People
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FOR THE COMMANDER

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Mentoring

A process area at Maturity Level 4: Predictable

Purpose
    The purpose of Mentoring is to transfer the lessons of greater experience in a workforce competency to improve the capability of other individuals or workgroups.

Description
    The organization develops objectives for its mentoring activities. Appropriate types of mentoring relationships are designed for accomplishing different mentoring objectives. Criteria are developed for selecting mentors and those chosen are trained for their assignments. Individuals or workgroups being mentored are provided orientation on how they can best take advantage of a mentoring relationship. Criteria are developed for assigning mentors to individuals or workgroups. The mentor and the individual or workgroup being mentored establish agreements on how their relationship will be conducted. Mentors meet periodically and occasionally evaluate whether they are achieving their objectives. Advice is available to improve the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship. Mentoring activities are evaluated against their objectives to identify needed improvements.

At the Defined Level, mentoring and coaching is informal, and the knowledge and skills imparted by the mentor are defined more by their experience and judgement than by a documented combination of knowledge, skills, and process abilities to be imparted. The purposes for mentoring were to support competency development, but the specific content to be imparted was not defined. At the Predictable Level, mentoring and coaching activities are organized around, and guided by, a defined content of the knowledge, skills, and process abilities to be imparted. This content is defined to a level sufficient for guiding mentors and coaches to achieve common and consistent competency development results with individuals or workgroups. At Maturity Level 4, mentoring or coaching activities are organized to make use of and to deploy competency-based assets. Thus, mentoring becomes a formal means of transferring a defined content of the knowledge, skills, and process abilities, typically contained in competency-based assets, to individuals

and groups throughout the organization as an advanced form of competency development.

Goals

Goal 1   **Mentoring programs are established and maintained to accomplish defined objectives.**

Goal 2   **Mentors provide guidance and support to individuals or workgroups.**

Goal 3   **Mentoring practices are institutionalized to ensure they are performed as defined organizational processes.**

Commitment to Perform

Commitment 1   **The organization establishes and maintains a documented policy for conducting Mentoring activities.**

Issues typically addressed in the policy include:

1. Mentoring activities serve the business objectives and stated values of the organization.

2. Mentoring activities are encouraged but not imposed on individuals.

3. Mentoring activities are included in the strategic workforce plans of the organization.

4. Mentoring activities are instituted, where appropriate, to provide support to individuals or workgroups.

5. Documented procedures are developed and used to guide mentoring activities. These procedures typically specify:

   ❏ requirements for the selection, training, and assignment of mentors;

   ❏ conditions under which mentoring relationships may be established, changed, or terminated; and

   ❏ requirements for periodic evaluation of mentoring activities to ensure their effectiveness and to identify improvements.

6. Mentoring practices and activities comply with relevant laws, regulations, and organizational policies.

Commitment 2 **An organizational role(s) is assigned responsibility for coordinating Mentoring activities across the organization.**

The role(s) coordinates and helps to:

1. advise on how to organize and conduct mentoring activities,

2. communicate general information about mentoring activities,

3. conduct training or orientation sessions for mentors and individuals or workgroups,

4. advise and counsel mentors and individuals or workgroups during their mentoring relationships, and

5. provide feedback on the progress of mentoring activities to executive management.

Ability to Perform

Ability 1   **Within each unit, an individual(s) is assigned responsibility and authority for ensuring that members of the unit participate in Mentoring activities, as appropriate.**

Ability 2   **Adequate resources are provided for performing Mentoring activities.**

1. Experienced individuals are made available to act as mentors.

2. Resources to support mentoring activities are made available.

> Examples of resources needed to support the mentoring program include the following:
>
> - Training for mentors
> - Orientation for individuals or workgroups to be mentored
> - Availability of an advisor for mentors, individuals, or workgroups
> - Support for evaluation of the mentoring program

3. Time is made available for mentors and individuals or workgroups to engage in mentoring activities.

Ability 3   **Individuals selected to act as mentors develop the knowledge, skills, and process abilities needed in relevant mentoring objectives, techniques, and skills to perform their responsibilities.**

