

THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD MENTORING PROGRAM

This instruction implements AFPD 36-34, *Air Force Mentoring Program*. It applies to all Air National Guard (ANG) members, and establishes responsibilities and procedures for the mentoring program within the ANG. For additional information review AFI 36-3401, *Air Force Mentoring Program*. Comments and suggestions for improving this instruction should be sent to the following address: ANG/HRQB, 3500 Fetchet Avenue, Andrews AFB MD 20762-5157

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. References, Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Terms. See attachment 1.

1.2. Purpose. To provide a source of career information and guidance, professional development, history and heritage, knowledge of air and space power, the ethos of our profession and understanding of our core values of integrity, service before self and excellence in all we do. Program success is dependent on supervisors assuming their responsibility to mentor their people, as well as, leaders at all levels holding themselves and supervisors accountable for a viable leadership development and mentoring program. This instruction is developed as a guide for commanders. Program success is dependent on the command climate and environment of every organization. Different approaches will work for different organizations. This guidance is a template for successful programs, but is not intended to be the only way the program will work.

1.2. Scope. This instruction applies to both officers and enlisted members of the Air National Guard (ANG). This instruction includes information on everything we believe is needed to facilitate a successful mentoring relationship at all levels within the ANG. The intent, when developing this instruction was to capitalize on the wealth of information already available on mentoring in both private and public sector organizations and not to re-invent the wheel. Mentoring, whether formal or informal, has been an integral part of our leader development culture in the ANG. In fact, the ANG is dependent on the development of competent and confident leaders for it to accomplish its mission. The development process consists of three equally important pillars: institutional training, operational assignments, and self-development. These pillars support the framework of eight leadership competencies: communication, supervision, teaching, job proficiency, decision-making, planning, use of available technologies and systems, and professional ethics. This instruction is designed for military specific mentoring within the military organization. It can have applicability to the civilian, technician or Active Guard Reserve (AGR) programs. However, care must be exercised to avoid any improprieties in the selection process. This can easily be avoided by offering mentoring to all individuals. As long as it is offered fairly then there is not a conflict in any future hiring process. Additionally, technicians and AGRs can be offered mentoring, during normal military training periods; as any other member, the program may apply regardless of the mentor's or associate's status.

1.3. Program Guidelines. Underlying the program's establishment are five basic principles:

1.3.1. All ANG members, regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, age or skill levels, are capable of improving.

1.3.2. Professional development and growth should be both continuous and systematic.

1.3.3. Developmental efforts or plans should be based on a comprehensive assessment of needs and the matching of these needs to specific developmental experiences.

1.3.4. Developmental efforts should be consistent with professional military education.

1.3.5. Mentoring is healthy for both the individual and the organization. It is intended to enhance competitiveness and advancement potential, but it is not a guarantee of, nor prerequisite for, promotion.

1.4. Program Responsibilities:

1.4.1. Responsibilities of the ANG Human Resources Quality Board (HRQB):

1.4.1.1. Develop and publish this instruction.

1.4.1.2. Provide assistance.

1.4.1.3. Evaluate program effectiveness.

1.4.2. Responsibilities of State Adjutants General:

1.4.2.1. Ensure a viable mentoring culture exists for all members.

1.4.2.2. Ensure equal opportunity for leadership development exists for all members.

1.4.3. Responsibilities of Wing/Group Commanders:

1.4.3.1. Evaluate the process of ascending to leadership positions, including mentoring, to ensure that all members have equal opportunity for advancement.

1.4.3.2. Ensure mentoring relationships are established for under-represented member populations.

1.4.3.3. Ensure the organization culture does not foster a “glass ceiling” environment.

1.4.4. Responsibilities of Program Proponent:

1.4.4.1. The commander selects the appropriate program proponent. The Director of Personnel should normally be the base level proponent for the mentor program.

1.4.4.2. Administer day-to-day operations of the program to include: publicizing the program, providing advice and guidance to mentors and associates, and ensuring a positive program climate and continuity of program operations.

