



# Officials Mentoring Handbook

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Based on and adapted from the Mentor Teacher Handbook by Rita W. Peterson, August 8, 1989 (Last Updated on 5-3-96) which can be found on the internet at <http://www.gse.uci.edu/MentorTeacher/Contents.htm>.

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## Bibliography

Note: each section on this page is linked to the original [Mentor Teacher Handbook](#) by Rita W. Peterson document for easy reference.

## PREFACE

The intent of this handbook is to lead many track and field officials to focus their energy on the development of stronger support systems for beginning and advancing officials. To come to the aid of officials begin new officiating duties by establishing an association level mentor programs. Such programs are expected to increase the success of beginning officials and those moving to new roles and encourage them to remain in the profession by increasing their knowledge and responsibility and thus their satisfaction with the job they have undertaken. The second goal is to provide mentoring/support for those officials who wish to be promoted to heads of events, referees and other management type positions by giving them direction rather than learning from experience only.

The design of the handbook follows a natural sequence of questions that are frequently asked by mentors and others interested in mentoring as outlined by the author Rita Peterson. I merely adapted the examples from those for teachers to those for officials. Its emphasis is on mentoring strategies; but readers also will learn about the rewards of mentoring and how to avoid the risks. By making this book available to those interested in mentoring, it is hoped that the quality of the mentoring experience is enriched for both mentor and mentee.

It is not intended to deal with the problems of recruiting new, female or racial minorities to our officiating ranks but rather with how to give them the necessary support and guidance once they have taken the first step toward becoming or advancing as track and field officials so as to improve the effectiveness and their speed of development as an official. For new officials this might include answering questions on such subjects as event rules or procedures, uniforms, officiating hierarchy, or organization in the area, hands on how to officiate. For advancing officials it might include sharing management techniques, ways to handle problems not covered by the rules or evaluation of techniques being used. Effective mentoring takes good communication skills and involvement only when needed.

For the most part it is the same as the original Mentor Teacher Handbook by Rita W. Peterson except that some of the examples and applications have been modified to Track and Field Official nomenclature. In addition I have added some job descriptions which were developed to implement a mentoring program in the Pacific Association's Officials Committee by Dennis Boyle that you might find useful.

## I: WHAT IS A MENTOR?

### **Mentors play many roles.**

A Mentor, in the historical sense, is seen as someone who:

- is a loyal and trusted friend, confidant, counselor, and advisor
- is a teacher, guide, coach and role model
- is entrusted with the care and education of another
- has knowledge and advanced or expert status and who is willing to take a personal interest and nurtures a person of talent and ability
- is willing to give away what he or she knows in a non-competitive way

- represents skill, knowledge, virtue and accomplishment

The most effective mentors:

- welcome newcomers into the profession and take a personal interest in their career development and well-being
- want to share their knowledge, materials, skill and experience with those they mentor
- offer support, challenge, patience and enthusiasm while they guide others to new levels of competence
- point the way and represent tangible evidence of what one can become
- expose the recipients of their mentoring to new ideas, perspectives and standards, and to the values and norms of the officiating and how to be athlete friendly
- are more expert in terms of knowledge but view themselves as equal to those they mentor

## **The Concept of Mentoring**

The concept of mentoring has a long history, one that comes to us from Greek mythology. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Mentor was the teacher of Telemachus, the son of Odysseus. But Mentor was more than a teacher. Mentor was half-God and half-man, half-male and half-female, believable and yet unreachable. Mentor was the union of both goal and path, wisdom personified (Daloz, 1983).

Today, some 3500 years later, mentoring relationships are still valued. In many professions mentors are thought to enhance if not ensure the professional development and success of talented newcomers. Increasingly, mid-career professionals at all three levels of officiating seek mentors when they wish to develop new levels of expertise and to advance in the profession such as to be promoted to the next level, become event heads or referees.

Yet, if mentoring were only a means for aspiring officials to gain a career foothold or to be given a boost up the officiating ladder, mentoring would be a one-way street. Common experience tells us that one-sided relationships do not work as well as reciprocal relationships where there is an even exchange of some kind. In fact, mentoring relationships most likely are reciprocal if they achieve their fullest potential.

What does a mentor derive from mentoring? Erickson's description of the Eight Stages of Man sheds some light on the question:

"For the mentor, Erickson's seventh stage of 'generativity' adds further substance to the mentoring relationship. The desire that one's work and influence 'live on' is an important life goal. The nurturing and influencing of young adults and the facilitation of their efforts to form and live out their hopes and wishes can fulfill the generative needs of the mentor" (Rodriquez, et. al., 1984).

Thus, among the strongest and most compelling reasons for serving as a mentor may be the desire to fulfill one's own felt need to contribute to the growth, development and wish fulfillment of an aspiring official. The act of mentoring allows one to repay, in some measure, the intrinsic benefits he or she has derived from the sport. But more than that the mentor by the very fact of teaching and answer questions by someone that looks at the subject in a different way, learns and improves his or her own skills in the process.

In this handbook, mentoring is defined as the individualized support, assistance, guidance and optimum amount of challenge which one professional gives to another - whether newcomer or mid-careerist in the profession.

## **II: HOW TO SELECT PROMISING MENTORS**

### **Characteristics of Mentors**

Effective mentors share a number of characteristics. The profile sketched below is based on a synthesis of observations described by many mentors and authors. While any single mentor may not possess all of the characteristics, effective mentors have many of these qualities:

#### **Knowledge of Their Field**

- They are considered by peers to be experts in their field.
- They set high standards for themselves.
- They enjoy and are enthusiastic about their field.
- They continue to update their background in their field.

