



Mentor Handbook



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A Mentoring Program for California State Parks (CSP) Employees

The goal of this mentoring program is to provide guidance to the California State Park (CSP) employees. Your mentoring efforts impact the important work of all of the various permanent classifications in the Department and contribute to improvements within the organization. Thank you for volunteering your time and energy to this objective.

Mentoring for our CSP employees will help in multitude of ways. At a basic level, the mentor pairing provides support and guidance to the interested employees and increases job performance and promotes the following:

- Enhance Skill Development
- Manage change, time, and stress
- Motivation
- Provide feedback
- Learn the workplace culture
- Networking
- Think and acting strategically
- Career development and more

The Mentorship Program benefits CSP in several ways, including:

- Building an effective and motivated workforce
- Supporting professional growth, leadership ability, and performance standards
- Increasing understanding of supervisory and managerial expectations and deliverables
- Encouraging employees to share and retain institutional knowledge
- Improving communication in Divisions and Work Groups; and
- Facilitating a stronger network and sense of community

To this end, a panel of fellow CSP employees will pair mentor to mentee to create the best possible match that will help in establishing goals. You will be provided with structure and materials (tools, timelines and schedules, materials, and ideas) to support your commitment and effort as mentors.

This handbook describes the program's structure, implementation details, and helpful tips to create a successful mentor-mentee relationship. Your mentee also has a handbook written from the perspective of their role.

Why Mentoring?

By participating in the CSP Mentorship Program, you will have the opportunity to learn more about the CSP. You will strengthen relationships with coworkers, communicate your knowledge of the Department, and guide mentees to develop best practices that help meet CSP organizational goals. There are numerous ways you, as a mentor, can benefit from this mentorship.

Being a Mentor

Being a Mentor can enrich your work experience in many ways, including:

- Recognizing, and be recognized for your achievements
- Strengthening your leadership skills
- Increases awareness of available talent throughout the organization
- Reconnecting with meaningful prior knowledge as you share stories with others
- Engaging in practices that will increase your ability to give constructive feedback
- Building strong bonds with a coworker and broaden your network
- Reflecting on your career and refine your own career goals
- Exposing another employee to things that interest and excite you

This program relies on experienced CPS employees becoming devoted mentors willing to spend a portion of their time to help enrich another employee's career experience. Being a mentor is a great opportunity to make a difference in the organization and to impact the potential of another employee. Being a mentor doesn't just benefit others; it can benefit you as well!



How does it work?

The CSP Mentorship Program is designed to provide guidance to those interested employees to assist in their career development. As a mentor, you are matched with a mentee so that you can share your knowledge and experience to help them to meet mutually planned goals and objectives.

Mentors will assist the mentee in creating an Action Plan to help meet their career objectives. Additionally, there is room for customization in a variety of subject areas, including personal growth and development as determined by the quality of the conversations between mentors and mentees. Resources and templates have been created and assembled to assist with goal setting, with guides on constructive feedback, and other suggested topics for the mentor/mentee pairing. The links to the resources and templates are listed in the appendix section at the end of the handbook.

Once a match is made, the mentoring relationship begins. Take the time to discuss needs and potential solutions, and to calendar goals, objectives, and assignments to help grow the shared commitment. The relationship develops as both parties commit to agreements that are purposeful, action oriented, and produce an intended set of results. Intended results are often discovered and learned through the mentor's willingness to coach the mentee to take risks and to adapt to changes in progress. This program can assist your mentee to build self-regulated learning practices based on shared experience, expertise, and exposure to the mentor's best practices.

Establishing the Mentoring Relationship

At the first meeting, mentors and mentees discuss expectations for their mentoring relationships. A frank discussion about what each party expects from the relationship, including any limitations, is the single most important factor in making the relationship a success.

