



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE



# DoD Strong: Leading the Way In Coaching

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# What is DoD coaching?

Coaching is one of the most valuable developmental resources that the Department of Defense (DoD) offers the workforce and has been linked to positive outcomes such as increased employee engagement, resiliency, and retention. A successful coaching engagement promotes and sustains professional growth and competence.

Coaching is an experiential development process, which facilitates change and growth in both individuals and teams, and ultimately, contributes to a positive impact to the overall DoD mission. Through structured dialogue, our DoD coaches assist their clients to see new perspectives and achieve greater clarity about their own thoughts, emotions and actions, and about the people and situations around them. The client gives power to the relationship, drives the coaching agenda, and is ultimately responsible for the outcome of the coaching engagement. Our DoD coaches apply specific techniques and skills, approaches, and methodologies that enable clients to develop their goals and design actions to achieve them.

# What is the difference between coaching & mentoring?

DoD Coaching and DoD Mentoring are two distinct development activities. Our Certified DoD Coaches use a facilitative approach intended to support clients to achieve their goals by questioning to promote awareness and self-directed learning. A coach does not require any knowledge, skills, or experience in the client's profession; however, a DoD Coach requires a minimum of 60 hours of accredited coach training. In addition, an Army coach needs a minimum of 80 hours of International Coaching Federation accredited training.

On the other hand, our DoD Mentors impart their personal experience, subject matter expertise, learning, and advice to those who have less experience in that field or career path. A mentor usually identifies goals and recommended actions.

For more on the distinction between DoD Coaching and DoD Mentoring, watch this short demo:

**<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/910945/mentoring-vs-coaching-demo>**

# Who benefits from DoD coaching?

Anyone can benefit from coaching; however, coaching is particularly powerful for those who are going through a transition, either personally or professionally. Some examples include a new position at work, a promotion to a supervisor or manager, a career broadening experience, a leadership development program, an upcoming retirement, a family move to another location, a marriage, etc.

Some examples of coaching topics include:

Goal setting, managing your inner-critic, forming habits and routines, time management, getting team buy-in, becoming more proactive, delegating, self-awareness, accountability, networking, gathering information, boundary setting, communication, feedback, preparing for crucial or difficult conversations, and more.

For DoD Coaching Frequently Asked Questions, please go to [DoD Frequently Asked Questions](#).

# What is behind the drive for DoD coaching?

1

Coaching is a sanctioned learning and development activity as described in 5 Code of Federal Regulations: (CFR) 410.203

2

Managers and supervisors will provide employees learning experiences such as coaching: (CFR) 412.201

3

Coaching is a vital professional development tool to be accessed across the Federal Government: 2018 memo from Director of the Office of Personnel Management

4

Take Care of our people: Grow DoD talent, build resilience and readiness, and ensure accountable leadership: SecDef Austin's 2nd priority