#### **Demonstrated Skills in Their Field**

- Their work demonstrates superior achievement.
- They use a variety of techniques and skills to achieve their goals.

#### **Earned Respect of Colleagues**

- They listen to and communicate effectively with others.
- They exhibit a good feeling about their own accomplishments and about officiating.
- They recognize excellence in others and encourage it.
- They are committed to supporting and interacting with their colleagues.
- They are able to put themselves in others shoes and understand their views.
- They enjoy helping others.
- They are sensitive to the needs of others and generally recognize when others require support, direct assistance or independence.
- They exercise good judgment in decisions concerning themselves and the welfare of others.

## "SHOULD I BECOME A MENTOR?" CHECKLIST

As one considers the possibility of serving as a mentor, it is time to stop and ask "Should I become a mentor?" The checklist below is designed to guide the self-reflection of individuals who are thinking about becoming mentors. The checklist provides a description of the qualities that are most often thought to be conducive to successful mentoring. Successful mentors generally have many of the qualities listed here, along with some other valuable qualities that are not listed but that are unique to them as individuals. Space is provided at the conclusion of this checklist for respondents to add those qualities that represent their unique or special assets to mentoring.

To use the checklist, respondents should read each statement and place an X in the appropriate column which represents the degree to which the statement characterizes the way the respondent sees himself or herself. After ranking each statement (1) Strongly Agree that the statement is representative; (2) Agree; (3) Neutral; (4) Disagree; and (5) Strongly Disagree, respondents may reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses. Items 1-10 and 15-18 apply to many professional fields while items 11 -14 focus exclusively on the teaching portion of mentoring. Items 19 and 20 are for the mentor candidates to list other unique qualities or assets which will help them to be good mentors.

There is no single "ideal profile", but respondents who possess many of these qualities are likely to serve well as mentors. If one has serious doubts about the strength of his or her own qualifications, it might be useful to get a second opinion from a colleague who knows the respondent well. It is also important to recognize that many of the qualities listed here are developed or learned and the result of practice.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I see myself as being people-oriented; I like and enjoy working with other officials.					
2. I am a good listener and respect my colleagues.					
3. I am sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.					
4. I recognize when others need support or independence.					
5. I want to contribute to the professional development of others and to share what I have learned.					
6. I am willing to find reward in service to someone who needs my assistance.					
7. I am able to support and help without smothering, parenting or taking charge.					
8. I see myself generally as flexible and willing to adjust my personal schedule to meet the needs of someone else.					
9. I usually am patient and tolerant when teaching someone.					
10. I am confident and secure in my knowledge of the field and make an effort to remain up-to-date.					
11. I enjoy the subject(s) I teach.					
12. I set high standards for myself and my students.					
13. I use a variety of teaching methods and my students achieve well.					
14. Others look to me for information about my subject matter					

and methods of teaching it.					
15. Overall, I see myself as a competent professional.					
16. I am able to offer assistance in areas that give others problems.					
17. I am able to explain things at various levels of complexity and detail.					
18. Others are interested in my officiating ideas.					
19. *					
20. *					

\* Items 19 and 20 are reserved for descriptions of one's unique and special assets for mentoring

### III. THE IMPORTANCE OF ESTABLISHING PRODUCTIVE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

#### The Nature of Mentoring Relationships

Establishing a positive mentoring relationship is very much like establishing other valued human relationships in a number of respects. Both parties usually have a genuine desire to understand the values and expectations of the other person, and to respect and become sensitive to one another's feelings and needs.

At the same time, mentoring relationships differ in an important way from other personal relationships because they are professional in nature. Mentors are responsible for conveying and upholding the standards, norms, and values of officiating. They are responsible for offering support and challenge to the recipient of their mentoring while the recipient strives to fulfill the profession's expectations.

Healthy mentoring relationships are evolutionary rather than static in nature. They change because the purpose of the relationship is to enable the recipient to acquire new knowledge, skill, and standards of professional competence. The perceptions of both members of the relationship evolve as the recipient's performance evolves to new levels of competence under the mentor's guidance and support. The person who once said, "No man steps into the same stream twice," could very well have been describing the changing nature of mentoring relationships.

#### Stages in the Development of Mentoring Relationships

One way to view the evolutionary nature of mentoring relationships is to think of them in terms of stages of development.

**Stage 1:** The mentor and recipient become acquainted and informally clarify their common interests, shared values and professional goals. Occasionally matchmakers who assign mentors to recipients can foresee "mentor marriages made in heaven," but more often mentors and recipients prefer to choose one another. Taking time to become acquainted with one another's interests, values and goals (Stage 1) seems to help mentoring relationships gain a better start than when such activity is given a low priority. (More will be said shortly

about situations which do not offer choice of mentors or mentees.)

**Stage 2:** The mentor and recipient communicate initial expectations and agree upon some common procedures and expectations as a starting point. In the very few cases where a major disparity is found to exist between the needs and expectations of the two individuals--and where neither party can accommodate to the other--the pair is able to part company on a friendly basis before the actual mentoring and inevitable frustration begins.

**Stage 3:** Gradually, needs are fulfilled. Objectives are met. Professional growth takes place. New challenges are presented and achieved. This stage may last for months or years.

**Stage 4:** The mentor and recipient redefine their relationship as colleagues, peers, partners and/or friends.

### Clarifying Expectations in Mentoring Relationships

Most professionals place a high value on taking the initiative to clarify their own expectations and to understand the expectations of others. This quality contributes to the establishment of strong and positive mentoring relationships.