Mentor/mentee pairs commit to six months of working together that include at least two regularly scheduled meetings per month. If possible, meeting weekly is ideal. Meetings may be in-person, by phone or by videoconferencing. Mentor and mentee pairs have the flexibility to design their meetings in the way that best fits their needs, with the most important goal being to create a consistent mentoring practice.

Through this structure mentors will work with an assigned mentee to employ best practices to meet the challenges and goals set for the duration of the mentor/mentee relationship.

The high-level process for the mentor/mentee relationship is as follows:

1. Mentor matched with mentee
2. Share contact information, best times to reach
3. Utilize the CSP mentorship website for helpful resources
4. Calendar flexible agreements to meet for the term of the Mentoring Program
5. Develop a mentor/mentee action plan
6. Meet regularly; discuss progress, problem-solve, and celebrate successes
7. Complete a Post-Assessment Supervisory Competency Assessment
8. Hold a final meeting to reflect on what was learned and achieved during the mentorship, thank one another, and create closure
9. End Mentoring relationship

Possible Topics

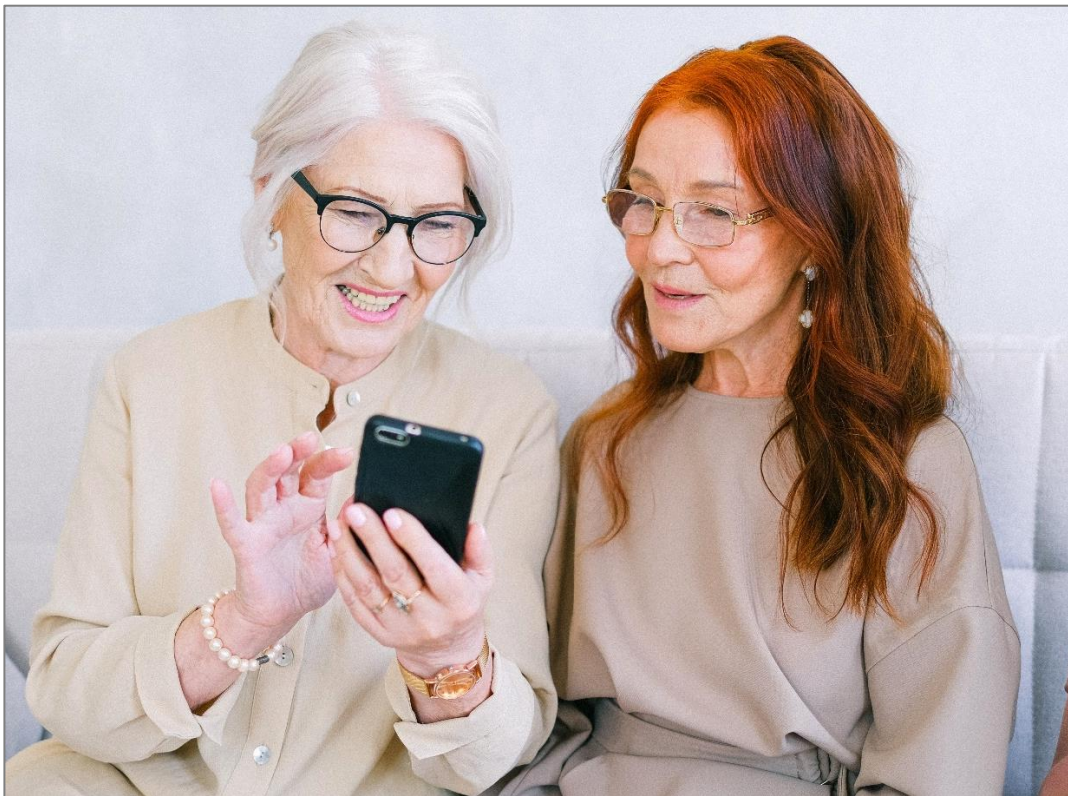
Possible topics mentors/ mentees may consider discussing over the course of the relationship include:

