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STRUCTURED MENTORSHIP : A STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE APPROACH FOR CANADIAN ARMED FORCES LOGISTICS OFFICER - FINANCE

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Exercise Solo Flight

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People represent the driving force for the future success and capability of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). How the CAF leverages, promotes and contributes to the professional development of its members will directly impact the extent of attaining its operational and strategic objectives for institutional success. Canada's recent Defence Policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged* (SSE), personifies a modernized approach to defence and security, that prioritizes operational flexibility and an ability to look over the horizon to prepare for and act with precise skill and professionalism to support global peace and international security.¹ Accordingly, the CAF has identified a clear requirement to improve the way in which military personnel are supported from a Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) perspective, particularly in how it integrates new approaches and initiatives to deliver on its mandate and commitment to putting people first.

This paper will illustrate and assert that a formal mentoring program provides a viable SHRM approach to support the occupational readiness of CAF Logistics Officer Finance (LOG Fin), therefore reducing current knowledge gaps while promoting professional growth for a sustained and erudite workforce.

A review of the LOG Fin occupational stream will be conducted to illustrate existing training and occupational challenges, including deficiencies relative to technical competencies and a need for sustained knowledge growth to meet current and future CAF demands. Traditional mentoring, including formal and informal approaches, will be explored through a literature review. The effects of mentoring will be considered from an organizational

¹ Canada. Department of National Defence. *Strong Secure Engaged Canada's Defence Policy*. 2017. Accessed: <http://dgpapp.forces.gc.ca/en/canada-defence-policy/docs/canada-defence-policy-report.pdf>, May 2019.

perspective; following discussion, formative recommendations will be delivered confirming the suitability of a formal mentoring program aimed to enhance the occupational readiness and professional growth of LOG Fin in the CAF.

LOGISTICS OFFICER FINANCE (LOG FIN) OCCUPATIONAL STREAM

Upon enrolment in the CAF, all Logistics officers are assigned to an Environment (Sea, Air, or Land). There are four Developmental Periods (DP) in the Officer Professional Development System (OPDS). At each DP, officers are trained and/or employed to further develop their occupational skills, knowledge, and experience.² Upon completion of the Basic Military Officer Qualification course (BMOQ), Logistics officers complete respective environmental training (i.e. MARS II, AFOD 1, BMOQ L), aimed at providing initial indoctrination and development training. Occupational jobs provide the foundational competencies for the Logistics occupation and serve as a framework for overall career development. Occupational proficiencies are predominately developed at the Canadian Forces Logistics Training Centre (CFLTC), including the Logistics Officer Common Course (AILJ), which provides introductory level training common to all Primary Logistics Functions (PLF).³ Subsequently, Logistics officers undergo Environment specific Logistics training. For instance, Logistics officers in the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) complete the Logistic Officer Common Sea (LOCS) course, followed by the Supply Chain Management (AJSI) and Financial Services Officers (ALGB) courses as pre-requisites to attaining their Occupational Functional Point (OFP). Once OFP is attained, trained Logistics officers are normally posted to an operational unit based on their particular Environment in order to develop and apply their core occupational

² Canada. Department of National Defence. A-PD-055-002/PP-001 MOSID 00328 Logistics Specification, *Canadian Forces Manual of Military Occupational Structure: Job Based Occupational Specification for Logistics Occupation*. March 2016. 1-2

³ Canada. Department of National Defence. *Logistics Officer Promotion Criteria to the rank of Sub Lieutenant/ Lieutenant and Principal Qualification Assignment*. Logistics Directive, Vol. 2-002, December 2016.

training in practice.⁴ For instance, Naval Logistics Officers (NLOs) are typically positioned in a respective coastal Formation for occupational progression while they await selection for formal at-sea training as the Assistant Logistics officer onboard a Her Majesty's Canadian (HMC) Ship in pursuit of their Head of Department (HOD) qualification (ALGA). The Canadian Army (CA) and the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), each conduct similar Logistics officer training programs tailored towards their unique Environmental, employment, and operational requirements.

By reason of job performance requirements (task, skill and knowledge), training efficiency, and operational requirements, additional occupational sub-divisions are created under Special Force (Mobilization) LOG, delivered through Occupational Speciality Specifications (OSS) training, such as the LOG Fin occupational stream.⁵ Once sufficient foundational experience and knowledge has been attained at the OFP level, Logistics officers are carefully assessed for stream suitability by their respective Occupational Manager and Career Manager, in conjunction with member input and organizational needs. Informal on-the-job training is also frequently employed by each Environment to supplement the formal training curriculum, notably while trainees remain on the Basic Training List (BTL) prior to reaching OFP. From this perspective, trained Logistics officers represent a critical supportive asset in the continued training and development cycle of untrained Logistics officers, particularly from a coaching and mentorship relationship.