What are examples of expectations that might be communicated during the exploratory stages (Stages 1 and 2) of a mentoring relationship?

- The frequency of contact, the availability and the accessibility of the mentor and recipient.
- The amount and kind of support that are needed by the recipient or that can be provided by the mentor.
- The various roles the mentor finds comfortable: listener, supporter, advisor, guide, counselor, role model, friend, nurturer or resource in the background. Many other roles might be identified.
- The range of roles the recipient will find natural: listener, observer, initiator of requests for help or guidance, need for nurture or autonomy, self-expectations as peer or co-equal. Many other roles might be communicated.

Can experienced professionals mentor to one another? Certainly they can and with great success. For example, highly skilled officials who wish to learn in new content areas or take on administrative duties such as referees, technical managers or meet directors benefit from mentoring relationships. In cases where the mentors and the recipients see themselves as equal and share many common interests and values, Stage 3 is the starting point for their relationship.

### The Importance of Matching in Mentoring Relationships

Historically, individuals who have desired to become mentors have looked over aspiring newcomers in their profession or event and have selected promising young protégés to nurture. Most of the time, these mentoring relationships work out very well. Occasionally they

do not, and the protégé moves on in search of another mentor or the mentor seeks another protégé. What should individuals who are contemplating a mentoring relationship look for during the exploratory stages of getting to know one another and sharing expectations? Several important factors are considered below.

- ❖ Degree of eagerness to have a mentoring relationship.
- ❖ Similarity in personal styles: gregarious, animated, spontaneous, vs. low-key, retiring, reflective.
- ❖ Similarity of expected officiating assignments, or events and responsibilities.
- ❖ Similarity in preference for nurture vs. autonomy when establishing expectations for support
- ❖ Similar original background in Officiating, common professional area or interests.

It is difficult to predict the combination of personal and professional/officiating qualities that attract individuals to one another in mentoring relationships. Large numbers of experienced mentors say there is no magic combination. Some individuals are attracted to opposites; others are attracted to similar interests, styles and backgrounds.

What if choice is not an option? Most professionals view the term "professional" to mean, among other things, that one is able to rise above personal considerations, differences or desires when providing service to those who need one's professional help or expertise. Thus, among professionals, any match in a mentoring relationship should be productive. While some freedom of choice is desirable if choice is possible in mentoring relationships, many situations do not offer this opportunity. Where mentors are not free to choose the recipient of their mentoring, they might expect--with preparation or training for the role--to be equally as effective as mentors who choose their protégés but who have no preparation for this role.

## **IV: IS TRAINING TO BE A MENTOR REALLY NECESSARY?**

Mentors can have a significant effect upon the professional development of aspiring young or mid-career officials. Whether a mentor's impact is positive or negative depends in large part upon how well informed and skilled the mentor is, and upon the mentor's commitment and availability. It seems only natural to ask: Is training to be a mentor really necessary?

Research at the University of California, Irvine, suggests that training is not only important to the success of mentoring relationships but that it can be directed toward the most difficult challenges faced by mentors.

When mentor with one, two or three years of experience as mentors were asked "Do you think mentors need to be trained?", one in five (20%) thought training was unnecessary. Their comments, which are illustrated here, generally reflect the view that mentoring is a natural extension of teaching. They suggest that mentoring essentially is normal teacher-talk, but talk that takes place between two people in a mentoring relationship.

- "The best mentoring is on a one-to-one basis where neither party thinks of himself as a mentor (or recipient). Untrained mentors are probably less threatening."
- "Enthusiasm is difficult to infuse or train someone to have. If a mentor is good, he will have fun mentoring or teaching others, even peers."
- "Teaching comes naturally so I suppose mentoring does too."

Yet the majority of mentor teachers (80%) surveyed expressed the view that training would be helpful.

- "Where do mentors/teachers get the skills to work with adults? Very few people are 'natural' mentors. Training would be valuable, especially to have others share what works for them."
- "The personality for mentoring--that nurturing personality--comes naturally, but the nurturing quality becomes focused by training."
- "Mentors need training so that they can feel more confident about helping others. They need to know how to help officials who need help but will not actively seek help."

But "helpful" doesn't mean "necessary." A better way to understand the need for mentor training is to examine the difficulties that mentors encounter while fulfilling their roles. When asked, "What are the most difficult aspects of mentoring for you?" most mentors cited examples which illustrated the need for basic information and training:

- "Making the initial contact and building trust. Sharing my ideas at first....I don't want to sound like a know-it-all even when I am asked for help."
- "Overcoming my hesitation to tell (the recipient) that he is wrong and to suggest alternatives. I feel like I am offending him."
- "Trying to explain (to the recipient) that her instructions were too difficult. I helped her revise it but certain parts were still too difficult. When do you stop correcting and revising? When does helping become hurting?"
- "Rejection, I offered help at her convenience but my help wasn't wanted.... It's hard to help people."
- "Working with someone for a whole year and then finding that he can't make it."

All of these responses suggest a need for basic information about mentoring relationships or for mentor training. The candid and sensitive responses of these mentors point to the value of some preparation for their role as mentors and the value of specific skills that allow mentors to feel confident and successful as they fulfill their expectations and goals as mentors.

## V. WAYS OF MENTORING

When most people think of mentoring, they think of experts sharing technical knowledge with less experienced individuals in a profession. Certainly sharing one's expertise is a large part of mentoring, but so is the communication of support, challenge, feeling and many other

kinds of information. A brief glance at the opening page of this handbook, [I: What Is a Mentor?](#), is a helpful reminder of the multiple dimensions of mentoring. Here we focus on sharing expertise and communication of support and challenge.