- Employee Performance Metrics
- Guidance on establishing expectations and responsibilities of employees
- Documenting employee performance throughout the year
- Holding an ADP or Probationary report meeting with employees
- Employee Attitude
- Effective communication within the organization
- Interpersonal skills that are important in their role that could lead to advancement
- Obstacles and barriers the mentor has had to overcome in working with employees
- How to deal with stress, tension and burn-out
- Employee Development Capacity
- Examples of employee issues the mentor has effectively resolved
- Opportunities for special training or education in a particular area
- Employee Problem Resolutions
- Understanding progressive discipline
- Dealing with problem employees
- Supervisor Stepping Stones (if applicable)
- Career development options and upward mobility
- Skills the mentor has learned in performance management
- Advice on how the mentee might acquire those performance management skills
- Providing effective feedback

- Best practices in goal-setting
- Holding effective team meetings
- Opportunities for special training or education in a particular area
- Challenges and opportunities in supervision

Some Other Suggested Questions/Activities

- What do you see as my role as your mentor?
- What ground rules should we set (e.g., confidentiality, openness, honest)?
- What topics are off-limits (performance reviews, personal lives)?
- Are there any topics of urgent interest?
- How do you prefer to communicate between meetings?
- Discuss mentee efforts to implement action plan goals or improvements
- Network with other CSP employees that have the same goals
- Have your mentee attend one of your CSP meetings pertinent to their career objectives
- Get coffee nearby to get out of the office
- Go on a short walk



Stages of the Mentoring Relationship

As with all relationships, your mentoring relationship will grow and evolve through stages over time. It takes time to develop an effective mentorship. While each relationship will move through the stages at its own pace, understanding each stage will help you know what to expect.

The mentoring relationship is different from other work-related relationships. Work relationships are often more about the expected deliverables of the job. However, your mentoring relationship is more about how to meet those deliverables, particularly around best practices and expectations. Mentoring takes place in a less formalized and supportive environment, where interaction regarding concepts can be shared and discussed.

Stage 1: Getting to Know Each Other

During the first stage of the mentoring relationship, mentors and mentees should work to build a foundation for the relationship and establish trust.

In your initial meeting, take some time to get to know each other. If you have already worked together, take some time to catch up and build up the relationship free from other work constraints. You might spend time talking about who you are, your background and experiences, your management and supervisory philosophy, and shared stories on the challenges in your career. Spend time sharing your expectations and ideas for the mentorship and listen to those of your mentee. This is also the time to come to agreement on how and when you will meet and communicate.

Possible Questions to consider:

- What is your educational and professional background (including your current role and how long you have been employed by the State)?
- What are your greatest strengths? Greatest weaknesses?
- What are your short-term career goals? Long-term career goals?
- What are your hobbies/interest outside of work?