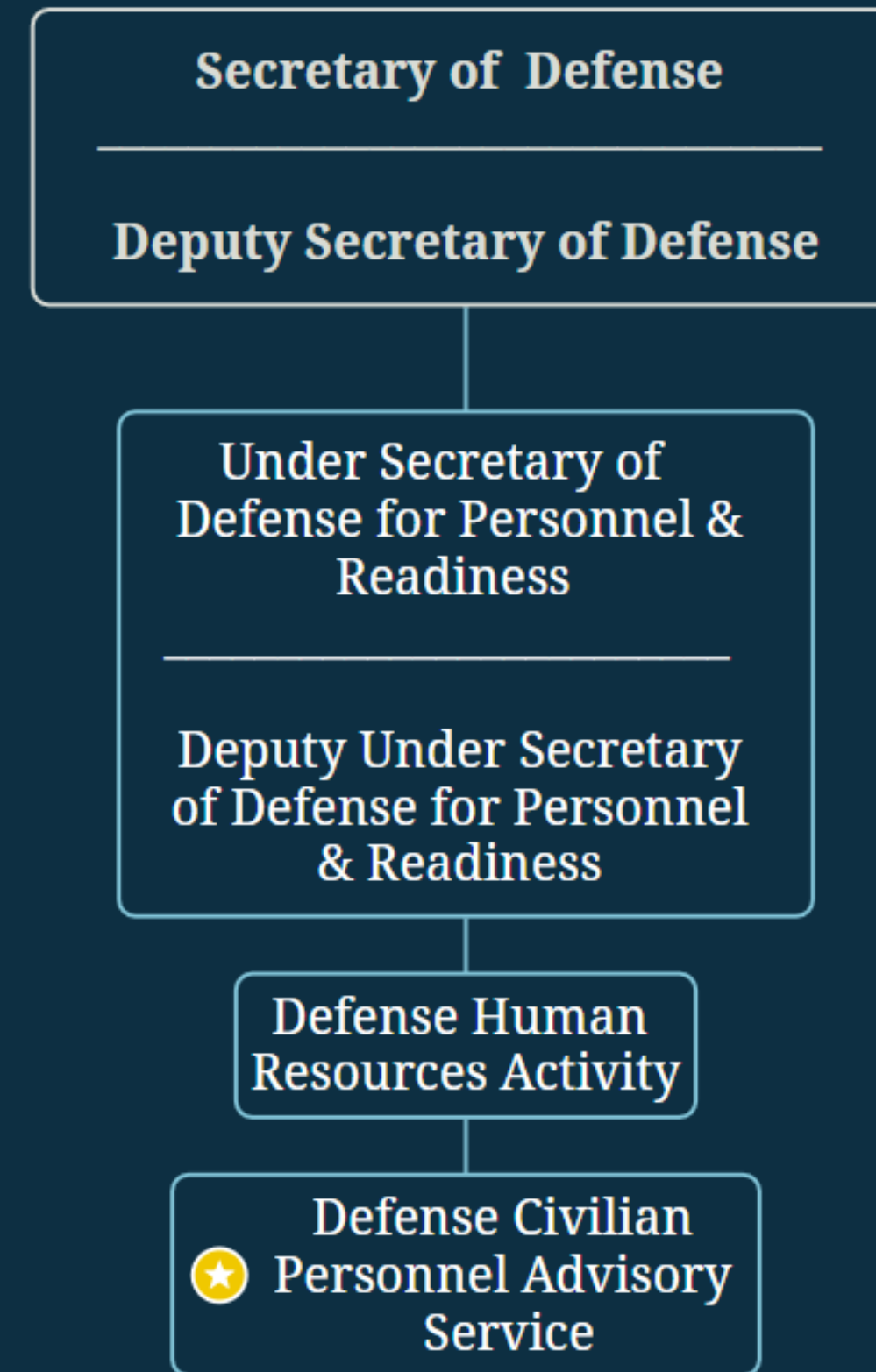
5

2.2: Improve Capacity-Building Opportunities: Investment in...coaching for managers and supervisors and the creation of pathways that focus on expanding skills and capabilities through upskilling: 24-25 DoD Human Capital Operating Plan

6

Coaching Program must include a Component Coaching Program Manager, and opportunities to teach some coaching techniques to DoD supervisors, managers, and leaders: DoDI 1400.25 Vol. 410, Sec. 4 Coaching Handbook (Currently being staffed)

# Where is the DoD Coaching Community housed?



# What role does the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) play in DoD Coaching?

DCPAS provides guidance and support to DoD Component and Defense Agency & Field Activity Coaching Program Managers, and subsequently, their coaches, to ensure a Culture of Coaching that is democratized across the Department.

