

2025 DoD National Mentoring Month Event, January 22, 2025

General Mentoring Questions:

Question		Answer
1.	Does WHS have a mentoring program?	WHS does not have a formal mentoring program at this time but they have information to support WHS employees interested in mentoring. Also, when DoD MentorConnect is up, it will be available to WHS employees to seek a mentor and/or to serve as a mentor. For the latest news on DoD MentorConnect, visit https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/find-a-mentor .
2.	Do you have any people would like to be mentored by someone outside of their department they are working? I am interested in HR but I am in Accounting.	Yes! I'm sure folks want to learn about other functional areas and departments. Please visit our Find a Mentor webpage https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/find-a-mentor to reach out to components where you'd like to serve as a mentor or sign up for DoD MentorConnect where you can serve as a mentor to others in DoD.
3.	How do I request a mentor?	You have a couple of options in locating a mentor: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You can find a mentor through networking, or asking colleagues or friends for recommendations. 2. You can reach out to your local Mentoring Program Coordinator. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Don't know where to start? Visit the Find a Mentor webpage https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/find-a-mentor to locate your agency POC. b. If your component is not listed, email dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-mentoring-resource-portal@mail.mil. 3. You can also sign up on DoD MentorConnect. This platform will connect mentors and mentees throughout DoD and is targeted for release in FY25. Sign up to be the first to know when it is launched: https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/gsYprVxv1g. For the latest news on DoD MentorConnect, visit https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/find-a-mentor.
4.	How do mentors determine whether the mentoring relationship will be highly documented and rigid or less formal and more broadly supportive?	The level of formality and documentation in a mentoring relationship isn't solely determined by the mentor. It's a collaborative decision shaped by several factors, and a good mentor will discuss these openly with the mentee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goals and expectations: A relationship focused on specific skills or career advancement might benefit from clear goals, documented plans, and regular check-ins. A broader support system for personal growth might be less formal. - Individual preferences: Some people thrive on structure, while others find it stifling. Both mentor and mentee should feel comfortable with the chosen approach. - Component context: Some organizations have formal, structured mentoring programs with set guidelines, while others leave it more open. - Time commitment: Highly structured relationships often require more dedicated time for documentation and meetings. - Nature of the relationship: A close, informal relationship might naturally lend itself to less documentation.

Question	Answer
<p>5. Often, we think of younger people, just starting in a career, as needing mentors, but often individuals who are mid-career would benefit from having a mentor. It seems mentorship is essential if one is interested in continuing to build in their career. What recommendation[s] do you have for someone who has never had the benefit of a mentor?</p>	<p>It is never too late to start a mentoring relationship! I recommend a couple of things to do in preparation for a mentoring relationship:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify Your Goals & Needs: Having a clear understanding of your needs will help you target potential mentors who align with your goals. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a□ Before seeking a mentor, ask yourself: What are your career aspirations? What skills do you want to develop? What challenges are you facing? 2. Look in the Right Places: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a□ Reach out to former colleagues, classmates, and professional contacts. Let them know you're seeking a mentor and see if they have suggestions or are open to the role themselves. b□ Join industry associations, attend conferences, and participate in online forums. These are great avenues to meet potential mentors with relevant experience. c□ Many organizations have formal mentoring programs. Inquire within your organization or explore external programs offered by professional groups. Check out DoD's Find a Mentor webpage to locate a mentor within DoD: https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/find-a-mentor d□ Websites like LinkedIn connect mentees with potential mentors based on interests and goals. 3. Be Proactive and Prepared: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a□ Don't Be Afraid to Ask: Many successful individuals are willing to mentor others. Don't hesitate to reach out, even if you don't know them well. b□ Craft a Compelling Request: When contacting potential mentors: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1□ Briefly introduce yourself and your background. 2□ Clearly state your goals and what you hope to gain from the mentorship. 3□ Explain why you chose to reach out to them specifically [e.g., their experience, expertise]. 4□ Offer to schedule a brief call or meeting to discuss further. 4. Be Patient and Persistent: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a□ Finding the Right Fit Takes Time: Don't get discouraged if it takes a while to find a good match. b□ Network and Build Relationships: Continue to expand your network and nurture professional relationships, as this can lead to valuable mentorship opportunities down the line.

