



# MENTORSHIP GUIDE

LEADERSHIP & DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

*March 10, 2025*

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The links and provided in this document are correct as of March 1, 2025.

They are reviewed and revised annually, however please refer to the K:Drive and U:Drive for the most accurate and current information.

## OBJECTIVE

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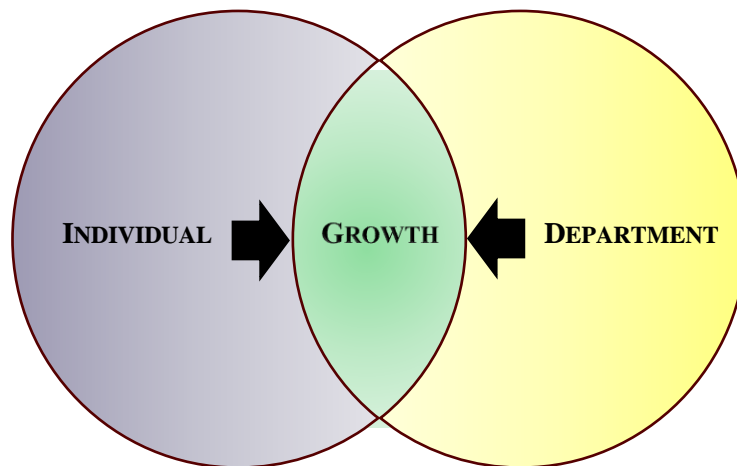
To establish a robust mentorship guide within St. Petersburg Fire Rescue that fosters a supportive and inclusive environment, providing every firefighter with access to personalized guidance, professional development opportunities and ongoing support, thereby enhancing skills, boosting morale, and promoting a culture of continuous learning and excellence. A supportive mentorship relationship will help firefighters gain the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to excel in their roles and contribute effectively to their firefighting team.

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## A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

**Success is driven by an individual's motivation and dedication to preparation and commitment to personal growth.** SPFR is committed to promoting advancement and providing a supportive learning environment. To support this, SPFR will offer training, education, and leadership development opportunities to assist and encourage personnel in reaching their goals.

To aid in professional growth, a variety of tools and resources, including a goal-setting worksheet, access to course-required textbooks and leadership self-evaluations, are available to guide individuals on their journey through the ranks. A clearly defined path can transform distant aspirations into achievable realities.



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## THE VALUE OF MENTORSHIP

Studies and surveys have been conducted regarding the value of mentorship. It is SPFR's goal to set personnel up for success to the greatest extent possible and having a defined mentorship guide is one aspect.

- ⑤ Mentees are **5 times** more likely to be promoted.
- ⑥ Mentors are **6 times** more likely to be promoted.

*\*Source: Forbes and ASTD*

Managerial productivity  
increased by

**88%.**

Training alone increased  
productivity by only 24%.

## **ARE YOU READY TO MENTOR OR MENTEE?**

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A mentor or mentee must be mentally and emotionally prepared to commit to the growth and development of another person. Mentoring requires time, energy, and a willingness to challenge, guide, or be guided by others to ensure collective success.

### **Desire**

- To coach or be coached
- To invest in the future of the organization

### **Ability**

- To communicate effectively.
- Step outside of your comfort zone.

### **Attitude**

- Proactive approach to your career.
- Want to advocate for positive organizational culture.

### **Passion**

- For the mission and values of the fire service
- To foster the strength of the fire service family

### **Commitment**

- To coach and learning
- To giving back to the organization.

## **GOALS OF THE MENTORSHIP GUIDE ARE TO:**

- Promote learning.
- Support a positive learning culture.
- Provide timely feedback.
- Reinforce a proactive approach to personal growth.
- Model the “right” way for others.
- Invest in the organization’s success.
- Support the success and survival of each member.
- Share perspectives to allow a better understanding of global issues.
- Challenge the status quo.

*Are You Ready to Mentor?*

## **7 GUIDELINES TO EFFECTIVE MENTORSHIP**

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### **Acclimation**

▶ Mentors should assist the employees in the new role they have just been assigned. This should include familiarizing them with policies and procedures, communication systems and daily duties.

### **One-on-One Training**

▶ The mentor provides hands-on training tailored to the employee's needs and skill level. This may involve demonstrations, simulations, and supervised practice sessions for various tasks such as conducting drills, responding to emergencies, or participating in department committee meetings.

### **Regular Feedback**

▶ The mentor should offer constructive feedback on the employee's performance, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement. Feedback is crucial for the employee's professional development and helps them refine their skills over time. Both positive and constructive feedback should be given when needed. For the next year, schedule a minimum of two quarterly interactions.

