

MENTORING IN THE CORRECTIONS WORKPLACE

A Self-Paced Workbook



**THE SOUTHERN REGION
OF
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CORRECTIONS ACADEMY DIVISION'S
REGIONALIZATION PROJECT**

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Who Produced This Workbook?

The Southern Region Regional Field Coordinators (RFCs) developed this self-paced workbook in response to needs expressed by corrections professionals in the south from jails, prisons, community corrections, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and in the juvenile justice arena .

The Southern Region, supported though the NIC Academy Division's Regionalization Project, are a team of training professionals from all facets of the adult and juvenile justice arenas, who create and deliver training and training related products, such as this workbook, to the greater corrections field.

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Want to Learn More About Regionalization?

For more information about NIC's Regionalization Project, visit the project page at <http://www.nicic.org/services/training/regional/default.htm>.

Performance Objectives for this Self-Paced Workbook:

At the conclusion of this self-paced course you will be able to:

1. Identify the benefits of the Mentor/Mentee relationship.
2. Identify the difference responsibilities of a Mentor and supervisor.
3. Identify the basic listening skills involved in mentoring.
4. Set expectations and goals with your Mentee.
5. Provide your Mentee with useful feedback.
6. List pitfalls to avoid when mentoring.

Each of us, hopefully, wants to be all we can be. Mentors are those special people in our lives who, through their deeds and work, help us to be all we can be. Within this self-paced workbook, you will find information and exercises to assist you in becoming a successful Mentor.

Mentoring is a fundamental form of human development in which one person invests time, energy, and personal know how in assisting the growth and ability of another person.

Mentoring involves going above and beyond. It is a relationship that is built on trust in which a person with greater experience, expertise and wisdom counsels, teaches, guides and helps another person to develop both personally and professionally. As a Mentor, you have a very important role. Let's begin by discussing why you believe mentoring is important.

List at least four reasons you believe mentoring is important or beneficial.

Now that you have come up with several reasons, look at some additional benefits of the program and why mentoring is important to our organization. Essentially, mentoring can:

- Attract and retain high performers
- Upgrade employees skills and knowledge
- Promote diversity of thought and style
- Develop leadership talent
- Preserve institutional memory
- Create inclusion
- Develop a line of succession
- Foster a collaborative environment
- Ease the transition to new assignments

So as you can see, mentoring is beneficial to organizations and employees. The mentoring process gives staff permission to ask questions and seek information in an informal/casual manner. It is a constantly evolving process and is really about helping an employee adjust to working on the job. It focuses on the goals of the

organization and increases employee retention, moral and productivity.

Now that we've established why mentoring is important, let's take a look at what is involved in mentoring a new employee.

Mentoring can occur in many different ways. Traditionally, we may think of the formal process in which someone older and wiser helps the younger person along and may even encourage the Mentee to "be like them" in order to get ahead. For our purposes though, we want to look at the relationship you will be building with the new employee as an empowering one. As a Mentor, you will want to foster success while building a relationship that will profit both you and the Mentee. Each of you can learn from the other and benefit from the relationship. As a Mentor you will be responsible for encouraging the Mentee to set and achieve their own goals. You will act as a coach and teach them to become a confident, well versed and independent employee. The mentoring relationship is different from the relationship the Mentee has with his/her supervisor. Let's look at some of the duties/responsibilities of the Mentor compared to the duties/responsibilities of the immediate supervisor.

<u>A MENTOR</u>	<u>A SUPERVISOR</u>
Listens to problems	Assigns work
Confronts when necessary	Completes Performance Reviews
Coaches	Initiates a disciplinary action
Shares knowledge	Checks over paperwork
Explains processes	Gives unsolicited advice
Offers wise counsel	Formally trains Mentee
Builds confidence	
Introduces them to colleagues	
Offers encouragement	
Teaches by example	
Motivates the Mentee	
Guides them in the right direction	
Serves as a role model	

As you see from the list, the Mentor and the supervisor perform different tasks. The supervisor's role is to assign work, complete the Performance Review and handle disciplinary problems.

The Mentor's role is to offer encouragement, build confidence and guide the Mentee in the right direction. The Mentor acts as a partner and role model to the new employee.