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<p>6. How do you get leadership to buy into the Mentoring program?</p>	<p>Gaining leadership support may include sharing the benefits of mentoring and demonstrating the value to the organization. Here's how to build a compelling case:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Align Mentoring to Organization's Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Show how mentoring supports key organizational goals b. Provide Concrete Examples: Use data and case studies from other companies or initiatives to illustrate the positive impact of mentoring on similar goals. 2. Quantify the ROI of Mentoring: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Highlight mentoring as a cost-effective alternative to formal training programs. b. Demonstrate how mentoring can reduce employee turnover, saving on recruitment and onboarding costs. c. Link mentoring to increased productivity, innovation, and improved employee performance metrics. 3. Address Potential Concerns: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Time Commitment: Offer flexible program options and emphasize that even short, focused mentoring relationships can be highly effective. b. Resource Allocation: Present a clear budget outlining program costs [e.g., platform fees, training materials] and potential funding sources. c. Measurement and Evaluation: Develop a plan for tracking program metrics and demonstrating its impact on key performance indicators [KPIs]. 4. Engage Leadership as Champions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Executive Sponsorship: Secure a senior leader to champion the program and advocate for it within the organization. b. Pilot Program: Start with a small-scale pilot to gather data and testimonials, demonstrating success before a wider rollout. c. Leadership Participation: Encourage leaders to participate as mentors, showcasing their commitment and setting an example. 5. Present a Clear and Compelling Proposal: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Executive Summary: Concisely outline the program's purpose, benefits, and alignment with organizational goals. b. Program Design: Detail the program structure, including objectives, target audience, time commitment, and evaluation methods. c. Resources and Budget: Clearly outline the resources required and the proposed budget. d. Call to Action: End with a clear recommendation for next steps and a timeline for implementation.

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<p>7. Can you give tips to people who want to be mentors? What should they do to get mentees and be good mentors?</p>	<p>Here are some tips for aspiring mentors on how to attract mentees and excel in the role:</p> <p><u>Here are some tips to attract mentees:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be Visible & Approachable: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Network actively by attend industry events, participate in online communities, and engage in conversations where you can connect with potential mentees. b. Publicly express your interest in mentoring; Let folks know and encourage them to reach out if interested. 2. Highlight Your Expertise & Experience: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Share your story by talking about your career journey, challenges you've overcome, and lessons learned. This makes you relatable and showcases your valuable experience. b. Offer specific areas of guidance by clearly articulating the skills, knowledge, or perspectives you can offer mentees [e.g., leadership development, technical skills, industry insights]. 3. Be Generous & Give Back: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Volunteer in mentoring programs to connect with mentees. b. Offer advice & support by sharing your knowledge through posts, workshops, or online Q&A sessions. This demonstrates your willingness to help others. <p><u>Here are some tips on being a good mentor:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Active Listening & Empathy: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a safe space by allowing mentees to share their challenges, aspirations, and concerns without judgment. b. Listen intently and ask clarifying questions to ensure understanding and show genuine interest. 2. Provide guidance, not solutions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Empower mentees by guiding them to find their own solutions and encourage independent thinking. b. Ask thought-provoking questions to help them analyze situations, explore options, and develop their own problem-solving skills. 3. Constructive feedback & encouragement: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Be specific & actionable by providing feedback that is clear, focused on specific behavior or skills, and offers suggestions for improvement. b. Celebrate successes by recognizing and acknowledging their accomplishments to boost confidence. 4. Mutual respect & open communication: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish clear expectations by defining roles, responsibilities, preferred communication styles, and meeting frequency upfront. b. Be reliable & responsive by making yourself available for meetings and respond to messages promptly. c. Encourage feedback by creating an open dialogue where both parties feel comfortable sharing. 5. Continuous learning & growth: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Seek feedback by asking your mentee for feedback to identify areas for improvement. b. Stay updated by learning and expanding your knowledge to provide relevant and up-to-date guidance.