### **Goal Setting**

▶ Together, the mentor and employee establish short-term and long-term goals to work towards. These goals may relate to mastering specific firefighting techniques, obtaining certifications or higher education goals.

### **Ongoing Support**

▶ The mentor serves as a resource and sounding board for the employee, offering advice, encouragement, and mentorship. They provide guidance on navigating challenges, adapting to the department's culture and advancement in their career.

### **Periodic Check-Ins**

▶ Regular conversations should be conducted to assess the employee's progress and readiness. These evaluations consider factors such as skill proficiency, teamwork abilities, adherence to policies and overall attitude.

### **Continuous Learning**

▶ Mentorship extends beyond the probationary period, with the mentor encouraging ongoing learning and professional growth. This may involve recommending training opportunities, providing mentorship on specialized skills, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement within the station and throughout the employee's career.

# **8 STEP PROCESS OF SELECTING A MENTOR**

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By following this process, employees can effectively select a mentor within the LDG Mentor Network, fostering meaningful mentorship relationships that support their professional development and advancement within the fire department throughout their career. This process can be followed at any point in a person's career.

**1**

## **Self-Assessment**

- ▶ Each potential mentee should consider a self-assessment to identify their career goals, areas for development and the type of mentorship they seek.

**2**

## **Understanding Mentorship Guide**

- ▶ Familiarize yourself with the mentorship guidelines, objectives, expectations, and available resources provided in the Leadership & Development Guide.

**3**

## **Identifying Potential Mentors**

- ▶ Make a list of potential mentors that possess the expertise, experience, and skills aligned with your development needs and goals.
- ▶ Mentors from within the same rank and shift may be considered.

**4**

## **Introduction and Agreement**

- ▶ Once you have identified a potential mentor, reach out to discuss the opportunity. If they agree, schedule an introductory meeting to get acquainted.
- ▶ During this meeting, the mentee and mentor will discuss their expectations, goals, communication preferences and the frequency of mentorship meetings. Review the [Mentor Meeting Ice Breakers](#) for conversations starters.
- ▶ Both should review the [Mentorship Expectations](#) document, outlining the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee.

## 5

### **Commencement of Mentorship**

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- ▶ The mentorship officially begins with scheduling regular meetings or check-ins to discuss progress, address challenges, and work towards achieving the established goals.
- ▶ The mentor provides guidance, feedback, and support to help you navigate your career path, develop new skills, and overcome obstacles.

## 6

### **Feedback**

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- ▶ Periodic conversations are conducted to assess the effectiveness of the mentorship relationship and the progress made towards your goals.
- ▶ Both the mentor and mentee provide feedback on the mentorship experience, suggesting areas for improvement and adjustments as needed.

## 7

### **Continued Support and Development**

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- ▶ The mentorship relationship continues to evolve over time, with the mentor providing ongoing support, guidance, and encouragement to the employee.
- ▶ Actively engage in the mentorship process, seek opportunities for growth, and implement feedback received from your mentor.

## 8

### **Closure or Transition**

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- ▶ The mentorship relationship may come to a natural conclusion once your goals are achieved, or you or they transition to a new role within the organization.
- ▶ Both the mentor and mentee reflect on their experiences, celebrate achievements, and discuss plans for continued growth and development.

## **MENTORSHIP EXPECTATIONS**

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The SPFR Mentorship Guide is designed to connect newly hired or promoted firefighters and officers with experienced, knowledgeable peers.

### **MENTOR & MENTEE EXPECTATIONS**

- Commit to at least one in-person or Zoom meeting per quarter for one year, with additional touchpoints via phone, text, email, or in-person meetings.
- Maintain a positive, professional, and respectful attitude.
- Be open to other perspectives.
- Actively listen and engage in conversations.
- Share your experiences openly and thoughtfully.
- Focus on guiding or being guided toward solutions, rather than simply providing, or receiving answers.
- Maintain confidentiality, except in cases involving safety concerns.
- Respect each other's time and ensure meetings and communications are meaningful and purposeful.
- Collaborate to plan for conclusion of the formal mentoring relationship and transition to ongoing self-development.
- Provide feedback on the mentorship experience and participate in any program evaluations.

### **MENTORS SHALL:**

Mentors share their professional knowledge and advice to support their mentee's development and success within the department. Mentoring also provides an opportunity for mentors to refine their leadership and coaching skills. Throughout your career, you will encounter diverse personality types, and learning how to effectively communicate, coach, and counsel others will make you more well-rounded and better prepared to achieve your own professional goals.

