

Mentoring GUIDE

FOR STEWARDS



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Mentoring GUIDE FOR STEWARDS

OTHER USEFUL DOCUMENTS

Guide for Members

Membership Benefits pamphlet

Professional Institute By-Laws and Regulations

Professional Institute Policy Manual

Directory of Staff Services

Steward Manual

Manual for Elected Officials

Pocket Guide for Elected Officials

Service *Plus* Brochure

Pocket Guide for Stewards

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INTRODUCTION



As a great number of Institute stewards are approaching retirement, it is crucial that the knowledge these stewards have accumulated through years of experience be passed on to the newly appointed stewards.

The Professional Institute, through its Member Services Committee, is committed to creating a mentoring program that meets the needs of both experienced stewards and those who have recently been appointed.

Mentoring is a dynamic form of learning and development that is characterized as a relationship involving an experienced individual who is motivated and available to provide advice and support to a less experienced person.

Mentoring is considered to be one of the most efficient ways to foster individual growth and organizational needs.

This guide provides basic information on the mentoring program and the role of the different participants.



What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a form of voluntary aid favouring development and learning based on an interpersonal relationship of support, exchange, and learning, in which an experienced person invests his/her acquired wisdom and experience to promote the development of another person who has skills to acquire and professional goals to attain.

Mentoring is defined as a helping relationship in which an experienced person lends his experience, advice and encouragement to a less experienced person. The mentor facilitates the mentee's personal, social and educational development. The mentor is a source of support and motivation for the mentee.

Mentoring is an equal partnership for two individuals desiring mutual growth...

While a coach will transmit specific skills, a mentor is a volunteer who establishes a relationship. Mentoring is not an obligation or a relationship based on power. It is centered on achieving professional as well as personal objectives. It is not a one-way relationship, nor is it power-driven. It is not a public activity but rather a private and confidential one.

Mentoring is an equal partnership for two individuals desiring mutual growth, one of whom has greater or

more developed skills, experience and wisdom. It is helping people develop skills and knowledge to build confidence and foster growth.

Every mentoring relationship is unique, based on the individual style of each partner, the commitment they have agreed to and the strengths both bring to the relationship.

What is the difference between mentoring, coaching and other forms of teaching?

Coaching is a method whereby an experienced person transfers expertise to a less experienced person by assigning various tasks to be completed while simultaneously giving advice and suggesting methods on how these tasks should be accomplished within the organization. It involves skills development with a view to improving individual performance so as to achieve organizational performance objectives.

The difference lies in the method and goals. While coaching is meant as a means to reach corporate goals, mentoring is more a teaching relationship designed to help less experienced people learn and feel more comfortable in performing their duties.

There are many means, in a corporate environment, to train employees. Here are two other examples of methods:

Tutoring involves the acquisition of learning for which the concept is predetermined and part of a program.

Sponsorship means political and/or financial support provided by a chosen person.



ELEMENTS OF MENTORING

While mentoring can be very structured, the model the Institute is attempting to put in place is based on the needs of the participants. It can be as structured or unstructured as the participants want to make it.

While some rules will need to apply in the establishment of the process, once in place, the mentoring program will simply become a tool for newly appointed stewards. This tool will enable them to draw on the experience and expertise of more experienced stewards in their region.

What mentoring is not:

- an obligation
- a hierarchical connection
- a power relationship
- a one-way relationship
- a private course
- a rigid process with very strict rules
- a therapy

What the mentor does:

- listens
- teaches by example
- helps to build self-confidence
- helps to put problems in the right framework
- encourages winning behavior
- encourages the respect of ethics
- helps to learn from one's errors
- inspires the mentee

Benefits of becoming a mentor

- contributing to the success of the union
- sharing experience and feeling useful
- belonging to a group which shares the same values (mentors)
- forming and reinforcing steward succession
- contributing to preventing new stewards from making mistakes
- developing new valuable relationships.



THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Newly appointed stewards are often overwhelmed by the sheer number of problems they encounter in dealing with management. This is especially true when members call upon a steward who has not yet had the opportunity to attend training courses.

Stewards, don't want to lose face with their colleagues, yet sometimes feel like they are drowning.

As a general rule, there are four phases in a mentoring relationship.

This is where the mentorship program can be of assistance. A click of the finger will give access to a list of mentors who, through their years of stewardship, have faced similar situations and have learned how to deal with

them. The mentoring relationship is geared to the needs of each individual steward and has a precise goal: to help the steward progress.

