

MCS 306

Mentoring Skills



Time allotted	50 minutes
Teaching format	Instructor-led discussion with PowerPoint support, Group activity with discussion

Resources

Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCS 306 -Seven Qualities of a Good Mentor – 1 per participant • MCS 306 - Seven Questions for Successful Coaching - 1 per participant • MCS 306 - Unit Commissioner Onboarding Progress Record - 1 per participant or a projected image on a shared screen
Equipment and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCS 306 – Mentoring Skills course plan • MCS 306 – Mentoring Skills PowerPoint presentation • MCS 306 – Roles of a Mentor instructions (for instructor) • 3x5 blank index cards (1 per participant) • Computer and projector • Whiteboard or flip chart, appropriate markers and eraser
Resources for additional participant learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit Commissioner Onboarding Progress https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/commissioner/pdf/Unit_Commissioner_Onboarding_Progress_Record.pdf

Course Connections

Connections to other CCS courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCS 106 - Coaching Leaders • DCS 506 - Coaching for Administrative Commissioners
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Presentation Outline

INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OBJECTIVES – 3 MINUTES

Mentoring is a long term relationship in which one individual supports and guides the personal or professional growth and development of another. Mentoring is an essential skill of a commissioner and this course will provide tools for commissioners to use when mentoring others. This course will also explore the similarities and subtle differences between mentoring and coaching.

Course Description and Learning Objectives

The course will discuss the new mentoring model, differences between coaching and mentoring and how it applies to unit service.

At the end of this training a commissioner will be able to:

- **Recognize** the role of a mentor
- **Understand** mentoring methods
- **Discuss** building the mentoring relationship

Role of Mentors– 5 minutes

What word comes to mind when you think of a mentor? Ask the group for their thoughts. Be sure the following have been mentioned: Guide, Counselor, Friend, Supporter, Teacher, Role Model

Have you had a mentor?

A mentor is an experienced Scout or adult leader who becomes a trusted guide and counselor of a less experienced individual. This trusting and caring relationship normally extends beyond Scouting skills into values, beliefs, and feelings. A mentor may be “assigned,” but often this relationship occurs naturally and is fostered between the individuals involved. Adults often mentor youth in the program, but for purposes of this discussion we will consider mentoring as a leadership skill required of adults when dealing with adults.

A useful way to remember what mentors do is to use the MENTOR model.

What Mentors Do – The M.E.N.T.O.R. Model

Mindset: Instill attitudes, “social intelligence,” and values embraced by Scouting.

Environment: Help someone develop an understanding of the unit environment and “culture” and the practicalities of life in the unit.

Network: Connect someone to others who might be able to help them by making introductions or providing recommendations.

Trust: Provide trusted, confidential counsel and a broader perspective on Scouting and personal issues.

Open: Be open for advice, support, and/or guidance on subjects that someone may find difficult to discuss with other leaders or peers.

Retention: Aid in retention of mentored individuals in our program.

Is Mentoring Like Coaching?

Ask the group for their thoughts on the differences and similarities between mentoring and coaching.

- Coaching is the process of facilitating the performance, learning, and development of another person.
 - For example, directing and aligning the members of a team toward achievement of a common goal.
 - Therefore, the coach is also responsible for the development of the team members.
- Coaching is different from mentoring because the mentoring process is led by the learner and is less skills-based.

Mentoring versus Coaching – 5 Minutes

Coaching vs. Mentoring

This graphic shows how coaching and mentoring intersect, but that mentoring is a long-term situation, while coaching is short lived. The mentoring graphic is much larger because the relationship is maintained over a much longer period of time.

Notice how skills, knowledge, behaviors and competencies affect both coaching and mentoring.

Key Differences

Goals:	<p>In coaching – To correct inappropriate behavior, improve performance, and impart skills as an individual accepts new responsibility.</p> <p>In mentoring – To support and guide personal growth.</p>
Initiative:	<p>In coaching – The coach directs learning and instruction.</p> <p>In mentoring – The person being mentored is in charge of his or her learning.</p>
Focus:	<p>In coaching – Immediate problems and learning opportunities.</p> <p>In mentoring – Long-term personal development.</p>
Roles:	<p>In coaching – Heavy focus on telling with appropriate feedback.</p> <p>In mentoring – Heavy focus on listening, being a role model, and making suggestions and connections.</p>

The Mentoring Relationship – 20 minutes

A Scouting Mentoring Relationship

Ask:

Are mentors assigned?

How do we find them?

How does mentoring happen?

Allow 2-3 minutes for discussion, then note the following:

- **Mentors aren't assigned.** They are earned. A real mentor is invested in your development because they genuinely care, not because they are assigned to you. Mentors tend to see bits of themselves in those they take an interest in.
- **Finding a mentor** isn't such a structured or explicit process. **In the real world, mentors are usually organic relationships without specific titles, goals or responsibilities.** Mentors are most often simply experienced people you get to know and look to for advice, informally and organically. They are people you go to coffee with, people you ask for guidance, and people you call when there's a big decision to make.
- **Mentorship is a two-way street** - both parties must want to engage in the relationship, and each gets something different out of it. As a mentor, you get the satisfaction of helping someone and the opportunity to have a protégé. As a mentee, you get access to someone who can accelerate your success, and who is likely a role model of yours.

Mentoring Process Attitude

Handout - Provide each participant with a copy of *Unit Commissioner Onboarding Progress Record* or project an image of the form on a shared screen.

For virtual presentation, consider whether to distribute this handout (a) prior to class, (b) during class via the chat line, if available, or email, (c) after class, or (d) a combination.