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8.	What are the responsibilities of the Mentee to the Mentor?	<p>Mentees have crucial responsibilities to ensure a successful mentoring relationship. The mentee should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be Clear About Your Goals and Expectations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communicate Openly: Share your career aspirations, skills you want to develop, and challenges you're facing. The clearer you are, the better your mentor can tailor their guidance. b. Define Success: Discuss what a successful mentorship looks like for you. What specific outcomes do you hope to achieve? 2. Be Proactive and Prepared: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Respect Their Time: Value your mentor's time by coming to meetings prepared with questions, topics for discussion, and updates on your progress. b. Take Initiative: You are responsible to drive the relationship. Suggest meeting agendas, share relevant articles or resources, and seek out opportunities to apply their advice. 3. Be Open to Feedback and Guidance: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Actively Listen: Pay attention to your mentor's insights and perspectives, even if they differ from yours. b. Ask Clarifying Questions: Don't be afraid to seek clarification or further explanation if something is unclear. c. Be Receptive to Challenges: View constructive criticism as an opportunity for growth. Be open to considering new approaches and stepping outside your comfort zone. 4. Take Ownership of Your Development: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Follow Through on Commitments: If your mentor suggests resources, tasks, or networking opportunities, make an effort to pursue them. b. Apply What You Learn: Put the advice and insights you gain into action. Share your progress and any challenges you encounter. c. Don't Be Afraid to Ask for Help: If you're struggling with a specific issue or need additional support, don't hesitate to reach out to your mentor. 5. Show Appreciation and Respect: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Express Gratitude: Regularly acknowledge and thank your mentor for their time, support, and guidance. b. Maintain Confidentiality: Respect the confidential nature of your conversations. c. Stay Connected: Even after the formal mentoring relationship ends, stay in touch, share your successes, and continue to nurture the connection. <p>A strong mentor-mentee relationship is built on mutual respect, open communication, and a shared commitment to growth and development. By fulfilling your responsibilities as a mentee, you'll gain valuable insights, accelerate your progress, and build a rewarding relationship that benefits both parties.</p>

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<p>9. What qualities or traits should a Mentor cultivate to maximize the relationship with their Mentee? What steps can a Mentor take to build the relationship with their Mentee that benefits both individuals?</p>	<p>Some characteristics of a good mentor include listens actively, provides clear guidance, gives constructive feedback, shows genuine interest in the mentee's goals and challenges, maintains confidentiality, and fosters a positive and motivating environment. By possessing these characteristics, a good mentor can create a supportive and productive mentoring relationship that benefits both the mentee and the organization.</p> <p>Some steps to build a strong mentor-mentee relationship include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish clear expectations & structure by defining roles and responsibilities, setting goals and milestones, and agree on frequency of meetings. 2. Create a safe space by encouraging open dialogue where the mentee feels comfortable sharing challenges and asking questions without judgment. 3. Ask open-ended questions. Prompt deeper reflection and self-discovery with questions like "What are your thoughts on...?" or "How did that experience make you feel?" 4. Share your personal experiences. Relate to your mentee by sharing relevant anecdotes from your career journey, both successes and failures. 5. Go beyond advice - Empower & encourage action. 6. Guide, don't dictate. Help the mentee explore options, analyze situations, and arrive at their own solutions rather than providing direct answers. 7. Connect to resources. Share relevant articles, books, tools, or introduce them to people in your network who can provide further support. 8. Challenge & support. Encourage the mentee to step outside their comfort zone and provide ongoing encouragement and belief in their abilities. 9. Regularly reflect & adapt by seeking feedback. Encourage honest feedback from the mentee on your mentoring approach and be open to adjusting your style based on their needs.
<p>10. I am a civilian employee and want to have a Mentor. A few questions: 1□ Does a Mentor have to work in my same organization/branch 2□ How do I get in touch with someone that would be able to Mentor me.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No, your mentor does not have to work in the same organization or branch but it depends on what you're seeking from a mentor. There can be advantages to having a mentor outside of your organization as they can provide a fresh perspective, they can connect you to people and resources outside of your organization, and they can provide a more objective view of your career trajectory. However, having a mentor within your organization can help you understand the culture and landscape, and can advocate for you within the organization. 2. There are many strategies to locating potential mentors. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. You can find a mentor through networking, or asking colleagues or friends for recommendations. b. You can reach out to your local Mentoring Program Coordinator. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Don't know where to start? Visit the Find a Mentor webpage https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/find-a-mentor to locate your agency POC. ii. If your component is not listed, email dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-mentoring-resource-portal@mail.mil. c. You can also sign up on DoD MentorConnect. This platform will connect mentors and mentees throughout DoD and is targeted for release in FY25. Sign up to be the first to know when it is launched: https://forms.osi.apps.mil/r/gSYPvVx1g. For the latest news on DoD MentorConnect, visit https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/find-a-mentor.