The core functions of the LOG Fin occupational stream continue to experience considerable demand and shift in strategic and operational focus, recently characterized by SSE

⁴ Canada. Department of National Defence. A-PD-055-002/PP-001 MOSID 00328 Logistics Specification, *Canadian Forces Manual of Military Occupational Structure: Job Based Occupational Specification for Logistics Occupation*. March 2016. 2-20.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 2-8.

for improvements in financial transparency and accountability of how the defence budget is managed, spent, and reported to the Government of Canada (GoC).⁶ The job functions of LOG Fin are captured across a myriad of financial management activities aimed to ensure that statutory and fiduciary obligations are met by the Department of National Defence (DND), including internal resource management, business planning, financial reporting (internal and external), accounting operations, compliance and assurance, financial policy and procedures, advisory services, and internal controls.⁷

As the CAF seeks to manage current and emerging challenges relative to budgetary constraints and heightened fiscal scrutiny, LOG Fin continue to be relied upon extensively to ensure the efficient use of resources, and that resources are aligned to defence program priorities. Given the relatively low number of LOG Fin employed across the CAF,⁸ there is routinely a requirement for heightened degree of employment autonomy. As a consequence, there is an intensifying demand for sound technical competency, up-to-date knowledge, and professional agility from LOG Fin to meet both the functional reporting requirements of the Deputy Minister (DM) and Assistant Deputy Minister (Finance), while supporting operative goals and objectives commensurate with positional Chain of Command. Further, the adoption of an increasingly results-oriented and accountable financial management structure in DND has placed greater emphasis on LOG Fin to integrate and adopt industry best accounting practices, including a requirement that LOG Fin will attain financial accreditation (i.e. Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation) or an equivalency accepted by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, for appointment to select senior LOG Fin positions (i.e. Level 1 Comptrollers,

⁶ Canada. Department of National Defence. *Strong Secure Engaged Canada's Defence Policy*. 2017. Accessed: <http://dgpaapp.forces.gc.ca/en/canada-defence-policy/docs/canada-defence-policy-report.pdf>, May 2019.

⁷ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, "Policy on Financial Management." Accessed: <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32495>, May 2019.

⁸ Canada. Department of National Defence. *National Defence Comptroller's Conference and Forum: Military Financial Officer Roadmap & Financial Service Administrators*. Director General Budget. 6 November 2018.

Director Budget, Director General Budget, etc.) in the CAF.⁹ By establishing such prerequisites, the LOG Fin occupational stream would serve to align their technical and professional competencies similar to that of the Financial Management (FI) group within the Canadian Public Service, as stipulated by the Treasury Board Policy on Financial Management.¹⁰ Unfortunately, as the demand for LOG Fin continues to rise, coupled with a dated, and arguably just-in-time OSS training and development program, there is a growing risk that the *knowledge gap* facing today's LOG Fin will continue to expand, thus jeopardizing occupational readiness and operational agility.

Within the roles and expectations of LOG Fin, there is a requirement to assume function and authority at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels, each demanding a distinctive degree of technical skill, experience, and knowledge base. LOG Fin are often required to work independently, or with minimal staff resources, thus creating further challenges given the perpetuating knowledge gap intensified by senior LOG Fin attrition, at rate exceeding the readiness and experience level of successors.¹¹ Such disparity arguably affects the CAF's ability to ensure a sufficient number of qualified LOG Fin are available for employment, both at home and abroad, to deliver requisite financial management capability within the CAF.

The official terms of reference for LOG Fin are inherently similar between military positions; however, the depth of knowledge and level of responsibility changes significantly from one rank to the next, not to mention the impact of frequent geographical postings to satisfy career management and succession management requirements. While breadth of knowledge and organizational diversity can complement professional and technical competency growth, it also

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, "Policy on Financial Management." Accessed: <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32495>, May 2019.