Stage 2: Setting Goals & Planning Action

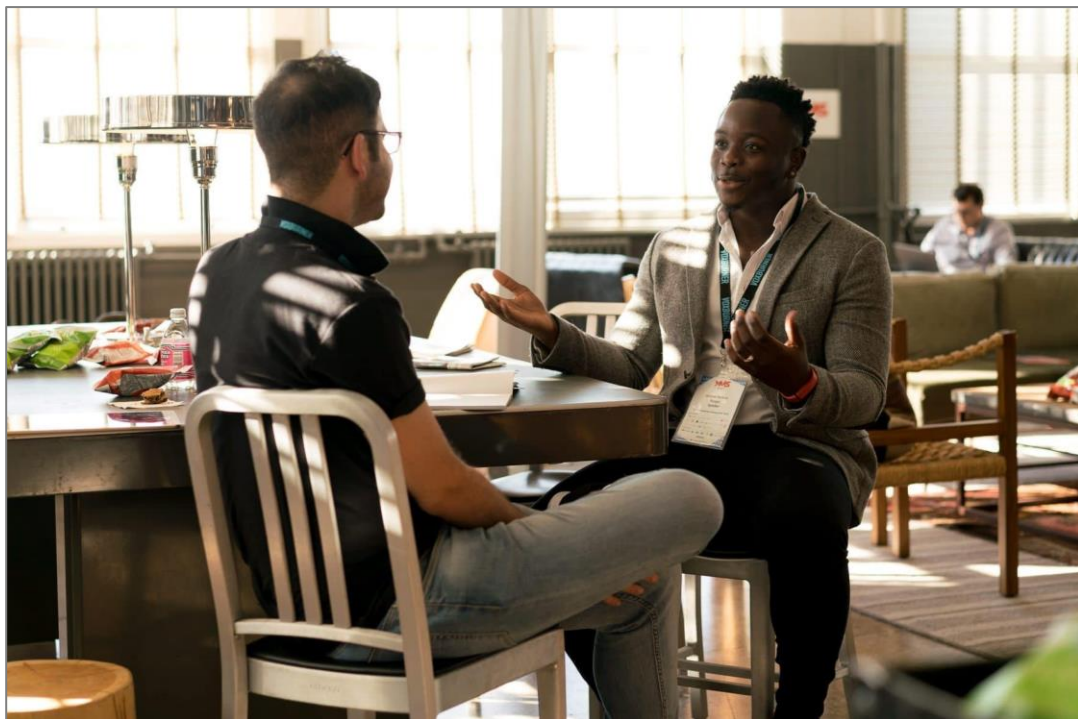
As you move into the second meeting and enter Stage 2, discuss expectations for the mentorship more deeply. Determine specific ways in which you will use the mentorship to support the mentee's career efforts and deliverables. Setting clear goals provides focus for the mentorship and allows you to tailor them to the specific needs of the mentee.

Once you have discussed and agreed upon the goals of your mentorship, finalize an action plan. Provide guidance while your mentee plans the action steps to achieve the goals set and ways these can be supported in the mentorship.

Stage 3: Working Together & Growing the Relationship

Most of the mentorship is spent in Stage 3, in which you meet regularly to support your actions toward the achievement of the goals set in Stage 2. During this time, the relationship between the mentor and mentee deepens. This allows greater trust and openness, and more meaningful discussion. The mentor and mentee become more comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas with each other, and you become more willing to try new approaches to achieving your goals.

Remember that you must follow through on commitments as a matter of integrity. Be sensitive to cultural and other social differences by respecting and accepting the other person's style and approach. Remember to treat your conversations with confidentiality.



Effective Mentoring Qualities

Each mentoring connection is unique, and therefore, each person comes to the relationship with his/her own style, values and expectations. One of the most critical things to do as a mentor is to help the mentee to feel at ease and to feel valued. Show genuine interest, kindness, appreciation, flexibility, empathy, and openness in the conversations. Also, you should work to set healthy boundaries, apply ethical business principles, and stage a relationship bound by social manners to keep communications within a professional context.

Generally, mentors embody a certain set of qualities that empowers them to guide the development of another person (the mentee). These qualities include:

- Positive, encouraging attitude
- Non-judgmental, perceptive
- Ability to coach
- Experience, exposure and expertise
- Capacity for integration of professional knowledge and best practices
- Strong time and project management skills
- Willingness to keep confidentiality
- Committed to mentee’s ability to self-regulate and formulate his/her own specific goals
- Well established, respected, and secure in his/her own career
- Not threatened by success of another person
- Respectful of diversity and differences.