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	Question	Answer
11	<p>It has been said to take someone that you "admire" as a mentor. Other than trial and error, is there a method to find that "admiration" that would benefit a mentor-mentee relationship?</p>	<p>You're right, simply admiring someone doesn't guarantee a successful mentoring relationship. While trial and error can play a role, it's wiser to be more strategic. Here's some things to consider when locating a mentor you'll truly connect with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you aspire to? Identify the specific skills, experiences, or qualities you admire and “<i>why</i>” they matter for your growth. Do you want to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop leadership skills like your manager? ○ Gain technical expertise like a senior engineer? ○ Navigate work-life balance like a working parent you respect? • Values Alignment: Consider if their work ethic, communication style, and approach to challenges resonate with yours. Shared values build a stronger foundation. • What to look for to have that initial connection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shared Interests: Common ground beyond work [hobbies, industry events] can strengthen the bond and create a more relaxed dynamic. ○ Communication Style: Do you prefer direct feedback or a more nurturing approach? Finding a communication style that works for both is crucial. ○ Energy and Enthusiasm: A mentor who's genuinely invested in your development and excited to share their knowledge makes a big difference. <p>Finding the right mentor is a two-way street. Be clear about your goals, be an active participant in the relationship, and don't be afraid to politely express if it's not the right fit.</p>

Question	Answer
<p>12. What strategies might you recommend for a mentor that has a mentee that approaches the relationship as more "obligatory." For example, if they are in the pathways program and only have a mentor because the program requires it. How do you break through to the tough ones that just don't seem to get it?</p>	<p>Ah, the "mandatory mentee." It's a tricky situation, but definitely surmountable! Here's how to approach mentoring someone who isn't fully invested:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ditch the assumption they don't "Get It" <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. It's not about "Getting It": Their lack of engagement might not stem from a lack of understanding, but rather from disinterest, fear, or feeling pressured. b. Shift Your Perspective: See them not as someone who doesn't "get it," but as someone you haven't connected with yet. 2. Uncover their "Why" [or lack thereof] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Open, honest conversation: Have a casual, judgment-free chat. Ask: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 ["What are your hopes/concerns about this mentorship?" 2 ["What are you working towards professionally right now?" 3 ["Is there anything I can do to make this mentorship more valuable for you?" b. Listen actively: Pay close attention to their responses, even the nonverbal cues. Their "why" [or lack of one] will reveal itself. 3. Find common ground & tailor the approach <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Shared interests: Even if their career goals seem distant, find common ground - hobbies, skills they want to develop, challenges they face. b. Relevance is key: Tie mentorship topics back to their interests. If they love music but struggle with presentations, connect presentation skills to stage presence. c. Flexibility is your friend: Be prepared to adjust your mentoring style and goals based on their needs and engagement level. 4. Focus on small wins & empowerment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Break it down: Large goals can be overwhelming. Focus on small, achievable steps that build confidence. b. Celebrate progress: Acknowledge even minor wins to reinforce engagement. c. Empower, don't dictate: Guide them to find their own solutions and own their progress. 5. Know when to reassess or step back <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Honest reflection: Is the mentee genuinely benefiting? Are you both frustrated? b. Open communication: If things aren't working, have an honest conversation. c. It's okay to not be the right fit: Sometimes, despite best efforts, a mentor-mentee match isn't ideal. If it's not beneficial, explore other options to include ending the relationship. <p>Mentoring is about guiding, not forcing. By understanding their perspective, finding common ground, and empowering them, you might be surprised by the transformation.</p>