# What are the major elements of DoD Coaching?

There are 10 major elements of DoD Coaching to include:

1. Policy and Guidance
2. Strategic Comms and Data Analytics
3. Coaching Program Managers
4. Coach Training
5. Coaching Skills for Leaders
6. Coaches
7. Clients
8. Executive and Niche Coaching
9. Communities of Practice
10. Coaching Resources/Events



# DoD Coaching Policy and Guidance

DoD Coaching Policy is steeped in the below policy:

- 5 Code of Federal Regulations: (CFR) 410.203
- 5 Code of Federal Regulations: (CFR) 412.201
- 2018 OPM Memo from Director
- Secretary of Defense Austin's 2nd Priority
- DoD Human Capital Plan (2024-2025)
- DoDI 1400.24 Vol. 410, Sec. 4 Coaching Handbook (Currently being staffed )

Based on the policy and experience, the DoD Coaching Program Manager works with the Component and DAFA Coaching Program Managers to provide support and guidance. Examples include:

- Monthly Communities of Practice for both Coaching Program Managers and for Coaches
- Advice on how to establish a coaching program
- Coach-client matching Tool
- Resources such as coaching tools and coaching skills workshops
- Coach training opportunities
- Mentor coach matching for credentialing
- Continuing Coach Education Units

# Strategic Comms and Data Analytics

Beginning in 2024, DCPAS will roll out its first annual DoD Strategic Communication Plan after careful consideration of audience, purpose, message, and channels of communication.

This communication plan will also be communicated to the Component and Defense Agency & Field Activity Program Managers for their use and dissemination.

Strategic Communication also entails providing metrics data, key performance indicators, and quantitative as well as qualitative return on investment at the Department level.

# Coaching Program Managers

All DoD Components and a large majority of Defense Activities & Field Agencies have a designated Coaching Program Manager; however, this may not be their primary duty.

Coaching Program Managers take on coaching strategy & innovation for their organizations as well as execute their coaching program in terms of internal and external coach-client matching, executive coaching, coach training, and coach data analysis.

To inquire about your organization's Coaching Program Manager, please write to [dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-coaching@mail.mil](mailto:dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-coaching@mail.mil).

# Coach Training

Formal Coach training consists of a minimum of 60 hours of accredited training hours; however, many of the DoD Internal Coach Training programs are over 100 hours in duration. The Army specifically requires their coaches to obtain 80 hours of ICF accredited training. The DoD has recently partnered with the Health and Human Services to provide Coach Training to our Total Force DoD members. The Defense Acquisition University and Defense Intelligence Agency are other examples of Coach Training Internal to the Department.

Other DoD organizations have contracted out their coach training such as the Department of the Air Force, the Army, and Navy.

External coaching outside of the DoD is also a possibility for DoD members. Examples of Coach Training Programs include the OPM Federal Internal Coach Training Program, Treasury Executive Coach Training Program, Internal Revenue Service Coach Training Program, and the Health and Human Services Coach Training Program.

After graduating from coach training, many coaches opt for their certification. For example, some apply to become an International Coaching Federation Coach while others apply to become a Board Certified Coach, while there are other certifications around the world. Each accrediting board has their own requirements and accredited training.

In order to keep their certification, many coaches have to obtain continuing coach education units.

One particular DoD Coaching effort is to provide continuing coach education units at the monthly DoD coaching Community of Practice.

# Coaching Skills for Leaders

DoD Coaching recognizes the need for Coaching Skills for Leaders workshops that can be tailored to any organization within the Department. Coaching skills entail creating an trusting environment, using empathy, active listening, asking open-ended questions rather than simply giving advice, and encouraging two-way conversation. As leaders, specifically Managers and Supervisors, adopt this style of leadership, their employees will be more productive, active contributors, more satisfied with their working environment, and as a force multiplier, will take on those same skills and use them with their peers and future employees. All of this contributes to the democratizing of coaching and a Department-wide culture of coaching.

The Department of the Navy as well as the Defense Intelligence Agency already have a robust Coaching Skills for Leaders Workshop and DoD Coaching is working to follow suit.

# DoD Coaches

As of December 2023, there are over 500 active coaches of all ranks and grades across the Department of Defense and this continues to grow as each coach training program graduates new coaches! DoD coaches provide formal coaching, at no cost, to officer and enlisted military members, non-appropriated funded civilians, and appropriated funded civilians. Coaches also provide coaching specifically to participants of DoD [Leadership Development Programs](#).