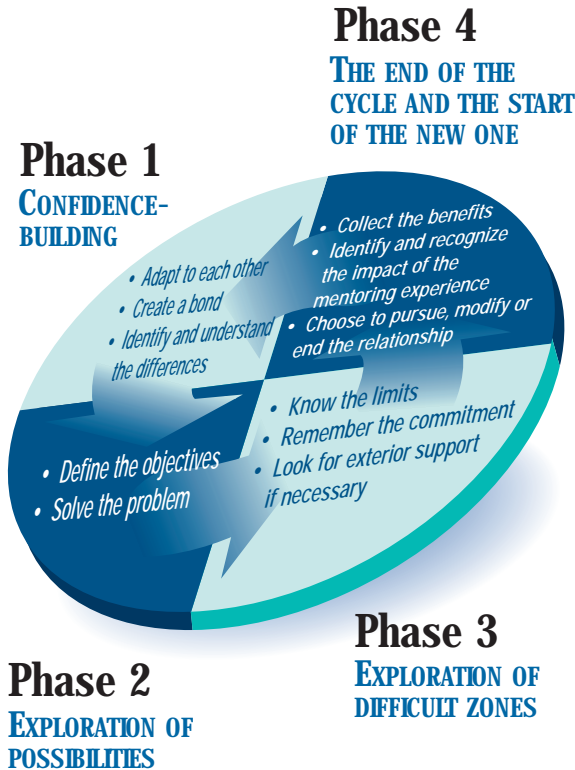
As a general rule, there are four phases in a mentoring relationship (see chart on page 10):

The first phase is the confidence-building phase. This is where mentor and mentee get to know one another and establish the basis of their mentoring relationship.

The second phase is the exploration of possibilities. This phase can vary from the mentor answering one simple question to the mentor walking the steward through each and every step of a specific process (i.e. a grievance).

The third phase, exploration of limits, comes later on when the mentee feels the mentor can no longer teach the mentee what he needs to know. At this point, the mentor could suggest other venues to obtain information (i.e. PIPSC Regional Office staff).

Finally, **the fourth and final stage** is the end of the cycle. At this point, the mentoring exercise is completed. Either the relationship ends completely, continues with a different problem, or starts again with a different mentor specialized in another area.



EXAMPLES OF MENTORING

Sometimes, the little things are the hardest to grasp. For example, while filling out a grievance form may seem simple enough, if not done right, the consequences could be devastating.

Here are some examples of mentoring possibilities:

- Grievances can pertain to almost anything. The steward must know what is grievable and what is not. A mentor can help.
- Is a grievance really necessary? While a member may want to grieve something, this may not be the best way to resolve the issue. Perhaps a meeting with management would suffice. Again, a mentor can help.
- Staffing actions may vary from one employer to another. Stewards need to be familiar with the various processes, such as appeals, individual feedback, independent third-party review, pre-qualified pools, etc. Mentors have had experience with those processes and can provide guidance.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A poorly planned and unstructured mentoring relationship can be a waste of time.

Mentors are experienced people who have assurance and wisdom, which incite them to transfer acquired knowledge to other less experienced persons. They are motivated and willing to share skills, knowledge and views of life to less experienced people and support the latter in the attainment of personal and career goals.

A mentor is a trusted individual who provides a listening ear, guidance and feedback. The mentor shares knowledge and experience, nurturing the growth of the mentee.

To accomplish these goals, the mentor must possess the following qualities:

- Possess knowledge of the field
- Possess knowledge of the department or agency
- Possess the ability to share and communicate that expertise in a way that supports and challenges the mentee

- Possess the ability to transfer information to others in a clear, unbiased and constructive manner
- Be flexible and have a diplomatic approach
- Be able to integrate past learning, current realities and probable outcomes
- Use intuition to anticipate likely consequences of a particular course of action
- Be fully committed to serving the needs of others as entrusted by the Institute
- Make a commitment to the growth of others - value people for more than their contribution

Here are some of the requirements for becoming a mentor:

- Must be an active or retired steward
- Must have been a steward for more than 2 years
- Must have taken basic and advanced steward training courses
- Must be (or have been) active on local, regional and/or national committees
- Must be (or have been) active in the Group, Sub-Group, Branch and/or Region.