1. Mentors receive preparation in techniques and skills to accomplish their mentoring objectives.

    > Examples of techniques and skills in which mentors are trained include the following:
    >
    > - How to accomplish mentoring program objectives
    > - How to conduct a mentoring relationship
    > - Interviewing and active listening
    > - Providing guidance and advice
    > - Providing a role model
    > - Problem solving
    > - Performance improvement methods
    > - Principles of knowledge and skill development
    > - Career opportunities and development methods
    > - Advising workgroups
    > - Team building
    > - Methods for integration with the organizational culture
    > - Roles to be fulfilled
    > - How to evaluate mentoring success

2. For mentoring activities focused on competency development, mentors receive preparation for imparting documented knowledge, skills and process abilities using defined mentoring processes.

3. Guidance is made available to mentors and those they mentor on how to improve their mentoring relationship.

Examples of guidance provided on mentoring relationships include the following:

- How to initiate the relationship
- When and how frequently to have meetings
- Potential topics to be discussed
- How to determine the mentoring needs of those being mentored
- Methods for pursuing mentoring objectives
- How to track progress in the mentoring relationship
- How to handle job or career problems
- How to overcome problems in the mentoring relationship

4. An advisor is available to mentors or coaches to discuss how to make mentoring relationships more effective.

Ability 4   **Affected individuals receive appropriate orientation in Mentoring practices.**

1. Individuals or workgroups to be mentored receive orientation in the mentoring relationship.

Those to be mentored can include the following:

- Individuals
- Groups of individuals
- Workgroups

Examples of topics covered in orientation regarding mentoring activities include the following:

- Objectives of the mentoring relationship
- Attributes of an effective mentoring relationship
- Problem-solving skills
- Expectations for mentoring relationships
- Roles to be fulfilled in mentoring
- How to handle problems or inefficiencies in the mentoring relationship

2. When appropriate, orientation is provided to other individuals affected by mentoring activities.

> Orientation to the mentoring program is typically focused on the individual or workgroup being mentored. Other orientation activities may include the following:
>
> - A combined session for mentors and individuals or workgroups being mentored
> - An orientation session for managers of those being mentored to make them familiar with the mentoring process and encourage their co-operation with the mentoring program

Ability 5   **The practices and procedures for performing Mentoring are defined and documented.**

1. Practices and procedures are defined and documented at the organizational or unit levels, as appropriate.

2. Guidelines for tailoring the practices and procedures for use in different circumstances are documented and made available, as necessary.

3. The individual(s) assigned responsibility for coordinating Mentoring activities across the organization ensures that defined practices and procedures are:

   ❏ maintained under version control,

   ❏ disseminated through appropriate media,

   ❏ interpreted appropriately for different situations, and

   ❏ updated through orderly methods.

4. Experiences, lessons learned, measurement results, and improvement information derived from planning and performing Mentoring practices are captured to support the future use and improvement of the organization's practices.

Practices Performed

Practice 1   **Opportunities for using the experience of the workforce to improve performance or achieve other organizational objectives are identified.**

1. Potential opportunities for mentoring activities are identified.

> Examples of sources through which potential opportunities for mentoring might be identified include the following:
>
> - Periodic review by competency ownership teams of opportunities to use mentoring in competency development activities
> - Periodic review by responsible individuals of mechanisms for more rapidly transferring knowledge across the organization
> - Recommendations for mentoring or requests for mentors from the workforce
> - Identified needs for addressing knowledge shortfalls in segments of the workforce
> - Periodic organizational assessment of opportunities by a knowledgeable person
> - Support mechanism for a new program, technology, or change in some segments of the organization

2. Opportunities to benefit from mentoring are evaluated and prioritized.

> Mentoring programs can be evaluated at the organizational or unit level, or within ownership teams for workforce competencies. The evaluation and prioritization would ordinarily be performed by the entity with the authority and budget to initiate a specific type of mentoring program.

