Mentor And Mentee Relationship

As perfect as you may seem, everyone in their life will depend on someone else to help them through a challenge in life. You don’t just grow up knowing all the answers. You must have experience. You have to seek guidance from someone who has been through what you are going through, who has the experience to know what works and what does not. These people we seek guidance and direction for are called Mentors. These individuals have been through the hardship to be able to guide you on a straight path. Having a successful mentor in your life that strives for greatness will improve your performance, morale, and will ensure success in your career progression. This essay will note the importance of having a mentor and the effect it has on an individual Soldier, the unit, and the Army.

How does mentorship affect the individual Soldier on a personal level? Well to better answer that question we must figure out what mentorship is. According to Army Mentorship Handbook (1 January 2005), the Army definition of mentorship is “The voluntary, developmental relationship that exists between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience that is characterized by mutual trust and respect”. Having mutual trust and respect with someone is a powerful motivator in life. An individual seeks mentorship for one reason. They need guidance and do not know where to go. Being a mentor it is your responsibility to steer the mentee in the correct direction. This will change the Soldier' views and ultimately change their career path for the better.

Mentoring has a ladder effect. Once an individual has had a mentor, this motivates them to also share their personal experiences and then seek for their chance to be a mentor for someone else in need. This improves morale in the Army. This process ensures people are guided to the correct positions they need to be striving for. In return, the Army is filling positions with the correct personnel in charge, doing the right thing at all times, and ensuring greatness in their section. Retention rates would start rising for the fact that Soldiers are not settling for meritocracy, instead, they are striving for the best results. This shows to the civilian sector that the Army leaders care for their Soldiers and will do what they can to help.

Mentoring does not just help the mentee. It helps the mentor as well. Mentors can take pleasure in watching the mentee grow from who they were to what they become. Taking pride in all of the time invested in a person for the greater good. Have you ever heard the saying “I can only lead the horse to the water, I cannot make him drink it”? This is true for mentoring. It is solely up to the mentee to take initiative and put forth their capabilities to be successful. Once successful, they need to remember all they have gone through to pass on the experiences to who they one day will mentor.

A mentee should take a lot into count when selecting the right mentor. The mentee needs to focus on what goals he wants to achieve. Once he has found what he is striving to achieve, he now needs to locate someone will good character, knowledge, and experience in what their goal is. This means you must communicate. Seek guidance from someone who is in a leadership position outside of your chain of command. You want someone good at what they do. Speak with people who know the service member you want as your mentor, to get a grip on who they are and if they are respected in their community. No one should care more about your career

progression more than you, but your mentor should be helping you achieve your goals.

In today's world, you want as many viewpoints and information you can get. With that being said. You can never have too many mentors. You need to figure out what works best for you. Networking and connecting with people from different organizations and ranks is key to understanding how things work. On the mentor side looking for mentees. You would never want too many mentees for the sake of commitment. You want to be the best mentor you can be and the fewer Soldiers you have to mentor, the more commitment you can put into mentoring those you have without overwhelming yourself.

The Army is looking for the best Soldiers in its ranks. When higher leadership invests their time with lesser experienced Soldiers and begins building trust. That will lead to better working environments for the Army. This will set the tone for training exercises and missions. Which will lead to the Army's main mission. Winning the wars of our nation and staying ready to fight.

If you want to have a successful time in service. You will not do it alone. You will need someone to help guide you through your time in service. It does not matter how much experience you gain. You can always improve. Focus on finding the right mentor for you. Focus on what the Army's mission is and never forget that there is always someone looking for mentorship. You just have to go find that Soldier looking for your guidance. President George W. Bush once said "…. It is the men and women of America who will fill the need. One mentor, one person, can change a life forever. And I urge you to be that one person".

Together we can help change each other's beliefs for the better. When one Soldier lacks guidance it will be up to his/her leadership to notice that. To help that Soldier stay on the track to success. It is never too late to mentor a Soldier. We are all in this profession together and we are only as strong as our weakest link. Mentors are not only helping the individual Soldier get better. It is the mentor and mentee relationship that is positively affecting the Army to make it greater than it is today.

References

1. Army Mentorship Handbook 2005 - Army Counseling Online. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.armycounselingonline.com/download/Mentorship Handbook.pdf.