## Sharing Expertise

Every mentor has a specific body of professional knowledge and skill to share. To illustrate, in the teaching profession a part of this pedagogical knowledge is referred to as "content." The content or subject matter to be taught to students--for example, history or mathematics--must be transformed from the rule book level to a form that is appropriate for the readiness level of each particular group of students. In other words, the subject matter must be repackaged to fit the students' maturational, developmental or grade level, and the range of previous experiences the students are likely to have had. Experienced teachers develop a sense of how well various groups of students will understand specific subject matter when the content is presented at different levels of complexity. They are able to "repackage" the content to fit different needs. Similarly, teachers use a variety of teaching methods, each adopted to achieve a specific outcome. Every profession has its own content or body of knowledge in the field and the variety of methods practiced when professionals utilize their knowledge in service to others.

## Suggestions for Sharing Expertise on Planning

- Find out how you can be the most helpful in the area of planning/preparing for an event.
- Team up during the orientation or initial training period or before and schedule regular times to meet for discussion and planning sessions.
- Discuss goals for the year or season and objectives for level of knowledge.
- Describe various officiating climates and environments at events that you have observed or created and how these variations worked out.
- Review the expectations of the officiating level and events being worked on and discuss how they can be woven into the mentoring plan.
- Share catalogs, articles, and monographs, for events of interest and how to order any instructional materials, rulebooks or officiating equipment.
- Show how you organize your schedule for the year, the seasons, the week and the day for each event of interest.
- Share your ideas about planning for contingencies at a venue.
- Talk about how and where to anticipate officials or athletes' errors and misconceptions.
- Describe the labor saving steps you use in preparing and instruction to athletes that pay off later in reduced workload, problems or protests.
- Talk about the patterns of athletes' physical, social and skills development in your events; and demonstrate your understanding and valuing of differences among the various officiating skills and duties in their events.
- Describe alternative strategies that are successful for learning where athletes or officials have diverse or conflicting needs.

- Collaborate on a special unit of instruction or a project.
- Work together to assign officials to best positions based on their skill levels and your needs as head of the event.
- Share shortcuts, officiating monographs or outlines, assignment sheets, instructions for athletes and officials that have worked well for you.
- Offer to share your contacts, websites or computer software or show where such information can be found.

### **Suggestions for Sharing Expertise on Officiating**

- Structure times at noon or the end of the meet to share reactions to the day's events or problems, explaining the alternatives and why the particular alternative was chosen or should have been chosen. Provide opportunities for the mentee to talk about any officiating concerns and to ask questions.
- Listen with interest when he or she talks about when giving instructions or explaining a call and if asked, offer your own reaction or analysis and support.
- Be willing to share information about your own officiating successes and failures, if appropriate.
- Volunteer to receive an evening or early morning phone call in an emergency.
- Talk about timing, pacing and sequencing in athlete instructions, particularly concepts that are difficult for the mentee to master or grasp.
- Offer to demonstrate techniques or forms--live.
- Discuss several kinds of athlete instruction that work best with various levels of athletes; explain the rationale for using each of the various approaches.
- Brainstorm a wide range of solutions that might be fitting for common problems.
- Describe strategies you use to increase athletes' attention, motivation or participation.
- Talk about "brick walls" and "roadblocks" that particular groups or all athletes encounter, and share your strategies for helping them students move forward.
- Offer to prepare to videotape lessons or formal classes and offer to give feedback if he or she has any questions.

### **Suggestions for Sharing Expertise on Event or Meet Management**

- Take time to listen to concerns about meet or event management or operations.
- Ask what kinds of feedback on event management would be most useful.
- Discuss standards for venue management/Athlete decorum while on the field of play and share strategies for meeting those standards.
- Talk about the importance of organizational routines and describe the routines that contribute most to event management.
- Describe ways to let athletes know you understand their needs and concerns, and demonstrate ways to link that knowledge with long-range and short-term planning.
- Share examples of ways to enhance students' self-concepts.

- Talk about the most difficult management problems you have encountered and various ways to address them.
- Describe techniques you tried that didn't work and analyze why they didn't work.
- Talk about standards of meet wide conduct.
- Demonstrate a wide range of meet management techniques--either live or on videotapes.
- Offer to analyze (as a colleague and peer) the videotape of a new official's performance in the area of event management, and be willing to share your own videotapes.
- Share exemplary officiating books or workshop materials on event and meet management techniques.

### **Suggestions for Sharing Your Expertise on Evaluation**

- Listen to the mentee's concerns about evaluation and share ideas about the overall purposes of evaluation at the meet.
- Talk about the variety of ways (formal and informal, verbal and nonverbal) that one can evaluate the official's learning and attitudes in specific subjects or at specific age group levels.
- Share your own system for evaluation and record keeping, and describe other models that you know about.
- Collaborate on the development of tests or reviews that might be used in identical or similar events.
- Offer to share a collection of tests or other evaluation measures you have developed.
- Offer to give feedback on the mentee's evaluation instruments and their results.
- Review the standardized test program used by the association or national, and talk about its role in relation to curriculum planning and evaluation of student learning in the field.
- Describe various strategies to handle the expected paperwork associated with mentoring assignments.
- Explore various approaches for when and how to sharing evaluation results with officials, mentoring head and certification chair.
- Discuss and compare various techniques for evaluation of one's own mentoring effectiveness.
- Help the new official to prepare for the review and evaluation of his or her first year of officiating at the end of the season.