- Take time to understand the mentee's experience, strengths, and areas for growth.
- Regularly check in on the mentee's progress toward their goals.
- Adapt your communication and mentoring style to align with the mentee's needs and objectives.
- Reflect on the mentoring process and adjust your approach as needed.
- Support the mentee's goals and aspirations.
- Help orient the mentee to their new role.
- Motivate the mentee to master foundational skills and concepts.
- Build the mentee's confidence, knowledge, and skill proficiency within their current level.
- Prepare the mentee for advancement to the next organizational level.
- Share your experiences, institutional knowledge, career advice, and insights.
- Provide constructive and positive feedback when appropriate.
- Encourage ongoing learning, self-improvement, and proactive growth.
- Challenge the mentee to think critically and step out of their comfort zone.
- Introduce the mentee to relevant contacts or networks that can support their development.
- Share helpful resources, such as articles, books, or tools, to aid in the mentee's growth.

## **MENTEES SHALL:**

Mentees must take responsibility for their role in the mentorship. Building a strong relationship requires time and effort from both parties, and being a mentee is a valuable opportunity for growth. Remember, this process is about your development—you will gain as much as you invest in it.

- Take the initiative. Reach out to schedule meetings and ask questions.
- Take the time to understand the mentor's experience and strengths.
- Monitor your progress by regularly assessing your advancement toward your goals.
- Be honest by clearly articulating your aspirations and what you hope to achieve during mentorship.
- Help your mentor help you. Identify challenges in your day-to-day work, take notes, and bring them to your next meeting.
- Expect support, not miracles. Mentors provide guidance, feedback, and new perspectives but cannot solve your problems. Ultimately, the effort and results are up to you.
- Be teachable by staying open to learning and considering new perspectives.
- Embrace feedback and be open to suggestions or constructive criticism. Growth often involves discomfort.
- Ask for general input on your professional trajectory and personal skills, as well as specific feedback on your skill set, ideas, plans, and goals. Clear, specific questions make it easier for your mentor to help.
- Follow through on your mentor's suggestions and act promptly. Keep them updated on your progress.
- Think critically and step out of your comfort zones to change yourself.
- Come prepared. Before meetings review previous goals and identify any challenges you faced. Outline new goals, actions steps, and topics you want to discuss. Keep a running list of experiences or events that might benefit you from your mentor's perspective.

# MENTOR/MENTEE MEETING ICE BREAKERS

08/21/2024



Below are some sample questions that could be asked as a jumping off point. These questions are meant to help facilitate a progress discussion between the mentor and mentee. They are not designed to be mandatory interview questions. Instead, consider them conversation starters, if needed, and tools to assist in getting maximum benefit from your meeting.

## **THINGS TO ASK THE MENTEE:**

- What steps have you taken towards your 1-year, 3-year and 5-year goals?
- What is one thing you noticed since our last meeting that was harder than you thought to get the hang of? What clicked or was easier to do/learn than you expected?
- Is there a behavior or habit that you would like to change or improve between now and our next meeting?
- Of the tasks and goals, you were able to complete, what gave you the most satisfaction? What gave you the least satisfaction or was the most difficult?
- Are there any short-term goals you have between now and our next meeting? What is your next step towards it?
- What was the best part of your last off-shift time?

## **THINGS TO ASK THE MENTOR:**

- What stood out to you this or last meeting as something that could be worked on?
- What have you watched or read lately did you find value in, that could improve an aspect of my personal or professional development?
- What has stood out to you as a strength of mine and how can I apply that to the next steps towards my short-term and long-term goals?
- What is an obstacle that you faced since our last meeting and how did you overcome it? In hindsight, do you wish you had done anything differently?
- What is one thing you wish you knew or did differently when you were where I am? When you started your current role?
- Who helped you get to where you are today? Who is helping you get to your next step?

## **RESOURCES SECTION**

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[Employee Goals Worksheet](#)

[Leadership Self-Evaluation](#)

[Big Five Personality Profile Self-Assessment](#)

[Probationary Employee Mentor Interview Form](#)

### Videos

- [Mentor Training – Texas A&M Career Center](#) 7 min
- [Mentee Training – Texas A&M Career Center](#) 7 min
- [How to Coach \(by asking questions\) Winning By Design](#) 6 min
- [How to be a Great Mentee – Kevin Harrington](#) 4 min
- [Importance of Fire Service Mentors – Robb Milano – FIRExTalk](#) 13 min

*For additional resources, refer to the Leadership & Development Guide.*