RESOURCES

As a Mentor you have many qualities and a great deal of experience to bring to the Mentor/Mentee relationship. You can draw upon this experience in your relationship with the Mentee. To help you think through this, think back to a time when you served as a Mentor to someone and answer the questions below.

List some of these examples:

What qualities/characteristics did you possess that were beneficial to these past relationships?

How will these qualities/characteristics benefit your future Mentor/Mentee relationship?

What are some things that did not go particularly well in these past relationships?

What did you learn from these past relationships?

Not only do you have your own personal mentoring experience you can draw upon, you also have had someone mentor to you in the past. These past experiences can also be beneficial in helping build your Mentor/Mentee relationship. Think back to a time when you had someone mentor you. How can you use this experience in your relationship with the Mentee. To help you think through this, answer the questions below.

Life Experience

1. Identify one person who provided advice when you needed it or provided something that helped you grow in your profession.

2. What characteristics did this individual possess?

3. How did this relationship benefit you?

4. How will it benefit you as a Mentor?

In addition to your past experiences, you can also draw upon some of your own personal resources. Perhaps you are a good time manager and will be able to offer your Mentee tips on becoming more resourceful with their time. Perhaps you are good at handling the stress produced by this job. If so, you will be able to share insights regarding managing stress with your Mentee.

Another example may be introducing them to professional organizations and associates. This can assist the Mentee in networking with other professionals in his/her field.

All of these are ways you can use your personal experiences and resources to build a relationship with your Mentee. Developing a positive relationship should be the basis for the mentoring relationship.

RULES OF MENTORING

Now that we have identified the benefits of the Mentor/Mentee relationship and offered some ideas on how to build the relationship, let's focus on five rules of mentoring. In order to effectively Mentor you must follow these rules.

The Rules of Mentoring

- 1) Listen Effectively
- 2) Set Expectations
- 3) Set Goals
- 4) Give Feedback
- 5) Explore Options/Solutions

EFFECTIVE LISTENING

Let's begin with listening. The key to your relationship with the Mentee is your ability to effectively listen. Listening is the building block for all other skills and activities that you will use in your relationship with your Mentee.

The goal of effective listening is to give the Mentee a chance to express or vent their feelings so that they know they were heard but without expressing your own thoughts or opinions. Let's look at two basic skills for effective listening:

1. Listening for feeling and content.
2. Paraphrasing

Let's explore these skills further.

Listening for Feeling and Content: Much of the time when someone is sending a problem message, the feelings are more important than the facts. Many times the

feelings tell you their true concerns. The goal is to demonstrate to the Mentee that their thoughts and feeling have been heard.

Let's look at an example:

The Mentee states: "I am so frustrated with all the paperwork. I thought I would be able to make a difference in people's lives but all I seem to do is push papers."

How could you respond to show that you heard the feeling? One way to respond may be to say "You seem to feel overwhelmed and frustrated with all the paperwork."

Paraphrasing: Paraphrasing is using your own words to communicate to another person your understanding of what he/she said. Typically when paraphrasing you begin your sentence with: "So, what you are saying is...", or "Let me see if I understand what you are saying..."

Let's look at an example of paraphrasing.

Mentee says: "I am just completely overwhelmed by all this paperwork. I don't understand how I will ever get it all done!"

Mentor says: "You feel consumed by your paperwork and you don't know how you are going to catch up."

Remember, the object is to re-state the message in your own words so the speaker knows that they are being heard. Paraphrasing allows the speaker to follow up or clarify his messages.

Now that we have given you some examples of effective listening, let's practice the techniques. Read the following statements, identify the feelings and then write your response.

Effective Listening - Guided Practice

Identify the feelings first and then write your response.

- 1) "When I got this job, I thought I was really going to be able to make a difference in the lives of offenders. Now I feel like all I do is shuffle paperwork and handle violations. Does anyone ever become rehabilitated?"

Identify the feelings: _____

Possible Response: _____

- 2) "When I made that presentation on Tuesday, you never even opened your mouth! I thought you supported my position. Instead, you just sat there. "

Identify the feelings: _____

Possible Response: _____

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

The next rule of mentoring is Setting Expectations. This rule consists of two types of expectation setting. The first type is your Department's expectations of you, the Mentor.