### **Communicating Support and Challenge**

The effectiveness of verbal and nonverbal communication is high on the list of important factors that contribute to the success of mentoring relationships--and of all professional and personal relationships. Mentors have a special responsibility for effective communication because they are a primary source of information, support and challenge to the recipients of their mentoring.

The Officials Committee depend so much upon effective communication to accomplish its mission that it needs to frequently provide training in communication skills for its National and Master level members. Such training may focus on the enhancement of specific communication skills or a wide variety of them.

The essence of training is communication: of knowledge, of skills, of values, of attitudes and of expectations. Thus, the quality of communication at and before meets affects all that happens in officiating and the achievement of their goals and objectives. Everyone associated with officiating including new officials, event heads, referees, mentors, meet administrators, athletes, the Officials Committee, and the National Committee depend upon the clear expression of goals, objectives and points of view in order to engage in any cooperative activity.

As mentors think about the importance of communicating support and challenge to recipients of their mentoring, it is helpful for them to review a checklist that focuses on the key features of effective communication. Such checklists are most meaningful when individuals make them up for themselves. An example of a communications checklist appears next.

## **COMMUNICATION CHECK LIST FOR MENTORS**

1. How do I perceive myself in the many roles a mentor plays?
2. How well do I understand the recipient's overall expectations for our mentoring relationship?
3. In general, is my communication with him or her effective, including verbal and nonverbal communication?
4. What is my objective in this specific conversation or message?
5. Does my delivery mode (face-to-face, phone, written communication) fit my purpose?
6. Am I too formal or informal for the purpose of this communication?
7. What assumptions have I made or shared in this communication?
8. What kind of response do I expect from the recipient?
9. Am I prepared for a very different kind of response?
10. Have I given him or her enough time to respond, to ask questions or to ask for clarification?
11. If I think I have been misunderstood, can I clarify and paraphrase?
12. Am I willing to set aside my own communication agenda to listen to his or hers at any time?
13. How should I react to his/her communication to further our mentoring relationship?

While the checklist above identifies a number of features of effective communication training at a general level, targeted communication training also is available.

Support can be communicated in many ways. Mentors find it helpful to make a list of the various kinds of support they are comfortable providing as they share their expertise. The examples below illustrate a few ways that mentors communicate support.

- A nod of the head, a smile, or a wink at a tense moment.

- A compliment, a pat on the back, or a hug after a challenge has been met.
- A coffee break or lunch together at a time when the mentee needs to talk.
- An opportunity to spend an evening together reviewing the results of a task or planning for the next one.
- An invitation to visit a clinic together, a map to a good bookstore across town, or a shared ride to some event.
- Information about ways to gain the support of key individuals.
- Suggestions for acquiring scarce resources or equipment.
- An invitation to a weekend barbecue or small get-together with other colleagues.

Mentors also need to offer their protégés challenges that stimulate professional growth and cause them to stretch. Challenges lead to the development of new levels of expertise. When the amount of challenge is well matched to the mentee's readiness for growth, the tasks become motivating. Challenges that are not matched well with the individual's level of development can be overwhelming and create feelings of being unable to cope. Then, rather than producing growth, the challenge may lead to frustration, panic or feelings of failure.

It becomes important then, for mentors to become sensitive to the growth needs of those to whom they mentor, and attempt to offer optimal challenges for their protégé's professional development. Some mentors develop mentoring plans to help maintain optional levels of challenge for the protégé. The primary function of a mentoring plan is to focus on the developmental nature of becoming a professional and to establish mileposts or markers which will guide and serve as reminders that the recipient is growing in knowledge and skill. Since the perceptions of both mentors and recipients alike change as mentoring evolves, mentoring plans help the observant mentor to keep one eye on the recipient's development and the other eye on his or her readiness for the next challenge.

## **VI: AVOIDING THE RISKS OF MENTORING**

Are there risks associated with mentoring? The answer is, "Relatively few," if risks are thought of as the lack of predictability and personal control over events that could harm us in some way. Fortunately the major risks associated with mentoring can be avoided or reduced through knowledge and planning.

### **Risk Awareness and Prevention**

What are the risks and how can they be avoided or reduced? Four of the most commonly mentioned risks--or fears of risks--are identified below and illustrated by examples of comments often made by mentors and would-be mentors. Brief descriptions are offered of the kinds of knowledge or actions that help to avoid such risks or to reduce fears of them.

### **Mismatch between mentor and recipient/protégé/mentee**

Mentors express this fear with statements like: "Our personal styles may clash. We may not be able to work together. I'm afraid I will overpower or threaten him. She has become too demanding and too dependent. Can he take honest, well-intentioned criticism?"

Knowledge/Action: Individuals who take time at the outset to become acquainted with one another's interests, shared values, professional goals and expectations greatly enhance the development of a strong foundation for a mentoring relationship, as pointed out earlier in III: Establishing Productive Mentoring Relationships. Such knowledge allows individuals to deal with major differences in expectations, to prevent unwelcome surprises later on, and to recognize those relatively rare instances where serious personal clashes are foreseeable and avoidable.

### **Threat to one's Officiating image**

This concern is expressed by statements like: "I may be misunderstood; he, she, or my colleagues may think I'm a know-it-all. If she fails to make the grade in spite of my mentoring, people may begin to wonder about my own competence. I could be responsible for his success or failure!"