¹¹ Canada. Department of National Defence. *National Defence Comptroller's Conference and Forum: Military Financial Officer Roadmap & Financial Service Administrators*. Director General Budget. 6 November 2018.

places additional strain on LOG Fin to quickly solidify professional and experiential development. Unfortunately, many LOG Fin are only exposed to a limited segment of financial management activities, or for a minimal duration, whether a result of delineating job functions between military and civilian positions, or simply varying position scope, reporting, and organizational structure. It is frequently suggested that public servants provide a viable substitution for LOG Fin positions in the CAF as a means to strengthen business and corporate continuity; however, it is argued that LOG Fin must maintain an appropriate *ship-to-shore* ratio or comparatively, a balanced *static-to-deployed* positional relationship in order to ensure requisite knowledge and occupational readiness meets future operational demands.

TRADITIONAL MENTORSHIP – A LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to determine if mentorship is a suitable SHRM approach to facilitate LOG Fin professional growth, it is important to explore the theoretical groundwork and subsequent effects of mentoring. The concept of mentorship has evolved significantly over recent years, including wide adoption across the business sector, academia, and even military organizations. However, scholarly debate exists relative to a definite definition of mentoring.¹² For the purpose of this paper, Kram's (1985) definition of the mentor relationship will be applied as the foundation for assessment, termed as a relationship derived between two persons, the mentor who asserts the senior role of coaching and offers assistance to a junior member in an organization aimed to evoke developmental impact and behavioural influence.¹³ Kram argued that mentoring can have a positive effect on protégé learning and development, notably through valuable knowledge transfer and information sharing. Cited for her depth of field research on mentoring functions, she devised a set of relationship functions, *career* and *psychosocial*, descriptors of the roles and

¹² Zachary, L. J. (2005). *Creating a Mentoring Culture: The organization's guide*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

¹³ Kram, K.E., "Phases of the mentor relationship", in *Academy of Management Journal*, 26, 1983. 608-625.

behaviours that drive the mentor / protégé relationship.¹⁴ More specifically, *career* functions embrace coaching techniques, sponsoring, protecting, and guiding a protégé towards potential opportunities in pursuit of performance objectives and desired recognition. A mentoring relationship based on *psychosocial* functions is said to be based more on role modeling and counselling mechanisms by the mentor. This functions aims to positively influence and guide protégé behaviour through mutual respect, often resonating a more intimate and longer lasting mentorship relationship commensurate with personal and professional development advice.¹⁵ Therefore, it is assessed that the mentoring relationship, when fostered correctly, can serve as a valuable tool to promote and leverage protégé potential, while reinforcing invaluable knowledge transfer for professional development and personal growth.

From the leadership perspective of the United States Army, mentorship is defined as “the proactive development of each subordinate through observing, assessing, coaching, teaching, developmental counselling, and evaluating that results in people being treated with fairness and equal opportunity.”¹⁶ Subsequently, it is suggested that the basis of mentoring should not be based on attaining immediate goals or short term objectives, but rather to evoke a sustained and impartial relationship between the mentor and protégé for personal growth and development. Similarly, the *CAF Mentoring Handbook* recognizes mentorship as a critical component of military leadership development, as a “mentoring relationship offers a more holistic approach to learning and creates an environment conducive to receiving the appropriate development in the areas of leadership, professional, career, and person growth.”¹⁷ Furthermore, it is acknowledged that successful mentorship relationships can also provide great credibility and institutional

¹⁴ Middendorf, T., "The Impact of Career, Psychosocial, and Spiritual Functions of Mentoring on Undergraduate Students" *Ed.D. Dissertations*, 2010. 2.

¹⁵ Harney, R.A., “Development of a Formal Army Officer Mentorship Model for the Twenty-First Century,” U.S. Army War College, 2000. 51.

¹⁶ United States Army, FM 22-1000 *Military Leadership* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army), 1999. 11.

¹⁷ Lagacé-Roy, D. and LCol Knackstedt, J., *Mentoring Handbook*. Ottawa: Canadian Defence Academy, 2007. 2

benefit in terms of job satisfaction, work productivity, retention, organizational culture and ethos. In 2015, the United States Navy released its *Navy Leader Development Strategy*, a comprehensive framework, based on conclusive empirical research, study, and meta-analysis. The strategy recognized that “people are our most valuable and important strategic asset”¹⁸ and that deliberate development of individual sailors and officers must become a top priority for the longevity and success of the Navy. Consequently, mentorship was identified as a key component in the fourth core element of leader development, underlining the conception that personal development is a core function of an effective military mentor-leader, including functions of performance evaluation, coaching, counseling, and mentoring.¹⁹ Further, a recent study and meta-analysis was conducted by Eby, comparing mentored and non-mentored individuals; the results confirmed that those who participated in a mentor / protégé relationship reported greater job satisfaction and commitment to their organization, reinforced by a range of favourable behavioural, attitudinal, health-related, and career-based advantages for the organization.²⁰ Therefore, based on the literature review and succeeding results from recent mentoring studies, it is shown that substantial positive effect can be realized from both an organizational and leadership perspective; further examination is required to understand the variances between *informal* and *formal* mentorship programs to assess suitability for LOG Fin in the CAF.