3. Mentoring programs are initiated based on relevant criteria, such as budget or availability of qualified mentors.

Practice 2 **The objectives and structure of each mentoring program are defined.**

1. Each mentoring program addresses specific competencies, positions, individuals, or workgroups within the organization that can be involved in its mentoring activities.

2. Each mentoring program establishes a set of objectives that its mentoring activities are to accomplish.

> Examples of objectives for mentoring activities include providing:
>
> - Orientation and adjustment to the organization
> - Support for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and process abilities
> - Support for the development of workforce competencies
> - Preparation of specific management or executive skills
> - Support to individuals or workgroups
> - Support for sharing the knowledge, experience, and artifacts that result from performing competency-based processes with others who might benefit from them
> - One-on-one personal attention
> - Support for attaining improved workgroup effectiveness
> - Workgroup development
> - Performance improvement guidance and support
> - Career advice and development
> - Counseling and advice concerning problems

3. Each mentoring program defines a mentoring process to a level of detail sufficient to ensure that those who receive mentoring develop the appropriate level of competency.

> At the Defined Level, mentors and those they mentor are allowed to develop their relationships according to what they believe would be most effective. However, at the Predictable Level, the process is made sufficiently formal to ensure that mentors are consistent in the capabilities imparted to those being mentored.

❏ Procedures for mentoring activities are tailored to each set of objectives.

> Different types of mentoring relationships may be defined for different sets of objectives. For instance, mentoring activities may differ by position or tenure in the organization such as those designed for new employees versus those designed for new executives.

> Examples of elements that could be defined for each type of mentoring relationship include the following:
>
> - The roles and responsibilities of the mentor and the individual or workgroup
> - How mentors are selected and trained
> - How individuals or workgroups receive orientation on mentoring
> - How mentoring relationships are established
> - How objectives of the relationship are accomplished
> - How the mentoring relationship is monitored for effectiveness
> - How the mentoring relationship is evaluated
> - The expected duration of the mentoring relationship

❏ Roles are defined for mentors to fulfill.

> Examples of roles that mentors might fulfill include the following:
>
> - Role model
> - Personal or workgroup advisor
> - Career counselor or sponsor
> - Knowledge and skill developer
> - Performance advisor
> - Problem solver
> - Expert

4. The knowledge, skills, and process abilities that are imparted through mentoring are:

❏ documented as competency-based assets,

> Refer to Practice 10 of the Competency-Based Assets process area for information regarding the use of mentoring or coaching activities to deploy competency-based assets.

❏ drawn from or based on the content of documented workforce competency descriptions,

❏ organized for use according to levels of capability represented in graduated career opportunities,

❏ complete enough to ensure that those being mentored have the competency required to perform at the intended level,

❏ described at a level of detail sufficient to create a common understanding among mentors or coaches of the specific knowledge, skills, and process abilities to be imparted at different points in the mentoring relationship,

❏ sufficiently thorough to ensure that any individual or workgroup who has worked with a mentor or coach has achieved a minimum capability for performing competency-based processes, and

❏ reviewed and updated, as necessary.

5. Alternative structures for providing the types of benefits achieved through mentoring are considered when appropriate.

> Examples of alternate approaches to mentoring include the following:
>
> - Mentoring circles
> - Local professional groups
> - A process group or improvement group
> - Other support groups or networks, such as a local software process improvement network (SPIN) group

6. Feedback on each mentoring program is collected by a responsible individual(s) to support evaluation of mentoring activities.

> Examples of feedback data used to evaluate mentoring programs include the following:
>
> - Feedback received from mentors or those being mentored
> - The evaluation of mentoring activities by those being mentored
> - Reports from advisors who are available to support mentors or coaches
> - Results of meetings conducted from time to time to allow mentors, individuals, or workgroups to express concerns or improvements that should be considered in improving the mentoring programs or mentoring relationships
> - Measurements regarding the status, performance, and effectiveness of mentoring activities

7. Each mentoring program is periodically evaluated to ensure that it is achieving its set of objectives and revised or terminated, when necessitated by feedback on the mentoring program, levels of workforce capability, or changes in business strategy or conditions, to improve the value of the mentoring performed.

