



U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Learning and Workforce Development
Enterprise Training Services Division
eTs

2009
MENTORING
PROGRAM
GUIDE



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DOE Mentoring Program

I. Introduction

Mentoring is an effective way to provide professional development and to enhance learning in the workplace. The mentoring relationship is a special relationship built on trust, encouragement, and targeted development. A mentor is a teacher, coach, and advisor who provide guidance and opportunities for learning and professional growth to another employee.

The Departmental Mentoring Program is a 12-month program that provides a series of developmental experiences for a number of carefully matched mentoring pairs. The primary goal of the relationship is the professional growth and development especially with regard to future management and leadership assignments. Through the mentoring relationship, the mentor has the opportunity to coach, guide and share experiences and knowledge which will contribute to the Protégé's growth. Mentoring opportunities will vary according to the needs and interests of the Protégé and the organization. Mentoring relationships require time, commitment, and clear plans of action.

More and more government agencies and organizations are creating formal mentoring programs for various reasons. From increased morale to increased organizational productivity and career development, the benefits of an organization that actively supports mentoring are numerous. However, successful mentoring programs do not just happen. Organizations must first make a strong business case to demonstrate why the organization should devote the time, attention and resources required to make a formal mentoring program work. Reasons for establishing a mentoring program must be linked to the organization's mission. For example, if DOE forecasts additional growth in a specific job series, the agency may want a mentoring program to help prepare high-potential employees for future managerial positions in that series. Also, a DOE component that is planning reorganization may be interested in a mentoring program to help facilitate continuity of organizational performance. The following are primary reasons for establishing the Department's mentoring program:

Skills Enhancement -- mentoring enables experienced, highly competent staff to pass their expertise on to others who need to acquire specified skills.

Professional Identity -- when younger employees are early in their careers, they need help understanding what it means to be a professional in their working environment. Professionals embody the values of the profession and are self-initiating and self-regulating. Mentors play a key role in defining professional behavior for new employees. This is most important when employees first enter the federal workforce.

Career Development -- mentoring helps employees plan, develop, and manage their careers. It also helps them become more resilient in times of change, more self-reliant in their careers and more responsible as self-directed learners.

Leadership and Management Development -- mentoring encourages the development of leadership competencies. These competencies are often more easily gained through example, guided practice or experience than by education and training.

Education Support -- mentoring helps bridge the gap between theory and practice. Formal education and training is complemented by the knowledge and hands-on experience of a competent practitioner.

Organizational Development and Culture Change -- mentoring can help communicate the values, vision and mission of the organization; a one-to-one relationship can help employees understand the organizational culture and make any necessary changes.

Customer Service -- mentoring assists in modeling desired behaviors, encouraging the development of competencies in support of customer service, and above all, cultivating the right attitudes.

Staff Retention -- mentoring provides an encouraging environment through ongoing interactions, coaching, teaching, and role modeling that facilitates progression within the organization; mentoring has been found to influence employee retention because it helps establish an organizational culture that is attractive to the top talent clamoring for growth opportunities. Mentoring is a tangible way to show employees that they are valued and that DOE's future includes them.

Recruitment -- mentoring can enhance recruitment goals by offering additional incentives to prospective employees.

Knowledge Management/Knowledge Transfer -- mentoring provides for the interchange/exchange of information/knowledge between members of different organizations.

II. Program Objectives

The program is designed to foster leadership development, expand employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities, and broaden understanding of DOE and its missions and programs. The Mentoring Program also aims to help prepare a diverse, high performance workforce that is capable of adapting to the rapidly changing workplace environment. The program features all Senior Executive Service (SES) members and GS-13 through 15 level employees serving as Mentors. GS-13 through 15 level employees can also serve as Protégé to SES members. The mentoring program is open to all DOE/NNSA Federal employees.

The specific objectives of the program are to:

- Establish and institutionalize a Department formal mentoring process
- Increase the number of senior managers who serve as mentors
- Provide a vehicle for employee professional and personal growth
- Expand/enhance leadership, coaching, and interpersonal skills
- Encourage development of career plans and goals
- Develop a diverse, high performance workforce
- Continuously recruit mentors for the mentoring program
- Develop potential replacements for outgoing subject matter experts and managers

III. The Benefits of the Mentoring Program

Engaging in a mentoring relationship is critical to anyone who wants to take charge of their career. Successful professionals who have had mentors consistently report that it was the guidance and assistance received from a mentor(s) that made a major difference in their careers.

