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Mentoring in the Canadian Armed Forces: Are We Missing Out?

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MENTORING IN THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES: ARE WE MISSING OUT?

By Major J-F Dore

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ABSTRACT

Mentoring brings us together – across generation, class, and often race – in a manner that forces us to acknowledge our interdependence, to appreciate, in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s words, that 'we are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied to a single garment of destiny.'

– Marc Freedman, *The Big Shift*

Mentoring as a concept is proven to positively influence job performance, satisfaction and members' personal growth. This paper demonstrates mentoring-focused gaps within the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) systems. First, it examines mentoring and the CAF systems involved that would affect mentorship. Then, a benchmarking exercise is conducted and factors such as learning and members' psychosocial development are studied to support the analysis. The analysis highlights some critical facts regarding CAF's approach to mentorship and their impact on its culture.

First, benchmarking demonstrate that the military tends not to support the psychosocial function of mentoring. Second, mentoring programs un-aligned with strategic goals and initiatives are rarely successful. Third, mentoring needs to be supported with various tools. Finally, engagement strategies need to be developed to ensure strategic engagement is sustained to create support for programs. In support of the findings, the CAF should develop a mentorship vision to enable and improve organizational learning. This approach would refresh the CAF's leadership doctrine and include a mentorship program for the institution. It would provide tools, resources and create an environment where mentorship relationships can flourish. Institutional level engagement from our leaders would be required over a prolonged period. In sum, this thesis provides an analysis of the concepts at play for mentoring in the CAF. This can enable and inform a campaign plan design with supporting tools for the organization and the soldiers' needs for growth and adaptability.

1 – Introduction

The true tragedy in most peoples' lives is that they are far better than they imagine themselves to be and, as a result, end up being much less than they might be.

– Earl R. Smith II, *Mentoring: Forty Meditations*

The Department of National Defence (DND) is structured to employ 70,000 full-time Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members and up to 25,000 civilian employees.¹ Within its structure lives many different sub-cultures represented by function, element, rank, geography, language, and many more that are not apparent. The Canadian people and the government expect its soldiers and civilians to exemplify our core values and represent Canada by steadfast example.²

Within the CAF, leadership is central to the organization's success and engrained throughout soldiers' careers and training. Soldiers learn their skills and sharpen their aptitudes through formal training throughout their career progression and sometimes more successfully, through experiential learning. The institution and the chain of command drive this journey through employment, career management and talent management to meet the needs of the institution. The Canadian Forces Professional Development System (CFPDS) represents the framework for the development of our soldiers. The institution manages soldiers' progression through the training system and the workforce outputs required to field an effective force.

CFPDS's four pillars include training, education, experience and self-development. The first three are the responsibility of the chain of command. The self-development pillar falls upon the soldier to decipher and address their personal circumstances and needs. Although the CAF

¹ Government of Canada, "Mandate of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces," last accessed 24 February 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/mandate.html>

² Throughout the paper, the term soldier refers to officers and non-commissioned members of all ranks as well as members of the three services, the Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Army and the Royal Canadian Air Force. The term members is used as well.

can provide many opportunities to further education and training, there are currently no formal, CAF-wide programs that rely on mentoring or coaching available for soldiers' self-development.

Mentoring and coaching offer a powerful value proposition for employers and members alike, supporting individual growth, leadership, institutional awareness, culture change, increased job satisfaction, and many more advantages. It creates better linkages throughout our sub-cultures and provides a better understanding of the current and future problem space within the force, and therefore better solutions and implementation to workplace issues. It has also proven to mitigate human resource (HR) issues that plague organizations.³

Mentoring is somewhat part of our organization within the leadership culture; unfortunately, the CAF has not provided enough opportunities within our professional military development system for all our soldiers to benefit from this type of knowledge exchange. In the early 2000's the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) issued his guidance for Officer Professional Development (OPD) to meet the demands of the future, *Officership 2020*.⁴ Two years later, the new CDS published the equivalent direction for the non-commissioned officers, *NCM Corps 2020*.⁵ Both documents included mentorship as a tool to develop soldiers and contribute to the military ethos of our profession. However, that vision has not materialized.