Effective vs. Ineffective Mentoring Behaviors

Effective	Ineffective
★ Constructive feedback	★ Excessive praise / criticism
★ Active listening	★ Judging & correcting
★ Two-way conversations	★ Doing all the talking or all the listening
★ Making suggestions	★ Making commands
★ Asking open-ended questions	★ Having all the answers
★ Focusing on positive outcomes	★ Trying to fix things for the mentee

Making the Most of the Mentoring Relationship

As stated above, mentoring relationships tend to be more satisfying for both parties when certain elements are in place and when both the mentor and the mentee take active roles. However, the success of the relationship also depends on several key elements to insure the effectiveness of the relationship. These key elements are:

1. Purpose

This relationship is a high priority for both of you. You consider being a mentor as an important purpose. You and your mentee are clear on why you are together and the reasons you are meeting. You discussed and agreed upon what to work on and recognize when you have completed your purpose. You feel good about the focus of your relationship and what you are doing in it. From time to time, you check in to see if you need to change that purpose or focus. When you both have accomplished the purpose of your relationship, you are willing to see the relationship end.

2. Communication

You communicate in the ways (in-person, phone, text, or email) you both prefer. You get back to your mentee in the timeframe you have agreed upon. Your mentee does the same. The communication between you adds up to at least 2 hours a month and is frequent enough for both of you. You're an effective listener, and you remember what your mentee tells you. You ask appropriate questions, and your mentee is responsive. You share information about yourself. You monitor your nonverbal language to be sure it conveys what you want it to. You help the mentee recognize how he/she communicates and, where appropriate, you make suggestions for improvement.

3. Trust

The process builds trust. You welcome and keep in confidence the information the mentee shares with you. Your mentee knows he/she can count on you to be honest, yet safe, and to follow through on your promises. You avoid any trust-breaking behaviors such as canceling appointments without compelling reasons, talking negatively about others, or unfairly criticizing your mentee. You increasingly share more of yourself and become more trusting and trusted as a result.

4. Process

Your meetings and other interactions move along at the right pace. You meet often enough to suit you both, and those sessions are usually the right length. You both like where you are meeting. You are aware of the mentorship website and using that site as a resource. You like how you operate as a

mentoring pair and check in with each other to ensure that you are both satisfied with the experience and the relationship.

5. Progress

You help your mentee identify appropriate best practice goals and build competencies to reach those goals. Together, you both identify interesting learning experiences and process the results of these together. Your mentee makes significant progress toward the completion of goals since you met. You make significant progress in your ability to mentor.

6. Feedback

You asked your mentee how he/she wanted positive and corrective feedback from you. You are doing your best to give this feedback in an honest and tactful manner and as frequently as agreed upon. You give your mentee much more positive reinforcement than you give correction. When you give your mentee feedback, you observe how he/she applies it and, if necessary, mention points again. You invite him/her to give you positive and corrective feedback on how you are doing as a mentor. When you receive feedback, you remain non-defensive and take immediate steps to apply it.



General Tips for Giving Effective Feedback

There are four factors to consider when providing feedback:

- Give **frequent feedback** and the mentee will have a clear understanding of his/her progress
- Give **specific feedback** that focuses the feedback on how, when and why
- Give **direct feedback** on what you have read or observed
- Never discuss matters you have heard secondhand.

Factors to consider when giving constructive feedback are:

- Be descriptive about the behavior
- Don't use labels such as "immature" or "unprofessional"
- Don't exaggerate
- Don't be judgmental
- Concentrate on the behavior that you would like your mentee to
 - do more of
 - do less of
 - continue performing
- It is important that you do not give feedback when:
 - You don't know much about the circumstances of the behavior
 - The time, place, or circumstances are inappropriate (for example, in the presence of others).



Effective Goal Setting

Use the **SMART** goal strategy to make sure your goals are well-defined and meaningful, as outlined below:

- Goals are **specific**.
 - Clearly explained
 - Bases on details about what the mentee wants to achieve.
- Goals are **measurable**.
 - Declare a clear measure for progress toward the goal.
 - Break large, long-term goals into meaningful segments as milestones
 - Quantify goals or segments to determine completion of the overall goal
- Goals are **attainable**.

The goals must be within the mentee's reach. The mentee needs to feel

 - Challenged and capable of reaching the goals
 - Acknowledgement of current special talents
 - Integration of current talents with the supervisory goals and skillsets
 - The right supervisory "fit"
- Goals are **results-oriented**.