Your Department depends on Mentors to offer valuable assistance to new employees and/or to peer employees. Because Mentors can have such an impact on the Mentee's professional life, your Department has several expectations to help facilitate the relationship. Take a look at your Department's and Mentee expectations listed below.

Mentors will be expected to:

- Schedule an initial meeting with your Mentee during their first week of employment.

- Meet with your Mentee at least twice a month, preferably once a week, in order to develop and maintain an effective relationship.
- Serve as Mentor for one person at a time.
- Maintain the relationship for at least the first year of the Mentee's employment.
- Keep information shared by your Mentee in confidence.

The second type of expectation setting is between you and the Mentee. This will assist in setting the tone for an open and empowering relationship. By clarifying the expectations you each have, you can then move on towards success. Listed below is a sample of the contract that you will be required to complete with your Mentee. This contract will assist in identifying the expectations each of you have concerning the Mentor/Mentee relationship. The contract should be completed during the initial meeting.

MENTOR/MENTEE AGREEMENT

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

As a Mentee, what do you expect to gain from the mentoring relationship?

How could this be accomplished?

In order for this to be accomplished, as a Mentee, I agree to:

As the Mentor, I will agree to:

Mentee

Mentor

Date

Date

You will need to make a copy of the completed contract for the Mentee and retain the original for your file.

GOAL SETTING

The next rule in becoming an effective Mentor is goal setting. As a Mentor you will need to encourage the new employee to see himself/herself as a successful, independent and productive member of your Department. Discussing the Mentee's short and long term goals is a way to help them focus on what they want to achieve. Some examples of short term goals for a new employee may be to learn the forms he/she will be using. What are some other short term goals you could suggest for a new employee? What about long term goals? The secret to the Mentee's success can be linked to the ability of the new employee to be able to envision themselves as the productive employee they want to become.

In order to help you begin to think about how to assist your Mentee in goal setting, take a minute to think about what helps you to set goals. For example: Let's say you want to become more organized with your time in order to be an effective Mentor. Your goal could be: To have more time to be an effective Mentor by being better organized with my work. To help you work towards your goal you could organize your desk, clean your office.

To familiarize yourself with setting goals, complete the exercise pertaining to goal setting.

Goal Setting Exercise

Think about what helps you set goals as you answer the following questions.

Think of one positive change you need to make in order to be an effective Mentor. Focus on the positive and write what your goal would be:

Goal: _____

What would make you feel like you are making progress toward reaching this goal?

A good approach to help your Mentee set goals is to ask them their goals as a new employee, discuss with them what positive outcome they would like to see once they reach their goal/s, and what would make them feel like they are “getting there”. Ask specific questions to assist the Mentee in establishing their goals. Listed below are several questions that can be used to assist the Mentee in establishing their goals.

- Where would you like to see yourself within your Department within the next year?
- What job position do you see yourself in within the next 3 to 5 years?
- What are your strong points?
- What areas of professional development are you working on or see a need to work on? (Examples: communication skills, time management, organizational skills, etc)
- What are some things you can do to help you reach these goals?
- What are some barriers you may encounter?

➡ What can you do to overcome these barriers?

With the first two weeks of the Mentor/Mentor relationship, you will need to complete the form on the next page and include it in the Mentee's file.

MENTEE GOALS

Mentor's Name: _____

Mentee's Name: _____

Today's Date: _____

MENTEE'S PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

MENTEE'S CAREER GOALS:

FEEDBACK

Next, let's build on setting goals by talking about the fourth rule of mentoring, giving feedback. As a Mentor, it is your responsibility to guide and coach your Mentee. In order to accomplish this you will need to give them feedback.

The purpose of feedback is to relay information to someone regarding their behavior or actions in order to change or maintain their behavior or actions. A rule to always remember about feedback is that it should be useful and constructive to the Mentee and a means for the employee to learn and grow.

Useful feedback gives the person information about how he or she affects others without putting the person on the defensive. This keeps the focus on the behavior and helps the Mentee decide how they truly want to behave or what action they want to take. For example, let's look at the scenario below.

Mentee states: " My supervisor is just being absolutely unreasonable! He has given me a deadline that nobody could meet for getting these reports completed. I'm telling you, the minute he walks in here this morning I am going to let him have it!"