Currently, formal mentorship and coaching programs are only available to the top executives of the CAF through the National Security Program and in Ottawa with the National

³ Tammy D. Allen and Lillian T. Eby, *The Blackwell Handbook of Mentoring: A Multiple Perspectives Approach* (Oxford, MA; Blackwell Publishing, 2010), 161 and 211.

⁴ Canada. Dept. of National Defence, *Canadian Officership in the 21st Century (Officership 2020): Strategic Guidance for the Canadian Forces Officer Corps and the Officer Professional Development System* (Ottawa: Dept. of National Defence, 2001), 5 and 8.

⁵ Canada. Dept. of National Defence, *The Canadian Forces Non-Commissioned Member in the 21st Century (NCM Corps 2020): Strategic Guidance for the Canadian Forces Non-Commissioned Member Corps and the NCM Professional Development System* (Ottawa: Dept. of National Defence, 2003), 6 and 7.

Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) Executive Coaching Pilot (ECP).⁶ These programs are only for the top talent-managed officers of the CAF, less than 1% of the workforce. The Canadian Defence Academy (CDA) published in 2007 a mentoring handbook to assist those wishing to participate in a mentoring relationship. However, it has not received wide dissemination and only provides the theoretical concept to assist in the activity. Is the CAF currently failing soldiers because it does not facilitate their growth to achieve their full potential? Workplace surveys currently state that only 40% of employees feel they are achieving their potential. Could this be true for the CAF as well?⁷

The literature on mentoring and coaching within the workplace, academia and youth is extensive. Pioneers in the field of leadership development, such as American Kathy E. Kram and Sir John Whitmore, have developed comprehensive frameworks widely in use supporting the field of study. There is also an acknowledgement by these leading theorists that more research is needed to produce reliable results to cement currently accepted outcomes and views. They also view new emerging adjacent fields of study, such as e-learning, network theory, adult learning theory, emotional and cultural intelligence theory and others as complementary to their theories, requiring more in-depth analysis. All this to say, the field of study offers a positive value proposition for employers, and its refinement will continue to improve its current constructs.

In the military realm, the utility of mentorship is seldom contested. It is reflected in the CAF's leadership doctrine, the CFPDS and the implementation of mentorship programs by some of our allies.⁸ What remains to be seen in the Canadian context is a juxtaposition of the CFPDS,

⁶ Canada. Dept. of National Defence. *Canadian Armed Forces Evaluation Report. National Defence Headquarters Executive Coaching Pilot Phase 2* (Ottawa: Dept. National Defence, 2020), 31 and 33.

⁷ Sir John Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance* (Great Britain: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2017), Preface.

⁸ Ashley Gleiman and Jan K. Gleiman, "Mentoring in the Military," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 2020, no. 167-168 (2020): 61.

career progression, organizational learning factors, and other such influences to the theoretical mentorship framework to identify a way forward in establishing mentorship best practices for the CAF.

This paper aims to discuss mentorship and its advantages, identify key factors for the CAF that would influence mentoring strategies or program implementation, and it offers an implementation model for a potential mentorship program. This is a necessary analysis as the CAF's work environment and culture offer some distinct characteristics that are not present in the civilian world. This examination should illuminate critical factors facing the CAF when dealing with mentorship allowing for the best possible outcomes for our personnel. This study demonstrates an additional need for mentoring engagements within the CAF to support organizational learning, diversity, performance and human resources strategies.

This study is organized in four main chapters. Chapter 2 will explain the base mentoring concepts, with chapter 3 focusing on the soldier, the environment and the development and learning strategy for the CAF. Chapter 4 will examine benchmarking within a few select organizations, while chapter 5 will examine additional factors for consideration and implementation models.

2 – Mentoring Concepts

Treat a man as he is and he will remain as he is. Treat a man as he can and should be and he will become as he can and should be.