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	Question	Answer
13.	How do you decline a mentee's request to have you as their mentor?	<p>Yes, there are times when the timing is off or that the chemistry isn't there. Here's a suggested approach: If you're unable to accept a mentee request, respond graciously and promptly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank them for considering you. Express appreciation for the mentee's interest in you as a mentor. • Explain your reasons [optional]. You can briefly mention your reasons for declining, such as a heavy workload or prior commitments. • Offer alternatives [if possible]. Suggest other potential mentors or resources that may be helpful to the mentee. • Wish them well. End on a positive note, wishing the mentee success in their search for a mentor.
14.	When do you know it is time to conclude a mentor mentee relationship?	<p>From the Mentee's Perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals achieved: The mentee has accomplished the goals they initially set out for the mentorship. • New goals: The mentee's aspirations have evolved beyond the mentor's expertise or network. • Stalled progress: Despite efforts, the mentee feels they are no longer progressing or gaining value from the relationship. • Life changes: Significant life changes for the mentee [new job, relocation, etc.] make continuing the relationship difficult. <p>From the Mentor's Perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited value add: The mentor feels they are no longer able to offer significant guidance or support in the mentee's current situation. • Time constraints: The mentor's commitments have shifted, making it challenging to dedicate sufficient time to the relationship. • Relationship strain: Communication has broken down, or the mentor feels the relationship is becoming one-sided. <p>Ending on a Positive Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open communication: Both parties should have an honest conversation about their feelings and whether the mentorship is still serving its purpose. • Expressing gratitude: The mentee should express sincere appreciation for the mentor's guidance and support. • Transition plan: Discuss a possible transition plan – perhaps less frequent check-ins, connecting with other professionals, or transitioning to a peer-mentorship. • Maintaining connection: Consider staying in touch informally, as the relationship may continue to be valuable in different ways. <p>Ending a mentorship doesn't have to be a negative experience. It's a natural evolution of professional growth and can pave the way for new opportunities for both parties.</p>

Question	Answer
<p>15. if your mentor is a senior leader and you are a GS-7 and they break the mentor, mentee confidence by going against you not once but multiple times, what are you supposed to do to make it right? Can anything be done to make it right?</p>	<p>It's incredibly disheartening when trust is broken in a mentor-mentee relationship, as this dynamic thrives on vulnerability and mutual respect. Some things that you can do include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess the Severity and Impact: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Was it a one-time lapse in judgment, a pattern of behavior, a violation of confidentiality, or something else? b. How deeply has this impacted your trust, your goals, and your emotional well-being? 2. Confront the Situation <input type="checkbox"/>If Appropriate<input type="checkbox"/>: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have a direct, respectful conversation. If you feel safe and comfortable, consider speaking directly to your mentor. Express how their actions impacted you and the relationship. b. Conversation should focus on "I" statements to show them how their actions impacted you. For example, "I felt hurt/betrayed/disrespected when..." rather than blaming language. c. Manage your expectations. Don't expect an immediate apology or a complete fix. The goal is to communicate your feelings and needs. 3. Evaluate the potential for repair: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What is your mentor's response to the conversation? Are they remorseful, defensive, or dismissive? Their reaction will reveal a lot about their willingness to rebuild trust. b. What is your willingness to forgive? Forgiveness is a personal process. Are you willing to put in the work if your mentor is genuinely committed to change? 4. Take action to protect yourself by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Setting boundaries. Clearly communicate your expectations moving forward. This might involve limiting personal information shared or setting specific guidelines for interaction. b. Seeking external support. Talk to a trusted friend, family member, therapist, or career counselor for objective advice and emotional support. c. Considering other options. If the breach is severe or your mentor isn't taking accountability, it might be healthier to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Formally exit the relationship: Explain your reasons clearly and professionally. 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Seek a new mentor: Explore other mentorship opportunities within or outside the program. <p>Remember:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Your feelings are valid. It's okay to feel hurt, angry, or betrayed. b. Prioritize your well-being. You deserve a mentor who respects and supports you. c. Trust takes time. Rebuilding trust, if possible, is a gradual process.

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Question	Answer
<p>16. How do you choose a great mentor and how do you trust that he/she will give you the best advice for your professional development?</p>	<p>Finding a great mentor is like unearthing a rare gem – it takes time, effort, and a discerning eye. But the reward of having someone guide and champion your growth is well worth the search.</p> <p>Some things you can do before starting your mentor search is to have a clear idea of what your needs and goals are. Then once you uncover what you're looking to develop, then you can look for a mentor where your values align and how has the experience to help you achieve your goals.</p> <p>Seek an individual who listens actively, provides clear guidance, gives constructive feedback, shows genuine interest in your goals and challenges, maintains confidentiality, and fosters a positive and motivating environment.</p> <p>Trust your gut and pay attention to any feelings of discomfort, inconsistencies, or breaches of trust. If you don't feel comfortable or confident in the relationship, then it is perfectly fine to explore other mentoring options.</p> <p>Mentorship is a partnership, and it takes time to build a strong, trusting relationship. Be patient and allow the connection to develop organically.</p>
<p>17 One of the hardest parts of the mentoring process is finding that particular mentor/mentee combination that “fits”. I am interested in hearing what initially drew the panel members to the particular mentor[s] that had the greatest impact on their career/life.</p>	<p>Finding the right mentor/mentee combination is often like searching for that elusive perfect puzzle piece—it takes time, observation, and a bit of intuition. For me, the journey to finding a mentor begins with careful observation over time. I'm drawn to those who, although different from me, share similar values.</p> <p>Engaging in organic conversations helps me gauge whether this person is someone I can connect with and learn from. Occasionally, there's an immediate connection, a melding of minds and personalities that just feels right. I also have immense respect for individuals who lead by example and walk the talk, even if our thoughts or personalities differ greatly. It's this blend of shared values, authentic connection, and mutual respect that makes a mentoring relationship truly impactful.</p>