1.4.4.3. Provide evaluation information to ANG/HRQB and assessment of overall effectiveness of program, as required.

1.4.4.4. Safeguard all documentation collected on mentors, associates, or program administration and operation.

Chapter 2

THE ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

2.1. Mentor Roles. There are several roles a mentor can assume during a mentor/associate partnership such as: counselor, coach, motivator and role model. The role the mentor assumes will depend on the needs of the associate and on the partnership that is built with the associate. The mentor role is always on a professional level and in no way should violate fraternization or sexual harassment policies.

2.1.1. Counselor. The role of counselor requires the mentor to establish a trusting and open partnership, stressing confidentiality and respect for the associate.

2.1.2. Coach. The role of coach is necessary to help the associate improve performance. Coaching is giving frequent feedback focusing on what was observed. Concentrate feedback on the behavior that the associate should do more of, do less of, or continue.

2.1.3. Motivator. The role of the motivator is when the mentor needs the associate to complete a difficult assignment, or to pursue an ambitious goal. Through encouragement, support, and incentives, the associate can be motivated to succeed.

2.1.4. Role Model. As role model, the mentor is the living example of values, ethics, integrity and professionalism.

2.2. Associate Roles. The associate, as well as the mentor, wears “many hats”. These include the role of gauge and student.

2.2.1. Gauge. The associate is the “gauge” to measure how interactive a mentoring partnership will be. The associate decides upon the amount of dependence and guidance he/she needs. The associate takes the initiative to ask for help or advice and is willing to tackle challenging work.

2.2.2. Student. The associate, as student, desires to gain from the mentor's knowledge and learns how to apply the knowledge that is gained. The associate practices and demonstrates what has been learned. An associate learns how to interpret, as well as apply, rules and regulations.

Chapter 3

PROGRAM PROCEDURES AND FORMS GUIDE

3.1. This chapter is provided as a guide for formal mentoring partnerships. It may be tailored to the units' specific requirements.

3.2. Periodic Meetings. Mentors and associates should meet as often as agreed. Using a partnership contract allows for documented, planned meetings. Keep in mind that building a partnership takes time and energy over an extended period of time. Time must be set aside for discussing planned activities, progress, coaching, and feedback. Additionally, the program proponent may want to have periodic meetings with both parties to get a feel for how the partnership is going and whether or not the process is working effectively.

3.3. Feedback to Program Proponent (Both Mentor and Associate). The program proponent monitors all operations of the program and may require periodic reports from both mentors and associates.

3.4. Application Process. A formal application may be required to participate in the Mentor Program. However, participation is completely voluntary. The application information will be held in strictest confidence and will be used only by the program proponent in forming mentor/associate partnerships and evaluating the overall effectiveness of the program. This information may be shared between mentor and associate at their discretion.

3.5. Partnership Contract. A partnership contract may be used at the discretion of the program proponent. The partnership contract can be the most crucial part of the formal mentoring process (attachment 2). Successful relationships will depend primarily on the reasonableness and clarity of the partnership contract. Attachment 2 is a sample contract covering most partnership requirements. It is imperative the mentor and associate fully discuss the contract. Key components of the contract are:

3.5.1. Confidentiality. It is best to establish confidentiality parameters at the beginning of the partnership. The discussion should cover how sensitive issues will be handled. It is imperative both partners understand the importance of trust in the relationship and feel comfortable with the kind of information to be shared.

3.5.2. Duration of the formal partnership. The start and stop dates should be realistic and flexible.

3.5.3. Frequency and place of meeting. The nature and extent of developmental activities should be the major factors in determining the frequency of the meetings. Unstructured activities may require fewer meetings than very structured or complex ones. While there is no rule as to the frequency of the meetings, they should be often enough to meet the developmental needs of the associate and to allow sufficient time for the mentor to observe, coach, and give feedback.

3.5.4. Approximate amount of time to be invested by both parties. Lack of availability of the mentor when the associate wants or needs guidance can adversely affect the accomplishment of goals and the quality of the partnership. Therefore, the mentor should determine the approximate amount of time he/she can devote to the associate in accomplishing goals. This action precludes disappointment and frustration in the partnership.

3.5.5. Associate goals. Expectations need to be expressed in concrete terms. Specific goals and developmental activities should be discussed.