Practice 3   **Each mentoring program is communicated to affected individuals and workgroups.**

> Information about each mentoring program to be communicated may include the following:
>
> - Program objectives and structure
> - The positions, individuals, or workgroups covered in the program
> - Procedures for volunteering to act as a mentor
> - Procedures for being included as an individual or workgroup receiving mentoring
> - Orientation or training requirements

1. Methods are selected to invite participation in the mentoring program based on the objectives established for the mentoring program.

   > Examples of methods that could be used to invite participation in the mentoring program range from active personal solicitation to passive announcements of the program's availability.

2. Individuals or workgroups are invited to participate in the mentoring program.

3. A responsible individual is available to answer questions about each mentoring program.

Practice 4   **Mentors are selected and matched with individuals or workgroups to be mentored.**

1. Criteria are defined for selecting mentors.

   > Examples of criteria for selecting mentors include the following:
   >
   > - Commitment to developing knowledge, skills, and process abilities in others
   > - Commitment to developing and guiding others
   > - Interpersonal and communication skills, such as the ability to listen,   trustworthiness, and objectivity
   > - Ability to provide a successful role model
   > - Experience required to mentor various competencies, positions, individuals, or workgroups
   > - Knowledge required to mentor various competencies, positions, individuals, or workgroups
   > - Business and organizational judgment
   > - Availability requirements
   > - Ability to assess development or career needs
   > - Ability to provide guidance on performance or career enhancement
   > - Ability to provide personal support
   > - Ability to work with workgroups
   > - Commitment to initial and ongoing mentor training

2. Candidates who have applied for mentoring assignments are evaluated against the criteria, and those who are qualified are selected to act as mentors.

3. Selected mentors are prepared to perform their mentoring responsibilities.

> Refer to Ability 3 of this process area for information regarding preparation of mentors.

4. Selected mentors are assigned to individuals or workgroups, based on defined criteria for:

❏ maintaining organizational or managerial distance between the mentor and the individual or workgroup to be mentored,

❏ matching mentors with individuals or workgroups,

> Examples of criteria for matching mentors with individuals or workgroups include the following:
>
> - Task, position, or career experiences
> - Knowledge and skill needs of the individual or workgroup to be mentored
> - Personal development needs of the individual to be mentored
> - Workgroup or team development needs
> - Common backgrounds
> - Career aspirations of the individual or workgroup to be mentored
> - Ability to match schedules for meetings
> - Personalities or interests
> - Level of mentoring involvement
> - Exposure to the breadth of the organization
> - Geographical considerations

❏ ensuring successful transfer of competency-based assets to the individual or workgroup being mentored,

> Refer to the Competency-Based Assets process area for information regarding the use of competency-based assets.

❏ handling requests for specific mentoring assignments, and

❏ having the necessary preparation in relevant mentoring objectives, techniques, and skills.

Practice 5   **Mentors and those they mentor establish a mentoring relationship.**

1. Both mentors and those they mentor receive appropriate training or orientation before establishing their mentoring relationship.

2. During their initial meetings, mentors and the individual or workgroup establish the basic agreements on which their relationship will develop.

> Examples of issues that they should reach agreement on include the following:
>
> - What they both expect to achieve from the mentoring relationship
> - Whether they will meet on a periodic or event-driven basis
> - Whether they will build and track a plan for their mentoring activities
> - A schedule for their meetings
> - Expected duration of the mentoring relationship
> - Specific exit criteria, related to the achievement of specific objectives for the mentoring relationship
> - How they will evaluate their progress
> - How they will conduct their meetings
> - How they will communicate between meetings

3. Mentors and the individual or workgroup determine the specific objectives to be accomplished through the mentoring relationship.