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Question	Answer
<p>18. Given the demanding nature of our profession, what is the optimal amount of time and frequency of meetings that a mentor should dedicate to a mentee in order to provide the most effective guidance and support, while also being mindful of the mentor's own time constraints and responsibilities?</p>	<p>There's no one-size-fits-all answer to the perfect meeting frequency and duration in a mentoring relationship. It's about finding a rhythm that works for both parties while maximizing the value of the connection.</p> <p>Factors influencing meeting frequency and duration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stage of the relationship: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Initial Phase: More frequent meetings [e.g., bi-weekly for 1 hour] help establish rapport, set goals, and create a foundation. b. Mid-Point: As the relationship matures, meetings can become less frequent [e.g., monthly for 1-1.5 hours] and focus on progress reviews, problem-solving, and deeper discussions. 2. Mentee's needs: Some mentees may require more frequent support and guidance, especially during challenging periods. Flexibility is key. 3. Mentor's availability: Mentors need to balance their responsibilities. Openly discuss time constraints and find a sustainable schedule. 4. Nature of the mentoring: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Short-term, goal-oriented: More frequent, focused meetings might be necessary. b. Long-term, career development: Less frequent, but deeper, conversations might be more appropriate. <p>Finding the right balance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start with a trial period: Begin with a proposed schedule [e.g., bi-weekly for 45 minutes] and adjust based on mutual feedback after a few sessions. 2. Open communication: Encourage open dialogue about what's working and what's not. Don't hesitate to revisit the meeting frequency or duration. 3. Flexibility: Life happens! Be understanding of schedule changes and willing to reschedule when needed. <p>Beyond formal meetings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Informal check-ins: Quick emails, phone calls, or even coffee breaks can provide valuable support and guidance between scheduled meetings. 2. Leverage technology: Utilize online tools for sharing resources, scheduling, and quick communication. <p>Lastly, remember quality over quantity. It's better to have shorter, more focused meetings than lengthy, unproductive ones. Both mentor and mentee should value each other's time and commitment.</p>

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	Question	Answer
1 9.	If your organization does not have a standing mentoring program. What steps should I take to create one? I'm passionate about mentoring and have benefited from mentoring myself in my career. Where should I start?	It's fantastic to hear that you're passionate about bringing the benefits of mentoring to your organization! If you're an authorized representative for your DoD organization, please contact us at dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-mentoring-resource-portal@mail.mil and we can assist in providing templates, tools, and resources.

Coaching versus Mentoring Questions

Question	Answer
<p>20 I hear a lot of talk about coaching instead of mentoring. What's the difference & what does the DoD program entail?</p>	<p>Mentors impart personal experience, subject matter expertise, learning, and advice to less experienced members in their chosen field or career path. At this time, there is no formal DoD Mentoring program but there are resources, templates, and information to locate a mentor or serve as a mentor on the DoD Mentoring website: https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/civilianleaderdevelopmentbroadeningother/mentoringportal</p> <p>Coaching is a collaborative approach intended to support clients to achieve their goals by questioning to facilitate awareness and self-directed learning. Ideal coaches are curious; they do not require any knowledge, skills, or experience in the client's profession. Coaches are also required to complete a minimum of 60 hours of accredited coach training. For more information coaching and to learn more about being a certified coach via the DoD Federal Internal Coach Training program, please visit: https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/civilianleaderdevelopmentbroadeningother/dodcoaching#</p>
<p>21 I see some questions on the difference between coaching and mentoring. From my belief and experience it is something merged. No way to be delivered separately. However, I would like to hear your standpoint on this.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. Using either mentoring or coaching or both, would be situational. For example, a mentor might be more appropriate for a new employee to "show them the ropes" and acculturate them to the organization. On the other hand, a coach might be more appropriate for a team lead who wants to improve their delegation skills. The coach would help them identify their delegation style, understand the benefits and challenges of delegation, and develop a framework for delegating tasks effectively.</p> <p>Ultimately, both coaching and mentoring can be valuable tools for personal and professional development. The best approach depends on the individual's specific needs and goals.</p>
<p>22 Is coaching or mentoring a SERIES under OPM. If not, what would similar roles.</p>	<p>There are no occupational series specific to mentoring and coaching but the skills demonstrated by coaches and mentors can be found in many other job series.</p> <p>Great mentors and coaches are those who have developed characteristics such as listens actively, provides clear guidance, gives constructive feedback, shows genuine interest in the mentee's/client's goals and challenges, maintains confidentiality, and fosters a positive and motivating environment. Both mentors and coaches create a positive and cohesive team environment where everyone feels valued and supported and demonstrates the qualities and behaviors they expect from others.</p> <p>Ultimately, a good mentor and a good coach empower individuals to take ownership of their development and achieve their goals. They act as a guide and cheerleader, helping individuals unlock their full potential.</p>