The mentee needs to concentrate on the results of the mentoring program

 - Activities are required to accomplish results
 - Activities provide a way of reaching the goal
- Goals are **relevant**.
 - The goals move the mentee closer to challenging and enjoyable work
- Goals are **time-framed**.

Commit to the overall time frame of six months for goals with interim deadlines to ensure that your mentee is moving toward these goals.

- Make goals within a reasonable and agreed upon time-frame.



Additional Roles of a Mentor

As a mentor, your primary role is to provide guidance and support to your mentee based on his or her unique developmental needs. There are a variety of additional roles you may assume as a mentor that depend on the relationship established with your particular mentee. At different points in the relationship, you will take on some or all of the following roles:

Teacher

As a teacher, you train the mentee on the skills and knowledge required to perform the job successfully. This role requires you to both understand the "nuts and bolts" of the mentee's position and to share your experience as a seasoned supervisor/manager. Determine what knowledge, skills, and abilities are necessary to successfully perform the duties of the mentee's position. Once you have identified the duties required for the position, identify what skills the mentee already has and what needs further development. Your focus helps the mentee to develop needed knowledge and skills.

Some tips:

- Listen deeply to the concerns and problems of your mentee
- Provide an array of scenarios in which those concerns and problems could be resolved
- Ask the mentee to consider and share some approaches that best fit their style
- Provide examples, when possible, of potential solutions
- Answer questions raised by your mentee
- Be realistic in your approach
- Know when to direct a mentee to a knowledgeable source
- Share your wisdom and past mistakes
 - Recall wise moves and share the results
 - Recall mistakes and share consequences
 - Recall moments of brilliance stumbled upon
- Sharing information is Key:
 - Share learning experiences
 - Share unique or special anecdotes
- Impart valuable knowledge through experiential learning:
 - Invite the mentee to watch the supervisory process live or on a video
 - Ask the mentee to share their feelings of what they saw
 - Ask the mentee to reflect on the experience and share thoughts
 - Ask the mentee to engage in a role play with you in reverse roles

Guide

As a guide, provide some clues and insights to help the mentee to discover and decipher the more informal "unwritten office rules" of the organization that offer a sense of inclusion within the ranks. This offer can accelerate their sense of belonging, and help them to see:

- The inner workings of the organization, "behind the scenes" dynamics, and office politics that are not always apparent, but are crucial to know
- The "unwritten rules" that include the special procedures that programs or customers follow, the "not always documented" guidelines, and policies under consideration
- Who does what, the critical responsibilities each member performs, and the internal and external customer personalities involved

Counselor

The role of counselor provides a context of trust and openness in the relationship. In order to create a trusting relationship, you need to:

- Stress confidentiality and show respect for the mentee
- Do not disclose personal information that the mentee shares with you
- Listen carefully and attentively to the mentee
- Ask questions like:
 - "How would you solve the problem?"
 - "What do you think the solution is?"
- Help mentees to:
 - Articulate work-related issues
 - Analyze problems in an impartial manner
 - Learn and practice good problem-solving skills

Motivator

Through encouragement, support, and incentives, you can motivate your mentee to succeed. One of the most effective ways to encourage your mentee is to provide positive feedback during an assigned task or while the mentee strives toward a goal. Positive feedback is a great morale booster and builds self-confidence and self-esteem. Concentrate on what the mentee is doing well and relate these successes to your mentee. Best practices for a mentor who motivates include:

- Be supportive, and available
- Return calls, e-mails, etc. with consistency
- Create incentives
- Encourage development of self-efficacy
 - Complete a task
 - Fine tune a skill

Sponsor/Champion

A sponsor creates opportunities for another that may not otherwise be made available, such as:

- Provide mentee with opportunities directly related to their job
- Invite the mentee to review their overall professional development
- Expose the mentee as much as possible to opportunities with minimum risk
- Develop instructive opportunities to set the mentee up for success
- Offer carefully considered opportunities to increase the visibility of the mentee
- Be sensitive to the readiness of the mentee to take on new opportunities:
 - Wait until the mentee has mastered required tasks
 - Consider contacts in your circle to procure projects for your mentee
- Serve as advocate for mentee whenever opportunity presents itself

Advisor

Advisors assist the mentee to develop professional interests and set realistic goals.