– Stephen Covey, *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

This chapter will cover the basic concepts for mentoring, providing the foundation for examining the soldier life cycle as it relates to mentoring in chapter 3. It will also support benchmarking presented in chapter 4. The works of Kram, Whitmore and others experts in the field provide the basis of the concepts with many more supporting articles.

Mentoring

The concept of mentoring has been present in the business world since the late 1920's with the majority of the academic work done on the subject in the past 40 years. However, most experts trace the phenomenon to ancient times in Greek mythology with Homer's *Odyssey* where Odysseus leaves his son, Telemachus, under the tutelage of Mentor when he leaves for the Trojan War.⁹ Thus, the first case study for a mentor and mentee relationship was established. The concept is well alive through many different contexts, such as academia, politics and technical trades. Although not formally presented in academia before the twentieth century, many other examples can be found throughout history that fit some of the parameters that are now described in mentoring. Some of the most revered thinkers, such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, shared such relationships that shaped generations. The same is true of Robespierre and Napoleon, and closer to our times, we can look to Dr. Benjamin Mays and Martin Luther King Jr., Warren Buffet and Bill Gates, with their relationships exhibiting some characteristics of mentorship. The

⁹ Daniel Lagacé-Roy, Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, *Mentoring Handbook* (Ottawa, Ont.: National Defence, 2007), 3.

context of these relationships is varied; some have familial ties, some occur within the academic setting and others within the workplace.¹⁰

A leader in the field of study, Kathy E. Kram, defined many of the concepts described in this chapter in 1985. As she illustrates in a subsequent publication, the social context now differs tremendously and requires re-evaluation through the current social, cultural and technological developments of the past 30 years.¹¹ The concept of mentoring can be broken down in type, function, and characteristics to simplify our approach for analysis. First, the definition from the CAF Mentoring Handbook by Dr. Lagacé-Roy is examined, where he describes mentoring as:

...a professional relationship in which a more experienced person (a mentor) voluntarily shares knowledge, insight, and wisdom with a less experienced person (a mentee) who wishes to benefit from that exchange. It is a medium to long-term learning relationship founded on respect, honesty, trust and mutual goals.¹²

The definition aligns with other academic work done in the field and is comparable with most work listed within the bibliography, including Kram's definition. Not all agree on the time horizon described and the extent of the emotional bond required inside the relationship. Within this construct, the mentor represents many different roles. They can be a sponsor, coach, challenger, protector, advocate, role model, counsel, friend, and other supportive roles.¹³ These roles can be characterized into two distinct functions, one career-focused and one focused on the psychosocial needs of the mentee.

The mentoring relationship can develop informally or formally through a variety of programs and settings. These can have a tremendous influence on the success and value of the

¹⁰ Alison M. Lucas, "A Case for Mentorship: Developing a Practical Guide for the Aspiring Mentor" (JCSP 45, Canadian Forces College, 2019), 4.

¹¹ Belle Rose Ragins and Kathy E. Kram, "The Roots and Meaning of Mentoring", in *The Handbook of Mentoring at Work: Theory, Research, and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2008), 16.

¹² Daniel Lagacé-Roy, *Mentoring Handbook*, 5.

¹³ Allen and Eby, *The Blackwell Handbook of Mentoring: A Multiple Perspectives Approach*, 161.

relationship. The context for the relationship is essential as it has a significant impact on the usefulness, result and processes involved in the conduct of the relationship. The areas of study for mentoring can be broken down into youth mentoring, academic mentoring and workplace mentoring. Each has distinct benefits and goals.¹⁴ These are of particular value when the career life cycle of soldiers is examined from their swearing-in to the time they leave the Forces or retire. The majority go through early adulthood upon entry, between the ages of 18 and 26. Then they take part in education and training throughout their careers and are part of the workforce in between.¹⁵

Coaching

Another concept that has surfaced and become mainstream in the last 20 years is coaching. Most of the literature differentiates coaching from mentoring in a few key characteristics. For one, the duration for coaching is described as short-term. Second, the purpose of coaching is concentrated on a specific skill and outcome. Again taken from Dr. Lagacé-Roy CAF Mentoring Handbook, coaching is:

...a short-term relationship in which one person (coach) is focused on the development and enhancement of performance, skills, effectiveness, and potential of another person (coachee).¹⁶

There is a growing consulting industry in this field. What started as coaching for athletes has developed for use in the workplace.¹⁷ Variants of the concept are present in the field of management and sport. One of interest is coaching for performance described by Sir John Whitmore, a British authority on coaching: “unlocking people’s potential to maximize their

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Canada. Dept. of National Defence. *Annual Report on Regular Force Personnel 17/18* (Ottawa, Ont.: National Defence, 2018).

¹⁶ Daniel Lagacé-Roy, *Mentoring Handbook*, 5.

¹⁷ Sir John Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance*, 12.

performance.”¹⁸ Researchers in organizational leadership also provide multiple definitions from their research that align well with the above definitions.¹⁹ All these definitions within the mentor construct described by Lagacé-Roy are encompassed, as both these coaching definitions address a key aspect of mentorship, support to the mentee’s potential and development. The term executive coaching also surfaces in the literature within the human resources field of study. The outcomes associated with executive coaching focus on the organisational needs and context, and is therefore directed on the top echelon of most organisations.²⁰ This targeted approach is included in mentoring and the central idea of sharing knowledge and supporting learning is met.

Mentor and Mentee

Not all great leaders or teachers are suited as mentors. Such abilities to train, develop, coach individuals are often cited in terms of required abilities, and listening and communicating well are key to creating the mentor and mentee relationship. Mentees were also found to seek out mentors with high levels of emotional and cultural intelligence.²¹ Experience and knowledge of the industry or surrounding field are also of value, however not a necessity. Mentors must be willing to invest themselves, their energy and time into the relationship.

There are core abilities that are essential for mentoring. Dr. Lagacé-Roy described empathy, active listening, openness, good communication, a willingness to share, and others.²² Each of these may have a different value depending on the stages of the relationship, the stages of both parties’ careers, and other aspects of their personal and professional lives.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Terrence E. Maltbia, Victoria J. Marsick and Rajashi Ghosh, “Executive and Organizational Coaching: A Review of Insights Drawn from Literature to Inform HRD Practice,” *Advances in Developing Human Resources* 16, no. 2 (2014): 164.

²⁰ Ibid., 165.

²¹ Ragins and Kram. “The Roots and Meaning of Mentoring”, in *The Handbook of Mentoring at Work: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 2-10.

²² Daniel Lagacé-Roy, *Mentoring Handbook*, 13.

The mentee must be a willing participant in the relationship, possess an open mind and be honest with the mentor. Their ability to introspect and be willing to learn will significantly impact the establishment of the relationship.²³ The initiative always remains with the mentee. They must be willing to express what their needs are and elaborate on what they are willing to do to fulfil them to drive the relationship.²⁴

Mentoring can be categorized into two types, informal or formal. Formal mentoring programs are established where a third party is involved in facilitating the introduction between both parties. It is done via government social programs designed to assist underprivileged or at-risk children in youth settings. Or by non-for-profit organizations specializing in youth development to support community goals. Academic institutions have established mentoring programs to assist students in their post-secondary education, supported by staff or other senior students. In post-graduate studies, faculty members also deliver this function, in a limited fashion, through specific program advisory functions. Within the workplace context, mentorship is done through talent management or formal programs to develop employee potential. Although this aspect was the initial drive behind the establishment of mentoring programs, other benefits soon came to light, which will be discussed in the next section.

The host institution accepts and monitors the formal mentoring program, setting the overarching aims and goals. It also resources the program appropriately, whether financially or with other types of resources. The institution must also create the conditions necessary for the program to flourish by incentivizing participation and communicating the associated benefits.

²³ Ibid., 12.

²⁴ Janine Elke Ursula Knackstedt and University of Waterloo, "Organizational Mentoring: What about Protégé Needs?" ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2000;2001; 4.