3.5.6. No-fault termination. Mentor and associate should monitor the progress of the partnership on a continuing basis. If either partner feels the partnership is no longer productive, that partner should exercise the no-fault termination. Both partners should understand that either party has the option of discontinuing the partnership for any reason, expressed or not. Either may notify the program proponent who will then conduct an exit interview. The purpose of the exit interview will be to identify steps that can be taken to improve the mentor program.

3.6. Exit Interview Questionnaire. An exit interview questionnaire may be used to gather information regarding the program at the discretion of the program proponent. All participants who elect to withdraw from the program should complete the exit interview questionnaire. The program proponent may use the questionnaire to determine procedural changes, program effectiveness, etc., and should be completed by the person initiating the termination of the formal partnership and, if possible, the other partner. Again, confidentiality is essential. The individual should not fear repercussions for withdrawing from the program. Questionnaires will be safeguarded as well as all other information collected in the administration and evaluation of this program. An example of an exit interview questionnaire is provided as attachment 3.

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5 Attachments
1. References, Abbreviation, Acronyms, and Terms
2. Mentor and Associate Partnership Contract
3. Exit Interview Questionnaire
4. Sixteen Most Commonly Asked Questions About Mentors and Mentoring
5. Troubleshooting

Attachment 1

GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES, ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS, AND TERMS

References

Title 10, United States Code, Sections 10211, 103305(h), 12302, 12310, 12402

Title 32, United States Code, Sections 502(f), 709

AFI 36-3209, Separation Procedures for Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Members

AFI 36-3212, Physical Evaluation for Retention, Retirement, and Separation

AFI 37-138, Records Disposition - Procedures and Responsibilities

Abbreviations/Acronyms

AGR	Active Guard Reserve
AFI	Air Force Instruction
ANG	Air National Guard
ARPC	Air Reserve Personnel Center
ETS	Expiration Term of Service
FTNGD	Full Time National Guard Duty
GSU	Geographical Separated Unit
HRQB	Human Resources Quality Board
MPF	Military Personnel Flight
NLT	No Later Than
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
NGB	National Guard Bureau
PDS	Personnel Data System
RIP	Review of Individual Personnel
SRRB	Selective Retention Review Board
SRP	Selective Retention Program
TAFMSD	Total Active Federal Military Service Date
TAG	The Adjutant General
USC	United States Code

Terms

AIR NATIONAL GUARD (ANG). The federally recognized Air National Guard of each state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam.

MENTOR. A trusted counselor or guide. Normally a senior person to the associate. A mentor is a counselor, coach, motivator, and role model. A mentor is a person who has a sincere desire to enhance the success of others. A person who volunteers time to help the associate.

ASSOCIATE. An ANG member participating in a mentoring program. An associate is a person with the capability and desire to excel, whether hidden or not. Some will seek mentors voluntarily, others will need a push.

PROGRAM PROPONENT. The individual at the base level, appointed by the Wing/Group commander, to serve as the office of primary responsibility for the ANG mentor program. The proponent will normally be the base Director of Personnel, however, if the commander deems appropriate, another office, usually in the full-time program, may be appointed as the proponent.

SUPERVISORY/MANAGERIAL MENTORING. A fundamental responsibility of supervisors. They must know their people, accept personal responsibility for them, and be accountable for their professional development. This includes a mentoring process composed of guidance, assistance and training provided to subordinates by the first-line supervisor/manager. This approach covers the gamut of supervisory responsibilities commonly associated with developing subordinates including providing feedback, evaluating, counseling, coaching, advising and being a role model.

INFORMAL MENTORING. Informal mentoring is the unplanned pairings and interactions that occur among experienced and less experienced individuals.

FORMAL MENTORING. Formal mentoring, sometimes referred to as facilitated mentoring, is the deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person (mentor) with a lesser skilled or experienced one (associate) with the agreed-upon goal of having the lesser skilled or experienced person grow and develop specific competencies (Murray-1991).