4. If competency development is a focus of the mentoring relationship, they evaluate and agree on what knowledge, skills, and process abilities the individual or workgroup needs to develop

5. When establishing a relationship where competency development is an objective, mentors or coaches arrange their responsibilities to ensure that the documented knowledge, skills, and process abilities are:

❏ learned sufficiently to allow those being mentored to perform competency-based activities at the intended level of capability,

❏ imparted on a timely schedule, and

❏ demonstrated in performing business activities.

6. The mentor provides feedback and guidance to those they mentor in a timely manner.

7. The mentor and those they mentor continually discuss the job performance or behavior of the individual or workgroup, and plan for future development needs.

Examples of issues that might be handled during mentoring sessions include the following:

- Evaluation of current performance and behaviors
- Use of time
- Setting priorities
- Self management
- Interpersonal style and skills
- Replaying the handling of situations or the making of decisions
- Identifying strengths and areas needing development
- Analyzing barriers to job performance or career growth
- Identifying needed changes in attitude or style
- Analyzing the processes, resources, and operations of the organization relevant to the individual or workgroup being mentored
- Analyzing career options and needed skills
- Identifying actions and plans to support development needs

Practice 6   **Mentors assist individuals or workgroups in developing capability in workforce competencies.**

1. Mentors maintain awareness of developments in the workforce competencies relevant to the individuals or workgroups they mentor.

2. Mentors evaluate gaps between the current capability and the capability levels established in the mentoring objectives of the individuals or workgroups they mentor.

3. Mentors assist individuals or workgroups in improving their capability relative to their:

   ❏ mentoring objectives,

   ❏ individual development objectives, if appropriate, and

❏ workgroup development objectives, if appropriate.

4. Mentors assist individuals or workgroups in adopting and improving their capability in using competency-based processes.

> An example of a mentor assisting a workgroup in adopting a competency-based process would be the use of a TSP® Launch Coach to help a software team initiate a project using the software development processes incorporated in the Team Software Process® [Humphrey 00]. This example of mentoring involves a person who has been certified by an external entity (the Software Engineering Institute at Carnegie Mellon University authorizes TSP Launch Coaches) to assist individuals or workgroups in developing or improving their capability in specific competency-based processes.

5. Mentors provide feedback to those they mentor on their capability and rate of development in workforce competencies and other skills relevant to their mentoring objectives.

6. Mentors use competency-based assets in conducting their mentoring activities.

7. Mentors assist those they mentor in learning how to leverage or benefit from competency-based assets in performing their business activities.

8. When appropriate, mentors can assist individuals or workgroups in using and interpreting data during quantitative management activities.

> Mentors are especially valuable to individuals or workgroups who are attempting to manage their competency-based processes quantitatively. The concept of mentor used in the People CMM is broad, and one form of mentor would be a Six Sigma Blackbelt or similarly qualified expert in quantitative process analysis and improvement who assists individuals or workgroups in analyzing and improving their operating processes. Refer to the Quantitative Performance Management process area for information regarding quantitative management practices.

Practice 7   **Mentoring relationships are reviewed to ensure that they satisfy their intended objectives.**

1. The mentor and those they mentor review the progress they are making toward their agreed-upon objectives on a periodic or event-driven basis.

> Examples of reasons for conducting this review could include the following:
>
> - Normal period for review, as established in the basic agreements on the mentoring relationship that were established between the mentor and those they mentor
> - A change in the competency of the those being mentored
> - Change in work assignments that cause mentoring to be difficult
> - Problems in the mentoring relationship
> - Attainment of the goals of the mentoring relationship
> - Assigning a new mentor to the individual or workgroup being mentored

2. When problems with mentoring relationships are identified, corrective action is taken to resolve the problem.

> Examples of corrective actions include the following:
>
> - Reestablishing the basis for the specific mentoring relationship
> - Planning more effective meetings or actions
> - Getting additional advice or training on conducting an effective mentoring relationship
> - Assigning a new mentor to the individual or workgroup

3. The mentor and individual or workgroup can agree to discontinue their mentoring relationship at any time.

Practice 8   **Mentors support the development and improvement of competency-based assets.**

   1. Mentors identify opportunities to capture lessons from their mentoring activities that can be incorporated into developing or improving competency-based assets.