INFORMAL AND FORMAL MENTORING PROGRAMS

The basis of informal and formal mentoring programs differ significantly in terms of how the mentor /protégé relationship is formed, its evolution over time, and the resulting outcomes sought. The premise of a well-executed mentorship program or an organic mentoring

¹⁸ United State Navy, *The Navy Leader Development Strategy*, (Washington, D.C.: 2014). 3.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

²⁰ Eby, L.T., Allen, T.D., Evans, S.C., “Does Mentoring Matter? A Multidisciplinary Meta-Analysis Comparing Mentored and Non-Mentored Individuals, in *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, Vol. 72(2), 2009. 254.

relationship aims “to shape employee development, screen for performance, leverage networks, inspire employees, and instil organizational norms.”²¹ However, as articulated by Levinson and colleagues, “mentoring is not a simple, all-or-none matter.”²² Researchers suggest there is a considerable variation in amount of knowledge transfer achieved and the level of satisfaction obtained along the continuum of informal to formal mentoring programs.

Informal mentoring relationships tend to develop spontaneously, and are traditionally evoked through a self-selection process, requiring mutual identification, often characterized by mentors selecting protégés who demonstrate potential and/or remind them of themselves, and protégés who identify with and/or view someone senior as a potential role model.²³ As defined by Chao, informal mentorship is “an intense work relationship between senior (mentor) and junior (protégé) organizational members...the relationship is not managed, structured, nor formally recognized by the organization...it occurs without external involvement.”²⁴ Moreover, as informal mentorship is less austere in practice, the relationship tends to evolve over time dependent on the needs and goals of the mentoring relationship, not necessarily the organization.²⁵ Therefore, it is argued that informal mentoring relationships are more likely fostered through commonality of intrinsic values, a foundation of perceived similarity, professional/academic interests, and professional ambition, thus supporting mutually beneficial results for a sustained mentor / protégé relationship.

²¹ Kopsler, G.J., “Mentoring in the Military: Not everybody get it”, in *Military Review*, 82(6), 2002. 42.

²² Levinson, D. J., Darrow, G. N., Klein, E. B., Levinson, M. H., & McKee., *The Seasons of a Man's Life*. New York: 1978, 100.

²³ Ragins, B.R., Cotton, J.L, Miller, J.S., “Marginal mentoring: the effect of type of mentor, quality or relationship and program design on work and career attitudes”, in *Academy of Management Journal*, 43, 2000. 1179.

²⁴ Chao, G. T., Walz, P. M., & Gardner, P. D., “Formal and informal mentorships: A comparison on mentoring functions and contrast with non-mentored counterparts”, in *Personnel Psychology*, 45, 1992. 620.

²⁵ Blake-Beard S.D., “Taking a hard look at formal mentoring programs: a consideration of potential challenges facing women”, in *Journal of Management Development*, 20, 2001. 333.

Conversely, formal mentoring relationships are deliberate in nature, “most often instigated by organizational representatives and involve a process for assigning employees or managers to mentor-protégé pairings.”²⁶ A formal mentoring environment is often led by a facilitator or organization champion, typically responsible to oversee program design and delivery in accordance with operative and human resource goals, supported by the organizations mission and vision. Unlike the organic disposition of informal mentoring, both parties in a formal mentoring program typically concur to a mentoring agreement, including a terms of reference outlining relationship goals, milestones, expectations, and even meeting frequency and duration. In addition, while the intent of formal mentoring is to appropriately match *compatible* mentors and protégés, such a feat can be significantly constrained or deterred by mentor / protégé availability (supply vs. demand), time management factors (i.e. multiple mentor pairings, scheduling, absence periods, geographical/proximity, interest, etc.), not to mention risk for protégé reluctance and averseness.