Knowledge/Action: Individuals who are familiar with the multiple roles that mentors can play (see I: What Is a Mentor? and III: Establishing Productive Mentoring Relationships) avoid stereotyped perceptions of mentors and their protégés, and can help to dispel misconceptions about the degree of responsibility a mentor has for the success or failure of the recipient of the mentoring. It is always helpful to remember that many persons contribute to the development of any new or advancing official. Wise mentors encourage such broadly based support and avoid over-identifying with the success or failure of their mentee.

### **Failure as a mentor**

Mentors express this fear or concern with statements like, "I might get in over my head. I'm trying to help, but maybe I'm hindering her. What works for me may not work for anyone else. Should I let him make mistakes that can be avoided so that he can profit from them?"

Knowledge/Action: Knowledge of successful mentoring techniques contributes to the professional growth of both individuals in a mentoring relationship, and thus, decreases the likelihood of frustration, failure or fear of failure for either member. More than 50 mentoring techniques are suggested in V: Ways of Mentoring.

The development of a mentoring plan can increase the sense of personal control that both members of the relationship have or may need. Such plans can identify in a systematic way the frequency and times of regular meetings or get-togethers and the topics or issues to be covered. A mentoring plan helps to remind everyone concerned that becoming a good official is a developmental process. And at the end of a year, both members can look back at the plan and recognize the protégé's growth.

### **Competition or rivalry**

Fear of competition or rivalry is evident in statements like: "He may be more talented than I am--can I handle professional jealousy? I have shared my best secrets and

strategies with her and now she is surpassing me! How will his or her success affect my status or opportunities?"

Knowledge/Action: Competition or rivalry can be destructive to any mentoring relationship. Knowledge of the evolutionary nature of mentoring relationships helps to prepare everyone for changes in a relationship (See again III: Establishing Productive Mentoring Relationships). Occasionally a few mentoring relationships last for a professional lifetime; but more often mentoring relationships are of much shorter duration because of other changes in officiating careers and organizations. When the mentor's guidance no longer seems to be needed and the emerging or advancing official begins to demonstrate expert competence and knowledge, the wise mentor takes the lead in redefining the relationship. Such leadership generally leads to a mutually rewarding respect for one another, and the mentor can then take justifiable pride in his or her contribution to the professional development of another individual.

## VII: THE JOYS OF MENTORING

### **"My Most Rewarding Experience as a Mentor"**

Since childhood many of us have been reminded that: "It is better to give than to receive." And in many languages and cultures, the idea has been expressed that: "It is not what we give but what we share. For the gift without the giver is bare."

Both ideas capture an important aspect of mentoring: that many joys and benefits result from sharing one's expertise, one's time, and one's self. The most obvious of these joys come bounding in the form of appreciation that others express for mentoring assistance. A different kind of joy accrues when others value our expertise so much that they incorporate our ideas into their own thinking and behavior. And then quite unexpectedly still a third kind of joy emerges when, in the midst of sharing our expertise with others, we rediscover long-buried feelings of pride and accomplishment that were forgotten--feelings that occurred when we first mastered our craft for ourselves. As mentors we often learn new and different approaches as we prepare and share out expertise. These are just a few of the joys of mentoring.

When mentors were asked what their most rewarding experiences were as mentors, and whether they were glad they had served as mentors, they replied with statements like those that follow .

#### **As a mentor, what were your most rewarding experiences?**

- "Seeing her excitement and enthusiasm--watching her gain insights into concepts that are difficult for a student to learn."
- "His comments, his requests for assistance, and the fact that he returned week after week was incentive enough for me to prevail in the face of countless hours of my own preparation."

- "Helping a beginning official so that he decided to stay in the profession for a second year."
- "They (new officials) told me that I unknowingly role-modeled a lesson idea and event management techniques, and they voluntarily and successfully adapted these ideas."
- "Demonstrating the proper use of new equipment in an event, and hearing the comments and requests to teach them from other officials."
- "Watching him try out and expand the ideas that we planned together!"
- "The greatest reward was helping him to understand where the pitfalls are in the event and how to instruct the athletes and coworkers to avoid the problems."
- "Having her report how well the athletes responded to techniques I had shared with her."
- (And from a Master official who mentored to a new event head:) "I just watched her event last week. She used the techniques that we discussed for better time management. A feedback she received from one of the athletes was very positive. She is developing into a first-class event head!"
- "The overwhelming appreciation I receive! And watching them grow into colleagues and competent officials."
- "Getting her to realize and accept the idea of being a good referee is the art of communication: knowledge without necessarily communicating skills or the details of how to accomplish the mission."

## VIII: HOW TO ORGANIZE AND EVALUATE A MENTOR PROGRAM

This section is written for readers who have responsibility for mentor training. It includes practical ideas for organizing, implementing, and evaluating the effectiveness of mentor training programs.

**Organizing for Recruitment:** The first challenge facing many readers who are responsible for mentor training is the recruitment of a core of individuals who will consider becoming mentors. In thinking about their recruitment, it is helpful to recall the kinds of knowledge and skills that would-be mentors will want to know. A brief review of the Table of Contents in this handbook will provide a quick overview.

Basic information about what mentoring is (Section I) and how one decides whether he or she is cut out for mentoring (Section II) is important for recruiting people to be mentors. Likewise, references to the personal benefits or joys of mentoring (Section VII) and how to avoid the risks of mentoring (Section VI) may be useful for recruiting mentors. This information can be presented in a brochure, newsletter, announcement, or some other form such as in a meeting or at a special reception, depending upon organizational customs and the preferences of the recruiter.

**Organizing a Mentor Training Program:** Every organization will have its own reasons or purposes for establishing a mentor program. The agenda for a mentor training program should reflect those goals or purposes.