Benefits to the Protégé:

- Accelerated professional and leadership development
- Increased job satisfaction and effectiveness
- Greater visibility in the organization
- Targeted development activities
- Enhanced self-esteem and likelihood of success
- Increased awareness of the organizations culture

Benefits to the Mentor:

- Enhancement of one's own professional and leadership development
- Revitalized interest in work
- Expanded awareness of the DOE environment
- Chance to make a difference and leave a meaningful legacy
- Increased awareness of the caliber of employees and the talent pool available for future staffing decisions

Benefits to the Department of Energy:

- Cost-effective professional and leadership development
- Opportunity to display and improve leadership abilities
- Improved recruitment and retention of a talented and diverse workforce
- Increased organizational communication and understanding
- Improved succession planning
- Increased employee motivation
- Increased management ownership and engagement

IV. Program Framework

Research and best practices indicate that first-line supervisors should not serve as Mentors for their direct reports. Supervisors retain on-going training and supervisory responsibilities and are expected to provide input on competencies required from the Protégé. Thus, a Protégé cannot select their first-line supervisor as their Mentor; however, other senior managers in the chain of command can be selected. Mentoring relationships work best when individuals are able to meet face-to-face regularly but no less than twice a month; therefore, with few exceptions, It is recommended that Mentors and Protégés should be geographically co-located or be in positions that otherwise bring them into frequent contact. There will be exception when virtual mentoring may take place. The intent of the Mentoring Program is to create valuable learning experiences and developmental opportunities for Protégés. Participation in the program does not guarantee Protégés a promotion or selection into a future position. Supervisors should encourage their employees to apply for the Mentoring Program. Protégés should be encouraged to become future Mentors when they become eligible.

The Mentoring Program will run for twelve (12) months. Participation in the program requires that the Protégé and Mentor 1) sign a Protégé/Mentor Agreement at the beginning of their program. (see Appendix D) along with the Protégé's supervisors; 2) develop a Mentoring Action Plan (see Appendix E); and 3) submit periodic program progress reports. Protégés and Mentors will be expected to attend orientation and core training sessions that will be announced, meet on a regular basis or on a schedule that is accommodating, for the duration of the program. Mentors and Protégés should also plan to participate in the closing ceremony, complete program evaluation forms, and help make recommendations to refine the program for future years.

Initially, the Protégé and Mentor should meet frequently but no less than twice a month; however, as the relationship progresses, meetings may take place less frequently. Such meetings will normally be held during working hours. No overtime, nor credit hours, shall be authorized for contacts outside normal working hours.

V. Selection of Protégé/Mentor Pairs

In initiating the Protégé/Mentor relationship, participants are asked to register for the program by completing a profile and application (resume) via **“The Mentoring Connection” (TMC)**, a web-based tool designed to implement the mentoring process. The TMC website will provide step-by-step instructions to guide employees in completing their registration process. Participants will be given a “Group Identification”, however, each participant must create his/her own “Password” and “User ID” to access the system.

To facilitate the matching/pairing process, both Mentors and Protégés will be required to provide information about themselves through the completion of the online application (resume) available via The Mentoring Connection. Information on each Mentor and Protégé can be viewed by the sort options: by organization or career paths available

through the TMC Website. Protégés will use Mentor applications (resumes) or Career Paths as a basis for requesting specific Mentors. Protégés can request up to three Mentors at one time to review his/her request to be a mentor (in priority order). Based on the specified preferences of the Protégé, Mentors will be able to access the Protégés relevant information to make the final selection of the individual he/she will mentor. A Mentor will normally have one but no more than two Protégés at any one time. Subsequently a Protégé will only be allowed to have one mentor. Additional assistance can be requested by Mentoring Connection or from the program manager.

Mentors:

The one-page Mentor Profile (see Appendix A) will include the following information:

- summary of current position and other professional experiences
- skills/competencies/expertise/knowledge the Mentor can contribute to the relationship
- description of additional Mentor strengths as well as goals for further development
- the time commitment the Mentor is willing to make

Protégés:

The one-page Protégé Profile (see Appendix B) will include the following information:

- summary of current position and other professional experiences;
- expectations for the Mentoring Program
- skills/competencies/expertise/knowledge they are interested in developing/enhancing
- description of additional Protégé strengths as well as goals for further development
- description of career goals
- three Mentor preferences if you have them

Protégés will also be required to submit a current resume (2-page maximum), performance appraisals for the past two years, as well as a supervisory assessment of leadership potential (see Appendix C).

Once the matching pairs are identified, the Mentors and Protégés will be notified of the final pairings. Unfortunately, not everyone who applies will be selected to participate in the program; therefore, it is essential that each prospective Protégé submit a complete application package. Individuals not selected for the initial program will be notified and encouraged to participate in a subsequent program.