Start – At the start of mentoring process, mentors need to have an attitude of building trust and setting up the mentoring contract in initial meetings. An example would be an assistant district commissioner serving as a mentor for a unit commissioner for their *Unit Commissioner Onboarding Progress Record*. (The Onboarding Progress Report uses the term 'coach' rather than 'mentor.' Both of those terms apply to the onboarding process.) Another example could be a unit commissioner for a brand-new Cub Scout pack.

During – During mentoring, a positive attitude of encouragement and giving directions is required. The mentor will provide guidance based on needs, share personal experiences, and be available. The mentee will take ownership of personal learning and development needs. The mentee will take initiative, drive agendas and meetings. The mentee will also seek constructive feedback.

Closing – When mentoring sessions are close to ending, mentor needs to have a goal of reducing dependency of mentee and make the mentee self-reliant. In Scouting the relationship will most likely last but will evolve into a friendship over time.

Seven Qualities of a Good Mentor

Handout – Provide each participant with a copy of *Seven Qualities of a Good Mentor*

- Ability and willingness to communicate what you know
- Preparedness

- Approachability, availability and the ability to listen
- Honesty with diplomacy
- Inquisitiveness
- Objectivity and fairness
- Compassion and genuineness

Most of these qualities have to do with either communication or compassion – or a combination of both.

Learning Conversation Steps

Handout – *Seven Questions for Successful Coaching* (1 per participant) (While not specifically about mentoring, the questions are applicable to both coaching and mentoring.)

For virtual presentation, consider whether to distribute this handout (a) prior to class, (b) during class via the chat line, if available, or email, (c) after class, or (d) a combination.

- **Mentoring relationships are developed for many reasons** – some for a period of time, some for a particular goal or project and some for a one-time situation where the mentee needs assistance in resolving a particular issue.
- **Reaffirmation** – The mentor and the mentee spend time to reestablish connectedness using more than just normal social niceties. In a good relationship, there will be a mutual recognition of emotional states and levels of trust.
- **Identifying the issue** – This is when the issue to be discussed is articulated as well as the mentee’s desired outcome is identified. We can use “*Seven Questions for Successful Coaching*” to get at the heart of the issue.
- **Building mutual understanding** – The mentor encourages the mentee to explore the issue in depth, by asking questions that stimulate insight. These questions enable both parties to understand the situation and all of the elements involved more clearly. The mentor wants to avoid offering solutions or analogies to his or her own experience. When the conversation comes to a natural conclusion, the mentor should summarize and check to see if mutual understanding has been reached.
- **Exploring alternative solutions** – This is when both the mentor and the mentee allow themselves to be as creative as possible, looking for ways to move forward. The goal is to build a range of solutions for the mentee to consider. Using “*Seven Questions for Successful Coaching*” will lead to some alternatives.
- **Final check** – The mentor encourages the mentee to review what he or she is going to do and why, and what the mentee has learned about both the situation in question and themselves. This allows for a mutual understanding and places the responsibility for what happens next on the mentee.

Roles of a Mentor Activity – 12 minutes

Notes: *Instructor Led Activity:*

You will need to supply: 3x5 index cards, Flipchart or whiteboard, Markers

Steps:

1. Give each participant an index card. Ask them to think and then silently:
 - Identify one person, preferably someone who is not a relative, who was a kind of mentor for them.
 - Think about why that person was important to them and the result for them of that person's interest.
 - Recall the qualities of that person that made her or him so valued, and write two or three of those qualities on the index card.
2. Have participants talk briefly about the mentor they identified and the qualities they valued. As they speak, list those qualities on the flipchart/whiteboard. When a quality is repeated, put a check mark next to it each time it is mentioned. (For example, the first time someone says "good listener," write that phrase. Each time someone else identifies this quality in his or her mentor, put a check mark by the phrase.)
3. Review the items on the list. Note which were mentioned most often. Then have the participants identify which of the qualities might be categorized as "communication skills", such as listening, talking, asking questions, and being nonjudgmental.
4. Ask participants to identify the roles a mentor can play in a person's life. List their responses on the flipchart/whiteboard. (These might include: friend, big brother/sister, positive role model, resource, guide.) Lead a brief discussion about what each of these roles might involve. Be sure participants see that a mentor is NOT a parent, teacher or counselor.
5. Allow time for participants to talk about their hopes and concerns *as a* mentor. For example, which of the qualities that they admired in their "mentors" do they feel fairly confident they possess? Which qualities do they need to work on developing? What other concerns do they have about their mentor role?

For a virtual presentation, ask participants to write down their answers and then share them in a chat feature. Some virtual platforms have "white boards" or students can scan the chat feature to determine which characteristics are listed most frequently. Instructors can also call on students to categorize qualities in #3. Instructors could call on a few willing participants to share their answers for #5.

Between sessions, the mentee should be reflecting on what has been discussed so that they can see if what they have learned relates to other issues. The mentor should also consider his or her role in the relationship and reflect on whether the mentee is progressing. A lack of progression might indicate failure to fully understand the issue or a potential path forward.

Benefits of Mentoring – 2 minutes

- **For the mentee**
 - Improved knowledge and skills
 - Greater confidence and well-being
- **For the mentor**
 - Greater satisfaction
 - New knowledge and skills
 - Leadership development
- **For Scouting**
 - Improved morale, motivation, and relationships

Summary/Conclusion – 1 minute

- **Mentoring is not coaching**
- **Mentoring in Scouting happens organically**
- **Key to mentoring is the relationship**
- **Mentoring is a 2-way street**
- **Mentoring can be a sustainable relationship** (the mentoring relationship can develop into a lasting friendship)

Questions? – 2 minutes