Mentor response: " I am concerned that if your frustration causes you to blow up at your supervisor it will only create more problems for you."

The feedback the Mentor used was useful to the Mentee. The Mentor expressed concern, acknowledged the Mentee's frustration, but focused on the possible negative behavior and further consequences. The Mentee can now begin to think through a more productive way to handle the situation.

Let's review some important guidelines you should use as a Mentor when giving feedback to your Mentee.

Guidelines for Feedback

- 1) **Timing is critical:** In general, feedback is best offered as soon as possible after the given behavior. Feedback is most useful when the receiver himself has some desire to know what you think. For example, sometimes you need to consider whether or not the person is receptive at this moment or not. After a crisis, the Mentee may need to settle down first. Imagine that your Mentee has just had a confrontation with their supervisor about late paperwork. The Mentee is very upset. You would want to give the Mentee time to calm down prior to giving him/her feedback. It is also important to note that it is okay for you as a Mentor to take a little time to formulate a response. In the example given above, the Mentor may need time to decide on the appropriate feedback to give the Mentee.
- 2) **Specific versus General:** Use specifics rather than general information. For example, telling someone that they are dominating would not be as useful as saying, "Just now when we were deciding the issue, you did not listen to what I said. I felt forced to agree with you."
- 3) **Behavior and Performance Focused:** Feedback is most effective when it is directed toward a person's behavior/performance. Reminding someone of shortcomings they cannot control is frustrating. Instead, offer specific feedback such as: "When you are late for our meetings, we are not able to get as much done." Sometimes it becomes necessary to confront negative behaviors with feedback. Pointing out the consequences of the behavior would be effective feedback. Example: "I am concerned that your negative feelings about Bob will keep you from working well on his team."
- 4) **Keep it Simple:** Feedback is worthless if it is misinterpreted so keep your feedback simple. For example, rather than saying, "You are really showing improvement." You could say, "Good job, your reports have been on time for the last two weeks."

Now that you have a better idea of the proper way to give feedback, let's practice. Read the scenarios pertaining to feedback and formulate your responses.

Feedback Exercise

Scenario Number 1: Joe has been holding up the progress of the team by asking lots of questions that have already been covered. Your Mentee is losing patience. The Mentee says, " I can't stand that Joe! He is just too dumb and it burns me up to have to work on the team with him. I just don't think I can put up with him anymore!"

What feedback would you give to the Mentee?

Scenario Number 2: Your Mentee is having trouble with computer skills and answers e-mail messages late. The Mentee says, " I know I need to start using the computer more but I just don't have the time. It slows me down when I try to e-mail someone and I mess up. Maybe I need to go through training again but I don't have time for that either."

What feedback would you give to the Mentee?

Scenario Number 3: Your Mentee presented their first case in court yesterday and, although visibly nervous, did very well. The Mentee says: "Boy, was I nervous in court yesterday! I could feel my knees trembling but the Judge did compliment my recommendations. Even my Team Leader said I did a good job. I just wish I hadn't been so nervous!"

What feedback would you give to the Mentee?

EXPLORING OPTIONS AND IDEAS

Now that you have completed the contract, established goals and expectations, listened effectively, and given feedback, what is the next step to help you reach those goals? In order to help your Mentee reach their goals, you must assist them by helping them explore different options and ideas. You can see that many of the types of activities that we have already discussed would set the groundwork for you to encourage the Mentee to explore different solutions to their problems. Remember also, part of your responsibility is to help the Mentee grow to feel confident and independent. By really being able to hear the Mentee's concerns and being a supportive sounding board, you can help them gain the confidence to solve their own problems. The goal here is for the Mentor to empower the Mentee to make his/her own decision and solve their own problems. Keep in mind, as a Mentor, you do not want to provide solutions for the problems unless asked. You need to encourage the Mentee to explore their options and make decisions on their own.

One way to encourage someone to explore their options is to help them imagine what they need to do in order to be successful. You will need to ask questions that will help guide them towards a plan.

Listed below are some guidelines for effective questions.

