



# SOCIOLOGY



## TECHNICAL NOTE (FOR INSERVICE USE)

### MENTORING WITH GUSTO

#### Introduction

The management of organizations is putting on a new face in operations. This is especially true in inter-personnel relationships. This trend is being strongly felt throughout supervisory manager and staff relations. The name of this new trend is mentoring.

Mentors have been described in many ways. However, the best description can be in how mentors approach problems and then handle job situations.

#### Five Ways To Mentor<sup>1</sup>



1. **Information** - Mentors do their best to keep their people informed. Mentors share and consult with their people on a regular (or as necessary) basis about what is happening in the local section or the agency as a whole. Keeping people informed dispels rumors, erases uncertainty and provides a strong basis for boosting employee morale.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Not Managers but Mentors" by Simon Buckingham, from the Un-organization Home Page pulled October 10, 1997 @ <http://www.unorg.com.a69.htm>.

2. Justification - Mentors justify the decisions they're called upon to make. They do this through information sharing and consulting. Gaining insight from several sources can be vital to making the best decision possible under "real life" circumstances. Justification also gives the participants a stake in accomplishing tasks to the best of their abilities.
3. Foresight - Mentors realize that the present is changing and the future will require new ideas, views, and methodologies. Keeping a staff informed and seeking justification in decision-making can produce a wealth of new and innovative ideas, which can be used to accomplish any assigned task.
4. Decision-making - Mentors present people with choices and then give them the opportunity to make a path of decisions. Often, mentors will give the main decision-maker a job and let them fully develop and complete the assigned task. This will build an employee's confidence in designing and completing a task.
5. Acknowledgement - Mentors give credit where credit is due. This approach creates a sense of fairness and helps all concerned shine brightly. Anything less will show a credit-taker to be "all wax and no wick."<sup>2</sup>

## Overall

Mentors act with a high level of confidence in the abilities of their personnel. They are smart enough to know they simply don't know it all. Mentors, through information, justification, foresight, decision-making, and acknowledgement, marshal their personnel in the development of sound ideas by a motivated staff who will accomplish any assigned task to the best of their abilities.



*William G. Reddig*

WILLIAM G. REDDIG  
Agricultural Economist

DIST: A, F

---

<sup>2</sup> "Canonical List of Fulldeckisms" by Alan Silverstein, from the Full-deck-isms Home Page pulled August 9, 1997  
@[http://oasis.ot.com/~kevin/full\\_deck.html](http://oasis.ot.com/~kevin/full_deck.html).