Informal mentoring occurs when a mentor and mentee relationship develops spontaneously or naturally without the help of a third party.²⁵ This can occur in any setting and between any type of relationship between the mentor and mentee. Formal mentoring also occurs within the parameters set out by the program's policies and procedures. In contrast, informal mentorship develops where both participants set the course of the relationship with no external assistance. The research discussed in Blackwell's *Handbook of Mentoring* demonstrates informal mentorship to be more effective in most categories observed than formal mentoring.²⁶

Functions

The roles the mentor provides to the mentee can differ throughout the relationship and are broken down into two specific functions. The career function aims to fulfil the mentee's needs in terms of their career goals and aspirations. It can also focus on the institution's future needs for its workforce depending on the program's aims and goals or the mentee's needs. The mentor can take on the role of an advocate, protector, coach, career counsellor, etc.

On the other hand, the mentor also provides psychosocial support focused on personal growth and individual well-being.²⁷ The roles can include role model, friend and confidante. This is based on trust, intimacy and a strong interpersonal bond. The mentee's needs between the two functions will fluctuate throughout the relationship. This will depend on the professional and personal context of their life and their growth as an individual. Good communications for the relationship's expectations can navigate through the life cycle of the mentorship.

The mentoring relationship consists of four phases, as described by Kram: initiation, cultivation, separation and redefinition. Most relationships are fluid and progress differently,

²⁵ Allen and Eby, *The Blackwell Handbook of Mentoring: A Multiple Perspectives Approach*, 12.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 84.

²⁷ Ragins and Kram. "The Roots and Meaning of Mentoring." In *The Handbook of Mentoring at Work: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 3-6.

meaning they can shift back and forth from one phase to the other as needed by the mentee or mentor. Typically, the initiation phase lasts between 6 months to 1 year, and the cultivation phase can last up to 5 years. Separation usually occurs when the relationship structure is changed or when the mentee's psychological needs or mentor's changes significantly, which changes the relationship. This can last up to two years, after which the redefinition phase will start. Then the relationship will either end or move towards a friendship-like relationship.²⁸

As far as mentoring methodology is concerned, there are a few emerging trends in how relationships are managed and through what means. Traditionally mentoring occurred face to face in a setting outside of work when possible (when dealing with workplace relationships). Academic and youth mentoring can take place in an informal or formal setting as well. With the advent of videoconference tools and their improved performance in recent years, mentoring relationships have taken advantage of using virtual means to conduct mentoring. Another means where communication takes place is through email and instant messaging. As the workforce and population become more familiar and comfortable with email communications, mentoring relationships have taken advantage of these means to connect and communicate.

Alternative variation of the mentor and mentee relationship has occurred with mentors taking on more than one mentee and utilizing a group venue to assist mentees in their growth. In contrast, mentees have been engaging multiple mentors to obtain advice and counsel in different areas. This recognizes the value of multiple perspectives and expertise in different fields. Kram refers to this new approach as a constellation of mentors.²⁹ These new methods offer advantages such as ease of communications, eliminating geographic barriers and supporting peer-to-peer

²⁸ Kathy E. Kram, "Phases of the Mentor Relationship," *Academy of Management Journal* 26, no. 4 (1983): 609.

²⁹ Rangins and Kram, "The Roots and Meaning of Mentoring." In *The Handbook of Mentoring at Work: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 3-6.

learning facilitated by the mentor. Disadvantages include difficulty establishing a strong bond between mentor and mentee and conflict between mentees within a group.

Benefits

Research conducted in the last 40 years concludes that mentoring results in positive qualitative outcomes for both the organization and the individual.³⁰ Most research programs were conducted within frameworks that make causation challenging to determine, rendering results less likely used for follow-on research. Nonetheless, experts in leadership, management, education and social sciences continue to acknowledge the importance and value of mentoring within their disciplines.³¹

Youths involved in mentoring programs, whether formal or informal, demonstrate more involvement in their schools. They are less likely to experiment with drugs, overall demonstrating a more positive outlook on their future. The research shows an increase in performance by the mentee and the mentor in their current roles from a performance perspective. It also indicates positive outcomes career-wise for future promotion, earnings and employability for the mentee. Mentees report a better understanding of the organizational goals and their role within its function, enabling better performance and decision-making. The increase in performance from the mentor perspective remains to be studied sufficiently as studies have failed to establish causation. Job satisfaction remains one of the positive effects reflected by both the mentee and the mentor from the mentoring relationship. This affects retention, quality of life and work-life balance for participating employees.