Guidelines For Effective Questions

1. Keep questions simple. The best way to make sure you are clearly understood is to keep it very simple. For example: "What specifically do you not understand about documentation?"
2. Use open ended questions. Questions should be phrased in a way that it requires more than a yes or no answer. Phrases such as "Tell me about....., Describe for me, Explain to me...." will help the Mentee talk and will usually result in more information being shared.
3. Use probing questions. Probing questions can be used when a problem needs to be explored at a deeper level or if you need clarification. For example, a Mentee is explaining his employment history and tells you

that he had problems on his last job. You may want to say, “You said you had some problems at your last job, what caused these problems?”

4. Use a non-judgmental approach. Communication shuts down when we feel we are being judged. Avoid asking “Why”. When you ask someone “why” it usually causes them to become defensive. They probably will reply with “I don’t know.” For example, if a Mentee tells you he struggled in school, instead of asking “Why” simply say: “Tell me how school was for you.”
5. Avoid questions that include the answer. If you answer the question for the Mentee they will likely just agree with you. An example of this is: “You are coming in on time, right?” Instead say: “Tell me when you have been arriving to work.”

Remember, a way to help someone explore their options is to ask questions so they can think through their dilemma. Help them imagine the steps necessary for success by asking questions that help them work toward a plan for reaching their goal.

PITFALLS

We’ve covered a number of skills a Mentor must possess in order to have a successful relationship with their Mentee. We’ve also covered steps and tasks that you must complete with your Mentee. But, in order to have a successful relationship there are certain pitfalls you need to avoid.

What are some pitfalls that a Mentor would need to avoid?

Let's talk about four of the most common pitfalls that a Mentor needs to avoid.

Common Pitfalls To Avoid

- 1) criticizing
- 2) giving advice
- 3) rescuing
- 4) failing to confront

Criticizing - When we are criticized, we feel bad. This certainly does not help with our basic goal of establishing a positive and empowering relationship. Remember, when you need to make corrective statements, do so in a constructive manner. Put yourself in the Mentee's place for a moment and try to think of what would help you at the time.

Giving Advice - What problems might you encounter by giving the Mentee advice? We assume that we always have all the knowledge or answers. Sometimes we don't. We need to help the Mentee explore their insight into the problem, they must learn to make their own decisions. They must learn to work through their dilemmas and make decisions on their own.

Rescuing - As a Mentor it is practical to think we will probably build a strong relationship with our Mentee. As a result you will probably have a strong desire to rescue your Mentee. The desire to rescue is natural when you have the knowledge base and/or expertise to do so. Sometimes it may seem like the easiest solution but it will only be a quick fix. You must allow the Mentee to make their own decisions and own mistakes.

Failing to Confront - The last pitfall is failing to confront. Confrontation is never easy and we all can take the easy way out and just let things ride. This would certainly not help the Mentee learn from their mistakes.

Now, for a little practice in avoiding these pitfalls, read the following scenarios and identify the pitfall then indicate how you can respond differently to the situation.

AVOIDING PITFALLS

Read the following scenarios. Write a more appropriate response.

Scenario Number 1: Jane has been having trouble keeping up with her workload. Her reports are becoming increasingly late.

Mentee: "I can't believe how far behind I am getting! I have so much to do and I have got to complete three reports today. I just cannot see any way that I can get it all done!"

Mentor: "Don't worry about not having time to finish those reports today with everything else you have to do. I have to run the same data for my reports and will just do yours for you."

Pitfall: _____

Your
Response: _____

Scenario Number 2: Jack has been more than ten minutes late for several days. You have observed his supervisor checking the clock and looking to see if he is in.

Mentee: "Well, goodness, here I am late as always. I think this is the third day in a row. My supervisor seems to be getting a little cranky about it too."

Mentor: "Mary what in the world is going on with you? You are always late!"

Pitfall: _____

Your
Response: _____

Scenario Number 3: You have observed Jane becoming very upset when the phone at the front desk rings. Several times you have noticed that she never answers the call and just continues to type.

Mentee: "I can not believe how many times this phone rings in a day. Sometimes I wish I could just cut it off.!"

Mentor: "Good morning Jane. How is it going?"

Pitfall: _____

Your

Response: _____

Scenario Number 4: John has not been keeping up with his documentation on his phone logs. You are aware of the fact that his supervisor has discussed this with him.