Attachment 2

**ANG MENTORING PROGRAM
SAMPLE MENTOR AND ASSOCIATE PARTNERSHIP CONTRACT**

We have voluntarily entered into this mentoring partnership and have discussed the following (BOTH MENTOR AND ASSOCIATE INITIAL EACH ITEM DISCUSSED, SIGN AND DATE THE CONTRACT. IF SO DESIRED, YOU MAY SPECIFY TO WHAT BOTH OF YOU AGREE):

___ a. Confidentiality.

___ b. Duration of the formal partnership: _____

___ c. Frequency and place of meeting: _____

___ d. Approximate amount of time to be invested by both parties: _____

___ e. Specific associate goals: _____

___ f. Other agreements vital to this partnership: _____

We have discussed:

___ a. The expectations of the mentoring relationship and what is required of each of us and how it relates to the overall mission of the ANG -- a trained and ready force.

___ b. Associate skills to be developed, improved or enhanced.

___ c. We agree to a no-fault termination of this partnership. If for any reason, either of us decides to invoke this option, we will notify the program proponent.

___ d. Other:

MENTOR SIGNATURE

DATE

ASSOCIATE SIGNATURE

DATE

Attachment 3

ANG MENTORING PROGRAM
SAMPLE EXIT INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

1. PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY YOU DECIDED TO WITHDRAW FROM THE ANG MENTOR PROGRAM.

TOO MUCH TIME SCHEDULING CONFLICTS NOT WHAT EXPECTED

MENTOR/ASSOCIATE NOT AVAILABLE JOB CHANGE MENTOR/ASSOCIATE SEPARATED

PERSONALITY CONFLICT OTHER _____

2. WAS THE PROGRAM DIFFERENT THAN WHAT YOU EXPECTED? (PLEASE EXPLAIN)

DISAGREE NEITHER AGREE/DISAGREE AGREE

3. WAS THE PARTNER WE SELECTED FOR YOU A GOOD MATCH? (PLEASE EXPLAIN IF YOUR ANSWER IS DISAGREE)

DISAGREE NEITHER AGREE/DISAGREE AGREE

4. WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD WE HAVE DONE TO MAKE THE ANG MENTOR PROGRAM BETTER?

5. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS?

Return the completed questionnaire to: _____

Attachment 4

**SIXTEEN MOST COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS
ABOUT MENTORS AND MENTORING**

QUESTION 1: Isn't mentoring just another passing fad?

RESPONSE: In the late seventies and early eighties, the terms mentoring and mentor received a lot of media attention. After a while the media moved on to other topics. However, the issues of "glass ceilings", under representation of women and minorities in senior brought mentoring back into focus. Many organizations envision mentoring as having a positive impact on addressing the above issues.

QUESTION 2: Does a person really need a mentor in order to succeed?

RESPONSE: It is possible for a person to be successful without the benefit of a mentoring relationship. However, more often than not, successful men and women acknowledge the value of a senior person who helped them along the path to success. In today's competitive environment, it is helpful to have a person who believes in, teaches, advises, sponsors, and critiques you. Time and heartache can be spared with the help of a good mentor.

QUESTION 3: What, if anything, does the mentor get from the relationship?

RESPONSE: The benefits to the mentor are numerous including pride in helping another person, and contributing to the future of the organization. Mentors get recognition from their peers and superiors for being visionary and developing the future leaders of the organization. Mentors get a different perspective of the organization from the associate which contributes greatly to the mentor remaining in touch with all levels of the organization.

QUESTION 4: Can a person have more than one mentor?

RESPONSE: Definitely yes, and in fact, we recommend a series of short partnerships as the optimum approach. It is good to have a variety of mentoring experiences but not necessarily simultaneous.

QUESTION 5: Doesn't the mentor have to be older than the associate?

RESPONSE: Generally, mentors are older, but that is not a hard, fast rule. The important thing is to identify your need and then select the person, whether older, younger or the same age, who can best meet that need.

QUESTION 6: What do mentors and associates do together?

RESPONSE: Mentors and associates can share many kinds of skill and professional developmental activities. They can talk together, attend meetings, conferences, and other events, work on a project. The associate can observe the mentor performing a given task, role play situations and discuss written materials.

QUESTION 7: What are some of the problems that can occur in the mentoring relationship?

RESPONSE: Not enough time and energy to spend on the partnership; resentment on the part of individuals not chosen to be associates or mentors; jealousy of spouses; unreasonable expectations of each other; one member taking unfair advantage of the other; lack of mentoring skills on the part of the mentor; inappropriate sexual involvement or harassment.