In fact, while some formal mentoring environments may prove highly satisfying to one individual, others “may be marginally satisfying, dissatisfying, or even, at the very extreme end of the continuum, dysfunctional or harmful.”²⁷ Consequently, a formal mentoring program that hinges on a lack of personal identification or intrapersonal disconnection, may actually do more harm than good relative to protégé personal development, growth, and knowledge transfer (i.e. lower job satisfaction, weak morale/sense of accomplishment, inferior work productivity, and negative attitude). Likewise, it is also important to consider the potential bi-product effects on the organization and its workforce if a formal mentoring program. If a formal mentoring program is carefully designed and implemented, the organizational and personal benefits can be

²⁶ Egan, T.M., Song, Z., “Are facilitated mentoring programs beneficial? A randomized experimental field study”, in *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 72, 2008. 352.

²⁷ Eby, L. T., McManus, S., Simon, S. A., and Russell, J. E. A., “The protégé’s perspective regarding negative mentoring experiences: The development of a taxonomy”, in *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 57, 2000. 1178.

exponential; however, if it is ill-managed and executed, there can be a risk for perceived elements of employee partiality, unfairness, favouritism/bias, and cronyism.²⁸ Therefore, when considering the distinct variations between an informal and formal mentorship program, it is apparent that the degree of satisfaction and/or perceived personal development garnered by a protégé from a mentor will be critically dependent on a “right-fit” relationship. Any program gains in one mentoring relationship could also become overshadowed by negative condemnation and loss of organizational credibility, thus highlighting the importance to design a SHRM formal mentoring program that accounts for such sensitivities in order to empower attainment of personnel and organizational goals, thus fostering a conducive and favourable organizational culture.

DISCUSSION

As stated in *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations*, “leaders are responsible for mentoring people in apprenticeship positions and challenging assignments, and encourage and support subordinate participation in educational, professional, and personal-growth activities over their career span.”²⁹ When considering the functional roles and responsibilities of LOG Fin, there is an adept requirement to ensure “financial resources of the GoC are well managed in the delivery of programs to Canadians and safeguarded through balanced controls that enable flexibility and manage risk.”³⁰ Given the current occupational training and development challenges facing LOG Fin, coupled by an expanding knowledge and

²⁸ Canada. Department of National Defence. *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Leading the Institution*. Canadian Defence Academy-Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2007. 5.

²⁹ Canada. Department of National Defence. A-PA-005-000/AP-004, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations*. Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy-Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005. 50.

³⁰ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, "Policy on Financial Management." Accessed: <https://www.tbssct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32495>, May, 2019.

experience gap within the community, perpetuated by increasing attrition of senior personnel, it is evident that positive control and action is required by LOG Fin leadership. On the basis of the aforementioned literature review and formed results, formal mentoring is assessed as a viable SHRM approach to assist in this objective. As a key enabler for heightened knowledge transfer and behavioural influence, a formal mentoring program signals a complimentary solution to help offset current LOG Fin deficiencies, while reinvigorating an occupational culture of collectiveness and professional growth. Moreover, by adopting a structured and deliberate approach to address the ensuing and prevalent knowledge gap, LOG Fin leadership will take a stride forward to demonstrate its commitment and investment in the CAFs *People-First* strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

While relative debate remains among researchers and academia as to the organizational effects of an informal and formal mentoring program, the following recommendations are provided in favour of implementing a LOG Fin formal mentoring program:

1. Devise a LOG Fin Leadership Strategy: successful execution of a formal mentoring program will require a detailed LOG Fin Leadership Strategy, supported by an Occupational Analysis (OA) and a comprehensive review of LOG Fin training and professional development curriculums. A common framework for leadership development will incorporate essential aspects relative to how mentoring provides value to the organization and to individual development (both the mentor and protégé). While various forms and degrees of informal mentoring relationships already exist within LOG Fin, the LOG Fin Strategy seeks to formalize a systematic process to increase awareness and underscore mentoring as a relevant and critical leader competence, one that should be infused and applied at all stages of personal and professional development in the CAF.

2. LOG Fin Mentoring Steering Group & Team Composition: In support of the LOG Fin Leadership Strategy, the creation of a LOG Fin Mentoring Steering Group will be responsible for the overall governance and deliberate management process of the formal mentoring program. In order for the LOG Fin mentoring program to be successful, a defined process approach should be applied to meet sought strategic objectives; recognized as ‘good practice’ within industry and business, a project management processes approach should be adopted; the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide) is recommended to guide the LOG Fin formal mentoring program through its five process groups: *Initiating, Planning, Executing, Monitoring and Controlling, and Closing* (if required).³¹ In terms of team composition, the CAFs senior LOG Fin, Director General Budget (rank of Commodore/Brigadier-General) is recommended to assume the role as *Team Champion*, supported by *Level 1 Team Leaders* (designated as Level 1 Comptrollers at the rank of Captain(N)/Colonel) as integral members and influencers to ensure environment-based occupational management requirements, sub-cultures, member preferences, and employment type/location is considered during the mentor / protégé assessment and pairing process. Select *Team Administrators* (key LOG Fin positions at the rank of Commander/Lieutenant-Colonel) should be assigned to represent subsequent working group level discussions, as well to provide program coordination and support for geographical and operational considerations. The LOG Fin Steering Group should aim to motivate and normalize, where possible, LOG Fin mentoring activities for aligned program objectives, while