Thousands of individuals have been coached across the Department. In addition, coaches continue to accumulate, collectively, thousands of hours of coaching experience.

Coaches coach within their organization, but also have the ability to coach outside of their organization, across the DoD, provided they have the bandwidth and permission from their supervisor and Coaching Program Manager. See DoD Coaching Clients for details of the DoD Coach-Client Matching Tool.

# DoD Coaching Clients

All DoD Components and many DAFAs provide coaching to their employees; however, there may be some restrictions on who is eligible. Please contact your Coaching Program Manager for details or write to [dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-coaching@mail.mil](mailto:dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-coaching@mail.mil) if you are unsure of who your Coaching Program Manager is.

Also, some employees would rather a coach who is outside of their organization. In addition, not all organizations have a robust coaching program.

For this reason, in 2024, DoD Coaching is offering a Coach-Client Matching tool. Coaches who are interested follow a user guide to post their profiles, with permission from their supervisor and Coaching Program Manager.

Clients also create a profile and then browse to find a coach. To connect with their preferred coach, the client requests to match with the coach.

Coaches and clients alike can use the DoD Coach-Client Matching Tool if interested in coaching or being coached.

Click here to request a coach: [https://dcpasexcellence.gov1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_1LocqlMSMmxvoDI](https://dcpasexcellence.gov1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1LocqlMSMmxvoDI)

# DoD Executive Coaching and Niche Coaching

Most of our DoD Coaches are life and leadership coaches; however, some coaches specialize in particular types of coaching. Some examples are career coaching, leadership development coaching, mentor coaching, group coaching, peer coaching, conflict coaching, resiliency coaching, performance coaching, and Executive Coaching.

Executive Coaching is especially popular amongst Senior Leaders--O-6s and GS-15s (and equivalent) and above. Some organizations offer executive coaching either internally or contact it out as most executive coaches have several years of experience, both C-Suite and military, as well as thousands of hours of coaching under their belt.

The DoD is currently looking into curating an Executive Coaching Cadre by training and developing their Senior Civilian Leaders and General Officers.

If interested any type of specialized coaching, please contact your Coaching Program Manager or write to [dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-coaching@mail.mil](mailto:dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-coaching@mail.mil) if you are unsure of who your Coaching Program Manager is. Once launched, clients can also go to the DoD Coach- Client Matching Tool and browse for a coach with a particular specialty.



# DoD Communities of Practice

There are two DoD Coaching Communities of Practice.

The DoD Coaching Program Manager Community of Practice is a place for Coaching Program Managers to convene to discuss program management, seek support, and work on Coaching Strategy and Innovation.

The DoD Coaches Community of Practice is open to Coaching Program Managers, coaches, and even those who are just interested in coaching. The purpose of this community of practice is to support coaches with continued professional development, guest speakers, and to offer International Coach Federation Continuing Coach Education units.

For more information on how to join either of the monthly communities of practice, please write to [dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-coaching@mail.mil](mailto:dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-coaching@mail.mil).

# Coaching Resources and Events

DoD Coaching, upon request, provides coaching resources such as Coaching Program Management Guides for new coaching programs, coaching tools for coaches, reading lists, suggestions for leadership assessments, suggestions for coaching evaluations, access to mentor coaches and coaching supervision, and more.

DoD Coaching also hosts annual events such as the International Coaching Week.

# DoD Coaching Way-Ahead

Our National Defense Strategy (NDS) demands that we successfully develop the ability to identify, recruit, develop, and retain the most talented professionals with the skills, abilities, and diversity necessary to creatively solve complicated national security challenges in a complex global environment.

To rise to these challenges and posture our personnel to lead the Department into the future, we must expand access to coaching as a tool that is proving a remarkable ability to amplify our personnel's ability to challenge thought processes and perceptions in service of creative solutions.

As DoD Coaching continues to mature, a dedicated Office of Coaching and centralized funding will ensure that Components and DAFAs have the funding, personnel, and support needed to promote resilience, adaptability, elasticity, and agility, all necessary traits of a strong, unified, ready DoD Force.