A new trend observed in the last few years also demonstrates the value of mentoring to better understand the organization's workforce. What some call mentoring up or reverse

³⁰ Ibid., 16.

³¹ Ibid.

mentoring has shown some promise in helping more senior members of organizations learn from the establishment and remain relevant to current and future issues.³² A secondary effect sees newer group members more involved within the organizational culture, increasing retention and involvement. Academics propose these benefits as extremely useful to navigate diversity and other human resources issues plaguing the workforce.³³ Organizations such as General Motors and Proctor and Gamble have undertaken such programs with some success.

New employees assigned a mentor have also reported better job performance and organizational loyalty than new employees not assigned a mentor. Having a mentor has decreased the ambiguity present in starting a new job or function within an organization, resulting in better job satisfaction. Networking is also a positive outcome of the mentoring relationship. As both parties become more involved and comfortable in the relationship, the mentor will open and share his network with the mentee providing additional contacts and possible allies for support. The mentor can also cultivate a network of supporters who see what value he can bring to the organization creating a loyal employee base.

Organizations have been working on promoting diversity in their workforce for the last two decades. Understanding that diversity and culture in the workforce can contribute significantly to performance and employee satisfaction.³⁴ Mentoring can have a supporting role in creating positive outcomes in this area, ensuring that employees are exposed to divergent points of view and experiences.

³² Wendy Marcinkus Murphy, "Reverse Mentoring at Work: Fostering Cross-Generational Learning and Developing Millennial Leaders," *Human Resource Management* 51, no. 4 (2012): 550.

³³ Sanghamitra Chaudhuri and Rajashi Ghosh, "Reverse Mentoring: A Social Exchange Tool for Keeping the Boomers Engaged and Millennials Committed," *Human Resource Development Review* 11, no. 1 (2012): 57.

³⁴ Jeffrey M. Stouffer and Bernd Horn, Canada. Canadian Armed Forces. Wing, 17, and Canadian Defence Academy. *Educating the Leader and Leading the Educated: The Defence Learning, Education and Training Handbook*. (Kingston, Ont: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2013). 271.

As stated previously, mentoring is still in its infancy and is viewed in a positive light. However, some negative aspects must be examined. First is the idea of “cloning”. This can occur willingly or by accident when the mentor shapes and develops the mentee into a younger version of himself. This becomes an issue in two ways. First, it is known that diversity is an attribute that is positive for an organization. Therefore, organizations should want to produce employees with varied perspectives and styles and not a facsimile version of their mentor. Second, mentors are facing the issues and problems of today. Therefore, their tools and methods will most likely be obsolete when the mentee progresses to the work echelon held by the mentor, placing the mentee at a disadvantage.

Another negative aspect discussed in mentoring research includes the idea of preferential treatment perceived by others outside the mentor and mentee relationship. This can result in conflict between employees and supervisors alike. Conflict can also result if the mentoring relationship does not perform as expected. Perceptions can also affect on our view of the benefits of mentoring. The rising “star effect” suggests that the institution may perceive mentoring as increasing performance.³⁵ However, it could only be that only the individuals with strong positive attributes look for mentors and are sought by mentors for relationships.

Current Context

The current framework described above has provided a solid foundation for the last 40 years of study in the field. Kram’s pivotal work continues to set the stage to define where mentoring will evolve in the future. This includes new perspectives such as the learning alliance perspective versus the established mentor framework. Supporting areas of study for the future include areas such as network theory, adult development theory, communications theory and

³⁵ Ragins and Kram, “The Roots and Meaning of Mentoring.” in *The Handbook of Mentoring at Work: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 3-16.

personal change theory.³⁶ Applying these theories to the CAF's structure, culture, human resource framework and vision for the future CAF professional development framework adds another level of complexity to the study and implementation of a mentoring program.