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	Question	Answer
23	<p>Can you talk about who's "Agenda" coaching vs. mentoring is focused on. The organizations or the individuals/employee or the coach/mentor. How much work is done outside of the coaching vs mentoring system.</p>	<p>Both coaching and mentoring are focused on the client and mentee. It is the client/mentee who drives the coaching/mentoring relationship, and the coach/mentor help steer/course correct. Most of the work to further the individual's development is done outside of the coaching/mentoring sessions where applying the learning occurs.</p>
24	<p>How easy or difficult is to apply and become a Coach in the Army as a interested Civilian Professional for FY 2026? Thank you.</p>	<p>It is not difficult to become a Coach in the Army. There are 3 options currently.</p> <p>First is participating in the Coaching Culture Facilitators Course [CCFC] training that we hold twice a year. Each cohort has 35-45 seats. This course is 14 weeks, Tues/Weds/Thurs, 1000-1200 ET, and graduates with a Level 1 ICF certification with 80 education hours. Application window opens in October for the FY26 and is posted on our website.</p> <p>Second option is through Army Credentialing Opportunities On-Line [COOL] and unfortunately, this is only available for Service Members only. There are 2 vendors currently approved for the certification through Army COOL.</p> <p>Third option is through external executive coaching programs like Georgetown University, Rice University, George Mason University, Center for Executive Coaching, etc.</p> <p>For information on the Army Coaching Program, please visit the Army Talent Innovation Directorate website: https://talent.army.mil/acp/</p> <p>If you'd like to learn more about becoming a DoD Coach, please visit: DoD Coaching: https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/civilianleaderdevelopmentbroadeningother/dodcoaching</p>

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Miscellaneous Questions

	Question	Answer
25	Would you be willing to share Ms. Nelson’s remarks? I loved her quotes.	Yes! Ms. Nelson was gracious enough to share her remarks. Here they are:
26	What books would you recommend to new Mentors?	<p>We will provide a listing of books for mentors in the upcoming Mentor Resources webpage on the DoD Mentoring website https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/civilianleaderdevelopmentbroadeningother/mentoringportal. Please check back in the spring when the webpage is up.</p> <p>Some recommendations include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Elements of Mentoring: 75 Practices of Master Mentors 2nd Ed, W. Brad Johnson and Charles R. Ridley, 2. The Army Officer’s Guide to Mentoring, Raymond A. Kimball, 3. Field Manual [FM] 6-22, Leader Development, 1 Nov 2022 4. Army Techniques Publication ATP 6-22.1 Providing Feedback: Counseling-Coaching-Mentoring, Feb 2024
27	Can we have this type of session twice a year? Once in January and again in July?	Thank you for the recommendation! We will explore the possibility of hosting another event in July. Please check back on the DoD Mentoring website for announcements of upcoming mentoring events: https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/learning/civilianleaderdevelopmentbroadeningother/mentoringportal .
28	Will there be a way to order DOD Mentoring gear in the future?	Yes! We’re so thrilled that you liked the DoD Mentoring apparel. Please reach out to: dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-mentoring-resource-portal@mail.mil to learn how to purchase the apparel. If there is enough interest, we will dedicate a website for folks to see the catalog of apparel available for purchase.