VI. Roles and Responsibilities

The Mentor-Protégé relationship can take a variety of forms. The most successful Mentors take an active and personal interest in the career development of those with less experience. They are supportive and engaged with their Protégés and serve as role models. Mentors serve as coaches for the Protégés and provide career guidance, offer suggestions or directions on a work-related issue, provide feedback on the Protégé's work, assist with educational/training resources, assist with management concerns, or work with the Protégé in other ways agreed upon by both parties.

Protégés benefit from the expertise and career knowledge of Mentors. They are also given the opportunity to take a proactive approach in developing many leadership competencies. A Protégé should also remember that they will manage their own career and life choices – a mentor is there to help them ask the right questions and guide them toward resources that will help them make these choices.

Protégés and Mentors contribute equally to the mentoring relationship. There are some basic expectations for both parties that should be discussed and agreed to before the mentoring relationship begins.

Before establishing a relationship, Mentors and Protégés should think about, discuss, and agree on:

- What is the focus of the mentoring relationship, career goals, business plans, projects, deliverables, management, etc.?
- What is the intended result? (job interviews, referrals, networking)
- How much time will be required? (one party may require more time- be flexible)
- How long will the relationship last? (12 months) Informal relationship may be established at the end of the program.
- Who should contact whom, when and how often?
- How quickly and often will questions be asked or answered?
- Will mentoring be done via email, phone, in person, IM, conferences, etc.?

The expectations for Heads of Departmental Elements, Mentors, Protégés, Mentoring Program Managers, Supervisors of Protégés, and Field Human Capital and Training Directors are as follows:

Heads of Departmental Elements/Program Coordinators:

- Hold senior executives accountable for mentoring and coaching employees
- Support program by allowing Mentors and Protégés adequate time for full participation
- Ensure the Mentoring Program is operating effectively in their organizations

- Facilitate, encourage, and support the Protégé/mentor relationship
- Assist in the matching process by increasing awareness of the mentoring program
- Assist in re-matching unsuccessful matches identified within the first 60 days

Mentors:

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

Protégés:

- 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 and coaching
- Demonstrate an ability to work as a team player
- Possess a positive and constructive attitude
- Develop functional Mentoring Action Plan (MAP) within mentor for structure within the first 60 days
- Utilize resources available through mentoring connection and from the program manager to engage in relationship enhancing activities
- Request for re-match can be made within the first 60 days to the Program Coordinator

Mentoring Program Managers:

The Mentoring Program Manager is responsible for ensuring that the varying components of the program are implemented in a timely and effective manner and that program evaluation takes place. The Mentoring Program Manager will service Headquarters' employees and a Mentoring Program Coordinator for each field office will service field employees. Responsibilities include the following:

- Manage and coordinate Mentoring Program activities
- Serve as the central point of contact on all aspects of the program
- Market the Mentoring Program and recruit potential Protégés and Mentors
- Oversee the mentoring matching process

- Provide orientation and training for Protégés and Mentors
- Maintain relations with Protégés, Mentors, and supervisors for any assistance they may need
- Arrange for the design, delivery and evaluation of Protégé/Mentor core training and quarterly activities
- Conduct an evaluation of the program with input from Protégés, Mentors, Protégés' supervisors, and program coordinators
- Track career paths of Protégés
- Prepare program reports for DOE management
- Develop programs for the beginning and conclusion of programs
- Frequently check with program coordinators to handle and resolve any issues
- Devise new methods and tactics to enhance program experience

Supervisors of Protégés:

The Protégé's supervisor can also serve as a resource for ideas on the Protégé's development and growth. The supervisor's role in the mentoring process is one of support and encouragement. Supervisors of the Protégés will sign off on the mentoring agreement so that they may be aware, and in support of, the minimum time required for mentoring relationships. As needed, supervisors will review and approve proposed developmental assignments; and, if appropriate, make adjustments in current assignments and workloads to allow Protégés adequate time to complete the program.

Field Human Capital staff and Training Managers:

- Serve as or appoint the Field Mentoring Program Coordinators for their office
- Work closely with the Field Organizations and the Headquarters Mentoring Program Manager to ensure that there is Department-wide program coordination
- Promote the program and assist in the identification of potential Mentors
- Identify and arrange for activities, speakers, instructors, etc., in support of quarterly program activities
- Provide input for program evaluation.
- Follow up with mentors and Protégés to validate progress
- Support developmental ideas and coordinate insightful group opportunities
- Encourage managers to participate as mentors.