³¹ Project Management Institute. *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge* (PMBOK® Guide), Sixth Edition. 2017. 4.

evolving occupational training and professional development through its scope of influence and requisite expertise for effective service/program delivery.

3. Mentor / Protégé Assessment & Selection Criteria: In a traditional approach to formal mentoring programs, mandatory matching of mentors and protégés occurs; however, it is argued that full assessment and/or high quality mentorship training and guidance for mentors should also be incorporated into this process. In fact, the mentor-leader dyad should represent an essential selection criteria, as not all individuals are arguably equally capable or adept to fulfil the mentor role. Moreover, rather than focusing exclusively on a centralized one-to-one matching process, consideration should also be given to voluntary or self-selections, coupled with an option for additional formal team-based mentoring. Such an approach affords a mentor to meet (physical or virtual presence) with multiple protégés concurrently, thus establishing enhanced community networking with other LOG Fin and offering a mentoring environment for holistic professional development, guidance, and knowledge transfer.

4. Mentorship Reinforcement & Awareness: A LOG Fin formal mentoring program requires periodic review to ensure the results are reflective of personnel and organizational needs. The merits of the program should be emphasized and incorporated in frequent occupational professional development opportunities and publications, such as the annual National Defence Comptroller's Conference & Forum, the RCLS Annual National Capital Region Meet & Greet, ADM(Fin) Lunch & Learn sessions, and periodic articles within the RCLS Newsletter. Moreover, reinforcement and awareness of mentoring should extend beyond the CAF financial community, and incorporated in relative CAF Command Team and Leadership training curriculum as a valued competency for subordinate development.

Therefore, it is affirmed that a successful LOG Fin formal mentoring program will require active and deliberate mentor-leader attributes to bolster the professional and personal development of protégés. Unfortunately, mentoring is not inherent in the current LOG Fin occupational structure; by addressing mentorship as a value leadership activity through a structured project management process, there is increased potential to identify and align mutually-beneficial returns, including more intimate mentor-protégé connections for sustained knowledge transfer and personal development, while capitalizing on the provision of increased agility and responsiveness to meet the occupational and professional needs of the CAF.

CONCLUSION

Through reasoned argument and analysis, it was demonstrated that a formal mentoring program is a viable and commendable SHRM approach, capable to stimulate professional growth and enhance occupational readiness of LOG Fin, whereby promoting a sustained and highly skilled workforce for tomorrow.

People remain at the core of everything the CAF does to deliver on its mandate to be *Strong at home, Secure in North America, and Engaged in the world.*³² However, the LOG Fin occupational stream continues to be pressured by growing institutional demands for heightened fiscal probity and transparency, yet lacking modernized occupational training and development. Outpaced and misaligned to the expected professional competencies of industry and the GoC, it is clear that LOG Fin requires substantial investment, an action committed to by the CAF and by its leadership commensurate with its *People-First* strategy.

The adoption of a proven and deliberate formal mentoring approach will not resolve all occupational and readiness issues for LOG Fin, but it is assessed to evoke the mentor-leader

³² Canada. Department of National Defence. *Mandate of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces*. Accessed: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/mandate.html>, May 2019.

dyad and provide invaluable sustenance to promote protégé personal growth, development and organizational stability. It is concluded that the future success of LOG Fin undoubtedly requires continued review of its formal and informal training curriculum; however, an opportunity exists to leverage a formal mentoring program to better guide, promote, and support the personal growth of the LOG Fin occupation. The emergent LOG Fin knowledge gap, debatably fueled by attrition and heightened work autonomy, presents a significant debt to overcome in the near term. In response, further examination and research into the influence of formal military mentoring on organizational commitment and attrition is recommended as a means to enhance future mentoring program design, process, and mentor-leader development.

The intent of this paper was to assess the viability of a formal mentoring program to increase occupational readiness and professional growth of the LOG Fin occupational stream; the basis of this thesis has been satisfied.

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