- Impress that the ultimate responsibility is with the mentee to set realistic goals
- Encourage mentee to complete an action plan with your guidance
- Guide the mentee to stay on their path, while you avoid taking the lead
- Create several goals to eliminate the possibility of your mentee feeling trapped
- Limit the number of goals to what you think the mentee can accomplish

Facilitator

Once career goals are set, you then are likely to assume the role of a facilitator. As you work with your mentee, develop an action plan that outlines what knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) a mentee needs to meet his/her supervisory expectations and deliverables. There are several steps that you and your mentee need to follow when developing a career action plan:

- Target the areas that require development, and query needs:
 - What are the expectations and deliverables?
 - What resources are available for review?
 - Measure the KSAs required for expectations and deliverables against the KSAs your mentee already has, and target areas of development.
- Recommend development activities (tasks) for the mentee to:
 - Acquire the critical knowledge, skills and abilities required to meet expectations and deliverables
 - Recommend job enrichment activities
 - If applicable attend supervisory workshops, conferences, or seminars
- Determine success indicators.
 - Provide a clear vision of the desired results of a developmental activity
 - Answer the question "How will I know I have succeeded?"
 - Select indicators that are measurable and meaningful to the mentee

Support the mentee to focus on the planned actions to complete the expectations and deliverables developed within the framework of the program.

Role Model

As a role model, you are a living example of the values, ethics, and professional practices of your profession.

- Be aware that most mentees, in time, imitate their mentors
 - As the proverb goes, "imitation is the sincerest flattery"
 - Teaching by example may be your most effective tool
- Be aware of your actions, intentions, and conversations with your mentee
 - Mentees will observe and learn about you while he/she observes you in action
 - How you handle situations and interact with others will imprint mentee behaviors
- Strive for high standards of professionalism, solid work ethics, and a positive attitude

Introducer

The role of the Introducer is to create opportunity.

- Establish a network of contacts for the mentee, both inside and outside the organization
- Provide a chance to meet other people to spur professional, as well as, social development
- Introduce your mentee to many of your own contacts to help build the mentee's own network
- Stress to your mentee that networking is directly related to:
 - An increase in the amount of assistance or advice available from the network population

- The amount of attention paid to the development of personal contacts within the organization
- Your mentee may want to consider:
 - With whom do I talk frequently in CSP?
 - With whom do I take lunch breaks?
 - With whom do I discuss my problems or concerns?
- As an Introducer, you also introduce information for your mentee by steering the mentee to resources that he/she may require.

Devil's Advocate

At times, you may need to challenge the mentee's assumptions and conclusions to help them see things more globally.

- Steer the mentee to replace preconceived notions with seasoned professional advice
- Foresee and advise your mentee on bigger picture thinking, to avoid a set of assumptions that may involve a more limited understanding of the job, organization, or industry
- When appropriate, play devil's advocate to help mentee think through important decisions and strategies and come from a more balanced perspective

Throughout all interactions, the mentor's focus is on the mentee's ability to meet supervisory expectations and deliverables. The mentor displays confidence, and provides experienced counsel, information, support, and psycho-social assistance to the mentee.



Additional Resources

CSP Website

The mentoring program is designed to adapt to the needs of its participants. We provide up-to-date resources and materials to help to achieve your goals in this program. For more information, please visit: CSPmentorshipprogram.com

Mentoring Program Contacts

For more information and or to provide feedback, please contact us at:

Training_Sec-Mentorship@calparks.onmicrosoft.com



Thank you for your participation in the CSP Mentorship Program