QUESTION 8: How can these problems be prevented or solved?

RESPONSE: A thorough discussion and a good partnership agreement at the outset can preclude many problems. Mentors and associates should be candid about their partnership and focus on its purpose--skills improvement. The program proponent must clearly articulate professional relationships, fraternization and sexual harassment policy to both mentors and associates.

QUESTION 9: Can males mentor females and vice versa?

RESPONSE: Yes. Cross-gender mentoring is not uncommon, especially as more women are migrating into senior management. Partners should be aware of the dynamics that are typically present and the stereotypes that people will have.

QUESTION 10: Is it necessary to eventually separate from the mentor?

RESPONSE: Yes, since the partnership's purpose is to build skills. Once the objective is accomplished, the partnership should terminate. The associate must be left to succeed on his/her own.

QUESTION 11: How often do mentors and associates have to get together in order for the relationship to work?

RESPONSE: Generally, monthly meetings are recommended. However, the developmental activities will determine the frequency of the meetings. Partners should make use of all available means of communication.

QUESTION 12: Do formal mentoring programs really work?

RESPONSE: Yes, since the programs are usually voluntary and supported by the senior management of the organization. Many organizations which encourage only informal mentoring are now adding structure to their programs and adopting more formal programs.

QUESTION 13: Doesn't there need to be chemistry between the mentor and associate?

RESPONSE: Not for a formal mentoring partnership. The only requirement is that the mentor and associate respect each other.

QUESTION 14: How do organizations benefit from mentoring?

RESPONSE: Organizational benefits include increased productivity by the mentor and associate, better assessments gained by both partners, management and technical skills improved, and latent talent discovered.

QUESTION 15: Does long distance mentoring work?

RESPONSE: If key ingredients are present (mutual respect, specific help which is valuable to the associate, the right time, and at least some meaningful contact), the associate will benefit.

QUESTION 16: What happens when mentor and associate get romantically involved with each other?

RESPONSE: Romantic involvement dramatically changes a mentoring relationship. Mentors and associates should immediately terminate their partnerships if romantic involvement occurs. Objectivity is lost in such partnerships. The credibility of the associate may be questioned, as people may attribute his or her success to the romance.

Attachment 5**TROUBLESHOOTING**

Problems that can arise in the mentoring relationship.

PROBLEM 1: **A mentoring style that does not meet the associate's needs or is incompatible with the associate's learning style.**

RESPONSE: Frustration often occurs when a highly organized mentor has an associate with a relaxed work style; a creative associate has a mentor who practices the "old school of thought"; an assertive mentor has an associate with a reserved personality and many other examples of incompatibility in the mentoring relationship. The most useful thing to do is to recognize and understand the differences and build a communication bridge to close the gap. Various resources are available to help a person identify and understand mentoring, personality and learning styles-how the various styles can complement each other.

PROBLEM 2: **Insufficient time.**

RESPONSE: There may be a tendency to sacrifice time with an associate or mentor because of competing demands. However, such action can have a detrimental effect on the relationship. Confidence, faith and trust may suffer. A good understanding i.e., realistic goals and expectations, at the outset of the relationship may preclude problems down the line.

PROBLEM 3: **The associate's supervisor feels excluded.**

RESPONSE: The associate's supervisor may feel threatened by the mentoring relationship. It is imperative that the authority of the supervisor is not undermined. The associate can avoid this situation by keeping the supervisor updated with his/her achievements, progress, goals and action plan.

PROBLEM 4: **The associate has a hidden agenda.**

RESPONSE: The associate may seek out high-level, respected mentors with the misguided intent of only furthering his or her own career, thus overlooking the significant benefits of mentoring. Hidden agendas are harmful to the mentoring relationship because the relationship is built on deceit. One way to avoid this obstacle is for both parties to be honest about motives and keep the lines of communication open.

PROBLEM 5: **Inappropriate attitude on the part of the associate.**

RESPONSE: Some associates expect too much from their mentors--demanding more time and attention than they actually need. Periodic discussions of expectations may head off this potential pitfall.