



Coast Guard Flag Voice 02

At the recent National Naval Officers Association (NNOA) Conference, in his remarks the Commandant challenged us with better communicating the value of mentoring for our Service with all members of Team CG.

A MENTOR is genuinely interested in people and has a desire to help others. A mentor is a listener, questioner and advisor.

A MENTEE has a sense a responsibility for their own growth and of where they want to go. A mentee must be willing to take feedback constructively and learn.

Both mentor and mentee must have a desire to make the organization more effective.

We began the Coast Guard's "formal" mentoring network in 1991 based on a review of studies which clearly showed the value of mentoring as a significant factor in retaining people in organizations. In the last year alone, the inclusion of formal mentoring networks by US corporations has doubled to about 47%. The process of enabling our people to make informed choices in their Coast Guard careers goes a long way in maximizing their potential for success. Subsequent Flag Voices will paint a picture of our current recruiting environment, but suffice it to say that it has never been more challenging. The most important part of the equation of "filling our workforce" is retaining those who are solid members and employees. Effective mentoring at all levels of our organization, especially for our newest people, can go a long way in sustaining our quality workforce.

The good news is that we have been working hard to provide a user-friendly system that enables all of our people to readily find or become a mentor. Our Office of Leadership & Diversity (G-WTL) has partnered with the other Department of Transportation agencies to develop a One DOT Mentoring Network accessible on the Internet that allows matches across organizations, if desired. CG people can search for a CG mentor, but also may expand to other agencies...an especially appealing feature for civilian employees or anyone else who may desire to form a professional development partnership for potentially changing to another field.

You can assess the DOT Mentoring Connection through the Coast Guard's G-WTL web site <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wt/g-wtl/home.htm>. The Coast Guard's site contains lots of information about mentoring, information and policy statements on diversity, current and past issues of the leadership newsletter, the COMDTINST on the Leadership Development Program, the Workforce Cultural Audit report, an article on the new Leadership Development Center, and more.

The DOT site provides complete instructions on how to apply to the mentoring program and includes a wealth of on-line information on how to be a successful mentor or mentee. We are working to add an extra page with optional blocks for CG specific career information, such as assignment history, training and education, and qualification codes.

Six to eight times a year we continue to offer a five-day mentoring course which provides in-depth training in effective mentoring, working with differences, and skill-building in communication, counseling, conflict resolution, and career advising. The course is for E6 through O4, W2 through W4, and GS-7 through GS-13.

Additionally, the CG Mentoring Program Coordinator (Ms. Kathy Wilson, 202/267-0010; e-mail kwilson@uscg.mil) will take a short orientation course on the road.

Please consider the merits of participating in the Coast Guard's mentoring network. This is a leadership issue at all levels. Thanks!

Regards, FL Ames

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