VII. Program Activities

A series of structured mentoring and coaching activities will be scheduled throughout the one-year program. This will include a one-half day orientation session for both the Mentors and Protégés to "meet and greet," to explain the structure and design of the program, and to discuss roles and responsibilities. In addition, separate one half-day training and information sessions will be held for both the Mentors and Protégés. Also, quarterly meetings/activities will be held to foster group cohesion and obtain feedback on the program.

Both the Mentors and Protégés will work in concert to complete within the first month following selection 1) a Mentoring Agreement (Appendix D); and 2) a Mentoring Action Plan (Appendix E). The Mentoring Agreement will outline the relationship and commitment that both parties have for the program. The Mentoring Action Plan will outline the activities and interaction between both parties during the year. This goal oriented document will add focus to the program. In short, structured coaching, training, and group activities will be provided to assure that both the Mentors and Protégés have a successful and positive experience.

In the event that the mentoring relationship is not working as effectively as it could, the program manager will assist in obtaining coaching and counseling for the mentoring pairs. If the relationship does not improve, a no fault termination will occur. That is, either the Mentor or Protégé may terminate the relationship with the understanding that both parties may participate in subsequent mentoring programs.

VIII. Program Evaluation

Evaluation of the program is one of the most important components of the DOE mentoring program. Participants' reactions are necessary for program expansion and program improvements. Mentors and Protégés will participate in a mid-term review of the program to include a discussion session with the Program Coordinator to identify and address issues relevant to the success of the program. A final evaluation of the program will be conducted in collaboration with all coordinators and the HQ program manager.

Key performance measures will be utilized to determine program impact on participants and organizations. Program evaluation will include both qualitative and quantitative performance measures. **Quantitative** performance measures which will be tracked include: promotions, changes in positions, changes in organizations, and departure from DOE. **Qualitative** feedback to measure program success will be obtained through quarterly workshops, mid-term reviews, focus group sessions, and written evaluations. The results of program evaluations, both quantitative and qualitative, will be used to institute results-oriented program improvements.

IX. Program Expectations

Consider what both parties want to get out of the mentoring relationship and how you can do this best. At a minimum expect the following:

- General discussions about issues, how to solve them, and other ideas
- The mentor acting as a career guide, providing suggestions and feedback for your long term career
- The mentor as a sounding board /reality check for ideas about projects or goals you are working on
- Sample projects or exercises that the mentor can assign and review

- Actual projects the protégé is working on that the mentor can review (Be sure to discuss whether a Non-Disclosure Agreement is required)
- Attending conferences, trade shows and local group events together
- A level of commitment: It is essential that both parties have a realistic sense of the time commitment that each expects from the other before they begin to work together. The time commitment may need to be adjusted as the relationship develops, but both mentor and protégé must be willing to put in appropriate amounts of time and effort.
- Shared areas of interest: Protégés' skills and experience levels will vary, as well as his or her interests and goals. The mentor should discuss areas of interest with the protégé before working with him or her.
- Balanced expectations: Remember to discuss up-front what each of you hopes to gain from the relationship
- A mutually respectful relationship: Mentors and protégés must have a willingness to consider each other's viewpoints and communication styles. Remember to stay within the boundaries you set regarding time commitment, hours of contact, schedule/deadlines, etc. Mentoring does not run one way only. Mentors and Protégés will learn from each other.
- Open, two-way communication: Both Mentor and Protégé should be active partners in the relationship, and both should feel free to discuss the progress of the relationship to exercise active listening skills.
- A certain level of conflict: You may have different ideas about how to approach a specific problem or project. Recognize mistakes and conflict as part of learning. Accept that the Protégés' decisions are ultimately his or her own to make.

Based on comments we have received from participants in our program, we have outlined a few things you should not expect from mentoring.

- Don't expect immediate results: It takes time to develop a mentoring relationship. Getting to know a person is a gradual process. Sometimes a Protégé is shy, awkward or embarrassed about bringing up a specific issue and needs time to approach a mentor about it. Mentors should assure the Protégé that their conversations are confidential. Also, schedules can get tight at times and make it difficult to keep in regular contact. Keep a positive attitude and keep communication open.
- Don't expect your Protégé to work for you exclusively. At times it may be desirable for a Protégé to work on a specific assignment to learn or develop a skill. In most cases, it is best if the task is a sample assignment, rather than a client project. If you feel comfortable giving your Protégé an assignment, get the supervisors approval.