The program agenda shown below illustrates how one might organize a successful mentor training program around the four stages of development in mentoring relationships which were described earlier in Section III: Establishing Productive Mentor Relationships.

First you need a coordinator or program monitor. The following is a role definition for such a person.

*Pacific Association USATF*  
**New Official Mentoring Program**

**HEAD COORDINATOR**  
Job Description and Duties

1. Promote the PAUSTF New Official Mentoring Program.
2. Report to the Certification Chair.
3. Recruit Regional Coordinators, if necessary.
4. Recruit new officials using developed PA USATF strategies.
5. Receive from the Certification Chair and or Training Chair in a timely manner a list of all new officials as the Chairs become aware of those who wish to become new officials.
6. Coordinate with the Regional Coordinators the assignment of new officials with mentors.
7. Set up conference calls with regional coordinators in December prior to the USATF clinics and in April after the mentoring program has been underway.
8. Provide constructive criticism regarding the New Official Mentoring Program to the Certification Chair.
9. Receive from the Regional Coordinators the names of all new officials that are undergoing mentoring and the new officials' contact information.
10. Keep a master list of all new officials and their contact information.
11. Set up an email group list with Regional Mentors as one group, new officials as another group.
12. Set up a mail out system through the postal system for occasional mailings.

If their needs to be regional coordinators because of the size of the association then their role could be defined as follows:

*Pacific Association USATF*  
**New Official Mentoring Program**

**REGIONAL COORDINATOR**  
Job Description and Duties

1. Report to the Head Coordinator or Chair of the New Officials' Mentoring Program
2. Participate in two conference calls with other Regional Chairs and the Head Chair, one to be held in December, one in April.
3. Recruit new officials using developed PA USATF strategies.

4. Recruit mentors within your region or geographic area and orient each mentor to the expectations of the program. Obtain a signed agreement from the new mentor.
5. Obtain new agreements each year from experienced as well as new mentors.
6. Link new officials with mentors.
7. Periodically evaluate the success of each mentoring situation.
8. Develop and update a master list of mentors and new officials in your region and forward them to the Head Coordinator.
9. Provide constructive criticisms (ways to improve and strengthen) regarding the *New Official Mentoring Program* to the Head Coordinator.
10. Assist in the implementation of change in future mentoring programs.

Now that the management hierarchy has been established you can get on with the program itself.

## **MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM**

### **Orientation and Reception**

- Overview of the Mentor Program
- Purposes and benefits of the Mentor Program

### **Getting to Know One Another: Stage One**

- The importance of Mentor-Recipient pairs sharing interests, values and professional goals
- Multiple roles of mentors; self-concepts of mentors
- Role playing Mentor-Recipient pairs at Stage I

### **Developing Common Expectations In Mentor Relationships: Stage Two**

- Communicating and clarifying expectations
- Developing consensus or dealing with major differences in expectations of Mentors and Recipients
- Role playing Mentor-Recipient pairs at Stage 2

### **Ways of Mentoring: Stage Three**

- Sharing expertise
- Communicating support and challenge
- Role playing Mentor-Recipient pairs at Stage 3

### **Redefining the Relationship: Stage Four**

- The evolutionary nature of mentoring relationships
- Avoiding the risks of mentoring
- Enjoying the benefits of a mentoring relationship
- Role playing Mentor-Recipient pairs at Stage 4

### **Evaluation of The Mentor Training Program**

Next you need to define the role of the mentor and the methodology for mentor, mentee assignment. A possible role description for a mentor is:

*Pacific Association USATF*  
**New Official Mentoring Program**

## **Mentor Role and Expectations**

**Requirement: The mentor must be a certified official who has certification as a National or Masters Official. However, an Association level official with three years experience may also serve as a mentor. All mentors must be approved by the Head Chair and Certification Chair.**

**The mentor must be willing to:**

1. Recruit new officials and help them enroll and attend USATF clinics.
2. Volunteer to become the mentor for those officials that they recruit.
3. Call the new official after he/she completes the new officials' clinic to continue that connection that has been made to the PA.
4. Assist the new official in the selection of meets and the events within each meet that will accommodate their ability to travel, available time, and degree of comfort that they feel for the events and meets they will work.
5. Keep track of the new official's schedule and make a follow up call after those scheduled meets. Do so after every meet during their first season.
6. Call frequently (at least twice/month - minimally)
7. Make the new official feel that they can contact you at anytime. This can be accomplished by frequent calls to the new official, at the frequency indicated above, as well as stress to the new official that he/she is welcome to call the mentor whenever they need to do so.
8. Take time to assist the new official at meets at which you are both attending.
9. Encourage the new official to work many of the same meets you will be working.
10. Encourage ride sharing to the meets with the new official
11. Encourage the new officials to provide most of the dialogue during mentor/new official conversations.
12. Introduce the new official to other officials at every opportunity and attempt to make important social connections with those veteran officials.
13. Inform the new official the proper way to relate to the athletes during competition and other times outside of competition.
14. Prepare the new official on ways that they may settle protests, disagreements, requests and demands by the athletes and their coaches, and objectionable behaviors which may occur at an event they work.
15. Reinforce the mental preparation of the new official in regard to their own personal safety during meets as well as the safety of athletes, coaches, and other people who may be involved in the meet.
16. Stress the importance of preparing oneself from the elements of heat, sun, cold weather, and work schedule.
17. Assist in acquiring the needed rulebooks, resource books, and other track and field publications.
18. Assist with obtaining the proper equipment for events the new official will work which may include clipboard devices, writing instruments, chalk, rubber bands, tape measures, colored markers, levels, flags, announcing equipment, and etc.