The role of mentor will include some or all of the following:

- Help the mentee acquire specific skills
- Respect the confidentiality of the relationship between mentor and mentee, i.e. don't advertize the mentoring relationship as either party may wish for this to remain confidential
- Make expectations clear
- Teach by explaining, showing, observing and providing balanced feedback
- Communicate clearly and listen impeccably
- Promote independent thinking and problem-solving
- Provide direct, useful and constructive feedback
- Provide moral support to the mentee, especially in times of stress
- Reassure the mentee

A **mentee** is a person seeking personal and professional advancement and who is motivated to make use of knowledge, skills and values provided by a more experienced person. This is a person who benefits from the help and support of a mentor who voluntarily assists the mentee.

A mentee must have a strong desire to learn, develop and grow.

To accomplish these goals, the mentee must possess the following qualities:

- Be able to find someone who can mentor you on the required subject. After all, teaching and learning are two sides of the same coin.
- Be able to accept constructive criticism and learn from mistakes

The role of mentee will include some or all of the following:

- Take responsibility for their own development
- Share the responsibility for making contact with the mentor
- Clarify what is expected of the mentor in terms of support
- Agree to and respect the confidentiality of the relationship between mentor and mentee, i.e. don't advertize the mentoring relationship as either party may wish for this to remain confidential
- Respect the mentor's time and feedback
- Complete the work necessary to achieve your goals



RULES OF CONDUCT

When applied to a mentoring program, ethics involve the following rules of conduct:

- Act with respect for the other person's way of functioning
- Act with mutual respect for each person's role limits
- Act with respect for the confidentiality of the information that the other person is generous enough to share
- Act with honesty, frankness and respect for the other person
- Promptly inform the other person of any modification, delay or difficulty
- Inform the person in charge of the program if any problem situation occurs.



HOW TO BECOME A MENTOR

The Institute and the Member Services Committee envision steward mentoring as a simple, informal and non-threatening process to further develop and strengthen the steward network. It should complement, not replace, any process that may already be in place in a

region. It should also be a team effort between the staff and volunteers.

Mentors are usually selected by the regional staff together with members of the regional training committee...

Every region has its own dynamics as a result of geography critical mass of members, organizational structure of the regional executive and role of the regional training committee. Therefore, how steward mentoring is applied may vary from region to region. How mentors are chosen may also vary from region to region.

Mentors are usually selected by the regional staff together with members of the regional training committee assigned to the mentoring project as these people should know their stewards and what they are capable of.

A database of all mentors has been developed and can be seen on the PIPSC Web site, under the Stewards page. The list will be generated by region and will contain the name, employing department (or agency) and worksite location of mentors.

Stewards interested in becoming mentors, should contact their PIPSC Regional office, Regional Training Committee or the Steward Coordinator for guidance through the process.

Remember that a mentoring relationship is not cast in stone. If the dynamics between mentor and mentee are not appropriate, the mentoring process will not succeed. Mentors should be able to tell mentees if they are not comfortable with the mentoring relationship and suggest another mentor whom might be more accommodating.

How can I seek help from a mentor (be a mentee)?

Stewards seeking assistance should visit the Institute Web site at pipsc.ca. Select “Stewards” from the navigation buttons. Then select “Mentoring” which will provide a listing of the various PIPSC regions. Click on the desired region and a list of prospective mentors will appear.

This list contains the name, employing department (or agency) and worksite location of the mentor. Simply click on the name of the mentor who could be of assistance and their biographical sketch, including phone number and area of expertise, will appear. Simply contact him or her for assistance.

Remember that a mentoring relationship is not cast in stone. If the dynamics between mentor and mentee are not appropriate, the mentoring process will not succeed. Mentees should be able to tell mentors if they are not comfortable with the mentoring relationship and try to find another mentor who might be more appropriate.



CONCLUSION

The mentoring relationship is characterized by openness, reciprocity and volunteerism, which develops over the long run to the point where personal and professional transitions are facilitated, self-actualization is promoted, and the development of both parties is supported.

The mentoring relationship is, above all, a human relationship that emerges and develops between two individuals. Both mentor and mentee must benefit from the relationship and feel that it is emotionally and intellectually positive. Both mentor and mentee must invest of themselves and clearly discern that the investment is mutual. It is a privileged relationship that demands motivation and commitment. Both parties must therefore be assured of its mutually beneficial nature.

A strong mentoring program will benefit all interested parties, be it the mentor, the mentee or the Institute. The mentor will have the opportunity to impart his/her knowledge to upcoming stewards while the mentees gain valuable insight from the experience of the mentor. Overall, the Institute will gain by maintaining invaluable experience acquired through years of stewardship.

*Praise reinforces what you know;
constructive criticism forces you to
learn more.*