- Don't expect your mentor to give you a job. While some mentoring relationships can lead to paid work, expecting your mentor to make job offer is overstepping the boundaries of the relationship. A mentor can be a valuable resource for introductions and job leads. Your mentor is there to help and teach, not to hire. Mentors can also be added as a reference on resumes.

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X. Appendices

(Note: The following forms are samples. Our official forms are currently available online via The Mentoring Connection at www.mentoringconnection.com)

*U.S. Department of Energy
Departmental Mentoring Program
Sample*

Protégé Profile (GS-15 and Below)

The information you provide on this form will assist us in making an appropriate match between you and potential Mentors. Please be as specific as possible. This form must be submitted to your organizations' training manager/coordinator coordinator within 60 days completion or as soon as possible.

Name: _____ Job Title/Series/Grade: _____
 Organization: _____ Mailing Address: _____
 E-mail Address: _____ Phone Number: _____ FAX Number: _____

Training Manager's/Coordinator's Name and Phone Number: _____

Summary of Current Position and Other Professional Experiences (attach additional documents as needed):

What are your expectations for this program?

Please identify skills/competencies/expertise/knowledge you are most interested in developing/enhancing:

Interpersonal Skills _____	Goal Setting Skills _____
Communication Skills _____	Preparing for Management _____
Conflict Resolution Skills _____	Time Management Skills _____
Networking Skills _____	Coaching/Counseling Skills _____
Leadership Skills _____	Technical Skills (<i>please specify</i>) _____
Other (<i>please specify</i>) _____	

Please describe any additional strengths or skills as well as goals for further development

What are your career goals?

Based on the Mentor profiles reviewed, please specify your top 3 choices of Mentors (*in priority order*).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

MENTORING PROGRAM

ASSESSMENT OF PROTÉGÉ'S POTENTIAL

(To Be Completed by Supervisor)

Applicant's Name _____

Part A

This assessment should focus on indicators of potential such as educational pursuits, self-study, formalized training, developmental assignments, membership/leadership on teams and task forces, special assignments, and involvement in voluntary civic/community activities demonstrating leadership qualities. Please limit to 300 words or less.

Part B

Place an X in the block that best describes the applicant's overall potential for assuring more challenging roles and/or leadership positions.

Medium										High									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

Period of Time You Have Supervised Applicant: Years _____ Months _____

Supervisor's Name _____ Date _____

Signature _____

Title _____ Work Phone _____

U.S. Department of Energy
Departmental Mentoring Program

Mentoring Agreement Form

We are voluntarily entering into a mentoring relationship which we expect will benefit both of us and the Department. We want this to be a rewarding experience with most of our time together being spent on developmental activities. The following are mutually agreed upon:

The mentoring relationship will last for twelve (12) months, the duration of the DOE Mentoring Program.

The two of us will meet every _____. While unforeseen circumstances may alter this plan, meeting times will be part of my calendar and I will make plans for each meeting.

Each meeting will last a minimum of _____ but not longer than _____.

Between meetings, we will contact each other by:

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

In-depth issues will be handled in face-to-face meetings.

The Mentor agrees to be honest and provide constructive feedback to the Protégé and the Protégé agrees to be open to feedback and attempt to incorporate suggestions into his/her behavior.

Other pertinent information that we will factor into this Agreement includes:

Mentor's Signature _____ Date _____

Protégé's Signature _____ Date _____

Protégé's Supervisor's Signature _____ Date _____

Mentoring Program Manager's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix E

DOE Mentoring Action Plan (MAP)

The Mentoring Action Plan (MAP) is to be developed and completed by the Protégé and Mentor. The Mentor works with the Protégé to help (him/her) remain focused and goal-oriented.

Career Goals: (Long- and Short- Term)	Competency Assessment	Strengths	Activities to Further Develop Strengths	Developmental Needs	Activities to Improve Developmental Needs
					Date:
					Date:
					Date:

Career Goals: (Long- and Short- Term)	Competency Assessment	Strengths	Activities to Further Develop Strengths	Developmental Needs	Activities to Improve Developmental Needs
			Date:		
			Date:		

Protégé's Name: _____ Date: _____

Mentor's Name: _____ Date: _____

MAP Column Term Explanations:

Career Goals:	Long- and Short-term, as appropriate
Competency Assessment: my career goal?	What competencies are needed to reach
Strengths: that are necessary to reach my career goal?	What competencies do I currently possess
Developmental Needs: necessary to reach my career goal?	What competencies do I lack that are
Activities to Further Develop My Strengths: possess.	Ways I can use competencies I currently
Activities to Improve Developmental Needs: competencies to reach my career goal?	Ways I can improve or acquire