19. Assist in obtaining the proper uniform dress for meets including the shirts, badges, pants, shoes, socks, hats, outerwear, and etc.
20. Facilitate the understanding of the rules as they apply to each event and each level of competition as the new official has questions that they cannot answer. In the event that you may not have the answer, connect them with other veteran officials with knowledge you may not possess. Have the veteran official call the new official and assist them and thereby increase the number of contacts for the new official.
21. Help determine the events that the new official will eventually specialize by encouraging the new official to observe or work as many differing events as possible during the season.
22. Reinforce their experiences with constructive criticisms and be sure to praise their work often.
23. Assist them in understanding the requirements that they will need to fulfill to reach advanced officiating certification.
24. Provide contact information for all new officials they are mentoring to the regional coordinators.
25. Report developmental progress of the new officials to the regional coordinators on a monthly basis.
26. Inform them that the service they receive by way of the mentor program will be evaluated at the end of the year and to be thinking of ways that the program could be improved to help new officials who join the Pacific Association in the future.

### Mentor Assignment Form

I accept the responsibility of being a mentor in the Pacific Association New Official Mentoring Program, keeping in mind the expectations stated above in training the following the new official(s) below:

#### NEW OFFICAL(S)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (H) : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (H): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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#### PAUSTF MENTOR

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (H): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

PAUSATF Mentor (signature): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVAL:**

PA USATF Certification Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PA Head Mentor Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Implementation: Structure to Keep a Mentor Program Going

Once the initial mentor training has been completed, people are ready to begin mentoring. But unless some structure is created which guides the course of events and which provides opportunities for mentors as well as their mentees (either together or separately) to share and review their progress, it is easy for mentor programs to lose momentum or to suffer from a lack of direction or communication.

Someone in the organization needs to be responsible for:

- Moving the mentor program forward in a positive direction
- Providing opportunities for mentors to share their experiences and their views about the effectiveness of the mentor program
- Providing opportunities for recipients of mentoring to share their views about the effectiveness of the mentoring program
- Addressing any problems or unmet needs that emerge during the course of the year.

Any of a number of structures will work. In some organizations, informal but regular social get-togethers over lunch best enhance the exchange of information that is necessary between the person responsible for the mentor program and the participants in the program. Other organizations may choose to hold more formal quarterly or monthly meetings to accomplish this same purpose. The meeting structure may include brief reports which are written or given orally by mentors to summarize their progress, to identify any special problems or needs they have, or to account for the resources they have directed toward mentoring.

The structure shown below illustrates how a mentor program might create forward motion by using a timeline that is tied to the meet calendar year. These regular exchanges of information are sometimes called formative evaluation.

### TIMELINE FOR A MENTOR PROGRAM

	Date
1. Mentors are recruited and selected.	date _____
The Mentor Training program is offered.	date _____
Mentors develop first draft of personal plan for mentoring.	date _____
2. Welcome/orientation for New Officials and Mentors.	date _____
Mentors are matched with New Officials.	date _____
Evaluation of Mentor Training.	date _____
3. Mentor and New Officials share expectations, develop 6-week plan and schedule regular meetings or phone calls	date _____
Mentors begin Portfolios to track mentor activities.	date _____
4. Instruction begins. Mentors support New Officials and meet with them regularly to share information, to compare expectations, and to revise plans to meet New Official's needs. Mentors add to Portfolio.	date _____
5. End of first 6-week period, Mentors review their progress as	

mentors, identify new challenges, and offer support to New Officials. Mentors meet to share experiences and Portfolios.

date \_\_\_\_\_

6. End of half of Meet Season, all Mentor-New Official pairs meet to share progress, identify needs, and revise plans for next half of season, Midpoint evaluation of Mentor Program.

date \_\_\_\_\_

7. Continue Steps 3-6 through second half of season. Final evaluation of Mentor Program: Mentor and New Official Self-Assessment, past-evaluation of Mentor Training, review of Mentor Portfolios.

date \_\_\_\_\_

## Evaluation of Mentor Programs and Final Reports

Typically, the person in charge of the mentor program is responsible for mentor training, program implementation, and evaluation. This individual generally is expected to prepare a final report which summarizes the results of the mentor program and makes recommendations regarding future mentor programs. The Officials chair and Certification Chair and other executive board members may review the final report and make decisions or recommendations regarding the program.

To evaluate the effectiveness of a mentoring program, it is important to assemble background information which describes the program and its participants, and to gather feedback from all who have participated in the program. Background information might include a description of:

- Participants (number and professional standing)
- Overview of the training and other services provided
- A timeline and highlights of events throughout the program's duration
- The resources (time, fixed costs, unexpected costs, etc. ) required to operate the program

Gathering feedback from participants in the program is worth considerable thought so that participants feel they have had the opportunity to fully share their views about their participation and about the effectiveness and values of the program. For example, the evaluator may design a formal survey instrument or checklist which participants are expected to complete and return (perhaps but not necessarily anonymously); or the evaluator may informally ask participants to share their views about the effectiveness of the mentor program at a final meeting and suggest ways to improve it. Obviously, feedback gathered over the course of the program provides more information than a single survey at the end of the program.

However feedback is gathered, the evaluator is then expected to prepare a written report which summarizes the feedback, compares the feedback with his or her own expectations--given the resources and constraints that pertained, to identify problems or concerns about the program, and make recommendations or decisions regarding the continuation of the program.

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