> Examples of contributions that mentors can make to developing or improving competency-based assets include additions or improvements to the following:
>
> - competency-based processes
> - competency development materials or methods
> - lessons learned or other information in a knowledge repository
> - measures of competency-based processes
> - any competency-based asset(s) relevant to a workforce competency

   2. Mentors contribute to the development or improvement of competency-based assets through mechanisms that are appropriate for the specific type of asset.

> Refer to Practices 4, 5, and 6 of the Competency-Based Assets process area for information regarding the development and maintenance of competency-based assets.

Practice 9   **Mentors participate in performance management and related workforce activities, as appropriate.**

   1. Mentors hold continuing discussions with the individuals or workgroups they coach on the performance of their work.

   2. For the individuals or workgroups they mentor, mentors may provide input for:
      ❏ formal performance feedback,
      ❏ training and development needs,
      ❏ personal development plans,
      ❏ performance improvement plans,
      ❏ workgroup staffing and composition,

    ❏   decisions regarding adjustments to compensation, or

    ❏   decisions regarding promotion or career advancement.

Practice 10   **The organization's workforce practices support mentoring activities, as needed.**

1.   Workforce practices are adjusted, as necessary, to achieve the objectives of the organization's mentoring programs.

> Examples of areas where workforce practices may need to be adjusted to support mentoring activities include the following:
>
> - Performance management
> - Training and development
> - Recognition and rewards
> - Compensation
> - Competency analysis and development
> - Career development
> - Work environment
> - Workgroup development and role definitions
> - Quantitative performance management
> - Organizational capability management

2.   Objectives of the mentoring relationship are confidential and should not be revealed without the agreement of the individual.

3.   Objectives and progress in their mentoring relationships are not used in performing any workforce activities without the agreement of the individuals affected.

4. Mentors are recognized for successful mentoring activities.

> Examples of recognition for successful mentors include the following:
>
> - Awards
> - Public recognition in meetings or newsletters
> - Privileges
> - Financial considerations
> - Acknowledgment for success in mentoring-related performance or career objectives

Measurement and Analysis

Measurement 1   **Measurements are made and used to determine the status and performance of Mentoring activities.**

> Examples of measurements include the following:
>
> - The number of mentoring relationships established
> - The rate at which candidates apply to become mentors
> - The rate at which new mentors are trained and assigned
> - The efficiency with which new mentoring relationships are established
> - The frequency with which mentors and those they mentor interact
> - The evaluation of mentoring activities by those being mentored
> - The number of problems identified and improvements made in mentoring relationships

Measurement 2	**Measurements are made and used to determine the effectiveness of Mentoring activities.**

> Examples of measurements to determine the effectiveness of Mentoring activities include the following:
>
> - The growth of workforce competencies in individuals or workgroups being mentored
> - The ability of individuals or workgroups being mentored to use the resources of the organization
> - The performance of individuals or workgroups being mentored on their tasks
> - The career development of individuals being mentored
> - The alignment of individual and workgroup motivations with the objectives of the organization

Verifying Implementation

Verification 1	**A responsible individual(s) verifies that Mentoring activities are conducted according to the organization's documented policies, practices, procedures, and, where appropriate, plans; and addresses noncompliance.**

These reviews verify that:

1. Mentoring activities comply with the organization's policies and stated values.

2. Mentoring activities comply with relevant laws and regulations.

3. Mentoring activities are performed according to the organization's documented practices and procedures.

4. Noncompliance issues are handled appropriately.

Verification 2	**Executive management periodically reviews Mentoring activities, status, and results; and resolves issues.**

These reviews verify:

1. The appropriateness of Mentoring activities.

2. Progress in performing Mentoring activities.

3. Results from reviews of Mentoring practices and activities.

> Refer to Verification 1 for practices regarding reviews of Mentoring
> activities to ensure adherence to the following:
>
> - Relevant laws and regulations
> - Organizational policies, practices, and procedures

4. Status of resolution of noncompliance issues.

5. Trends related to Mentoring.