Mentee: "I am really having trouble remembering what is significant enough to enter on my phone logs. By the time a week goes by and I get a chance to enter it on the computer, I've forgotten.

Mentor: "John, what you need to do then is use a tape recorder to take notes after each call. Then, the minute you get a chance to get to a computer, enter everything you said on the tape. That way your phone logs will be as accurate as mine!"

Pitfall: _____

Your

Response: _____

As an effective Mentor it will be important to remain conscious of these pitfalls to avoid them. Remember to stick with helping, sharing information, role modeling positive behaviors, and confronting when necessary. Your Mentee's growth will depend on the Mentee learning how to solve their own problems and make their own decisions.

Remember the mentoring relationship needs to be empowering. The goal of the Mentor is to assist the Mentee in becoming an independent and confident employee. So, let's look at how to move from being a Mentor to being a peer.

TRANSITIONING

Transitioning is a vital step to ensure your Mentee develops as a productive employee.

After the first year of the Mentee's employment, you will transition to the role of peer. In order to do this, you will need to begin the transition throughout the last weeks of your mentoring relationship.

If the transition does not occur, the Mentee may remain dependent on you for support after it is needed.

What are some ways you can think of to begin the transition?

Here are some additional ideas:

- √ Begin to meet less often. When you do meet with the Mentee you should help the Mentee focus on their successes and the confidence they have gained.
- √ It will be important for you and the Mentee to discuss the fact that the mentoring phase of your relationship will be ending. You may want to re-visit

your Mentoring Agreement and discuss goals that were set throughout the year. Give each other feedback on how the process worked for each of you. You may decide to help the Mentee set some goals they wish to pursue after your mentoring process has ended. Finally, make sure you discuss ways that each of you would like to continue your relationship as you both become peers.

Let's review some information that we have explored regarding mentoring programs.

Make sure you are clear on what a Mentor does and what a Mentor does not do:

MENTORS' CHECKLIST

What Mentors Do:

- Listen to problems
- Teach by example
- Coach
- Share knowledge
- Explain processes
- Offer wise counsel
- Build confidence
- Abandon Mentee

Mentors Do Not:

- Tell Mentee what to do
- Criticize Mentee
- Finish work assignments
- Rescue the Mentee
- Answer all questions
- Know everything
- Give unsolicited advice

List the 5 rules of mentoring:

When should the initial meeting occur?

What should be accomplished during this meeting?

What are some responsibilities of the Mentor?

What are the five pitfalls to avoid?

ACTION PLAN

Now that we have explored the rules of mentoring, pitfalls to avoid and how to transition from a Mentor to a peer; we're going to help you transition into the role of a Mentor. Using the goal you set on page 15, write an action plan to help you become a successful Mentor. Your responses to the questions will give you your plan to action which will assist you in becoming a successful Mentor.

In order to become a successful Mentor, one goal that I would like to achieve is:

Of the five rules of mentioning, I feel the most challenging will be?

Why?

I will avoid or overcome this pitfall by....

My action plan to achieve my goal:

Review of the Mentor/Mentee relationship

The Mentor should initiate the first meeting with the Mentee during the Mentee's first week of employment.

During the initial meeting the following will need to be accomplished:

- schedule future meetings to include date, time, location.
- complete the contract.
- set expectations.
- assist the Mentee in establishing goals.

Throughout the relationship the Mentor will:

- effectively listen to the Mentee..
- give feedback to the Mentee
- assist the Mentee in exploring their own options/solutions by asking appropriate and effective questions.
- coach the Mentee.
- maintain updated knowledge of your Department.
- document the Mentee's progress.
- communicate effectively.
- be tolerant and patient.
- serve as a positive role model.
- be sensitive to cultural diversity issues.
- impart knowledge of organization on issues such as structure, culture, and values.

- evaluate effectiveness of Mentor/Mentee relationship.
- recommend changes as appropriate.
- avoid common pitfalls a Mentor faces such as:
 - criticizing
 - giving advice
 - rescuing
 - failing to confront
- begin the transition to peer after the Mentee' first year of employment.

The Mentor/Mentee relationship is an important relationship. By following the steps and guidelines you can help others move towards fulfilling their goals and reaching their potential as an independent and successful employee.