Additional lenses to examine the mentoring framework proposed include human capital, which describes how knowledge, skills and abilities are acquired. Others could be movement capital, which discusses how organizations prepare and look for future work opportunities and path-goal clarity, which considers employees' personal growth.³⁷ The CAF should consider all these different lenses and others when dealing with implementing mentoring programs to maximize its success.

New tools are also emerging to facilitate mentoring, influencing how people connect at work and in their social life. Consulting firms now offer a full suite of tools to establish and run mentoring programs, including training software and program maintenance. Companies such as *eMentor Connect*³⁸, *Together Platform*³⁹, *Pushfar*⁴⁰ and *Mentor Complete*⁴¹ just to name a few, provide services to multinational companies, governments and non-profit organizations, supporting organizational goals and strategic aims. How organizations decide to employ these must consider this evolving aspect of how and when employees are looking to connect for their developmental objectives.

Finally, mentoring continues to be a lifelong activity that has been examined through short windows of time, with its impact focused on specific areas of study. As mentoring is observed through the timeframe of a career, the CAF must also examine how its personnel

³⁶ Ibid., 3-6.

³⁷ Ibid., 3-16.

³⁸ eMentorConnect, "Official Website," last accessed 27 April 2021, <https://ementorconnect.com>

³⁹ Together, "Official Website," last accessed 27 April 2021, <https://www.togetherplatform.com>

⁴⁰ PushFar Limited, "Official Website," last accessed 27 April 2021, <https://www.pushfar.com>

⁴¹ Engagedly, "Official Website," last accessed 27 April 2021, <https://www.mentoringcomplete.com>

navigate through their careers with their education, training, career progression and personal life. The analysis must include the mentees' and the mentors' perspectives to ensure people's availability to participate in such developmental programs.

Summary

The theoretical concept of mentorship is widely accepted, and the benefits and outcomes of the mentor and mentee relationship are well defined and recognized. Mentorship, as defined in this section, is currently occurring within the CAF. The question remains: are the conditions for it to flourish within the current structures present? As the CAF further defines the context of mentorship within the CAF, the examination must include the professional development pathways for officers and non-commissioned officers. What are the CAF's goals and priorities for human resources, and what learning culture does it want to establish in the future? A few key characteristics specific to the CAF will be examined in the following chapter when contemplating a mentorship program.

3 – The Canadian Armed Forces and Professional Development

Leaders should influence others in such a way that it builds people up, encourages and edifies them so they can duplicate this attitude in others.

– Bob Goshen, *The Power of Layered Leadership*

This chapter covers the CAF framework for its members' career progression. This, in addition to the mentorship concepts viewed in chapter 2, will enable a CAF-specific analysis for mentorship. The review will cover the CAF training system, soldier development, the soldier within the system and talent management. Examining these concepts will identify gaps in the training and development system and opportunities for engaging soldiers at critical inflection points in their careers. As discussed in the previous chapter, the environment in which the relationship occurs does impact its outcomes. Therefore, understanding the settings where soldiers operate, learn and grow impacts their mentorship needs and how the institution fills those needs.

The CAF continues to brand itself as an employer of choice within Canada. It differentiates itself from civilian employers in many ways. However, it does have some similarities with aspects of the corporate setting. The CAF offers an environment of continuous training and advancement in a challenging setting. Members participate in and face complex activities throughout all stages of their careers. Military culture also places a great deal of importance on leadership. All members are expected to lead in one manner or another. They are also required to face personal challenges imposed from their employment. These include relocations, deployments, time away from home and others that differ from conventional employment. All these aspects impact the manner mentorship is viewed and executed in the organization.

To alleviate issues faced by members through their careers, the CAF is attempting to implement several initiatives through the “Journey”. Chief Military Personnel, the lead organization in implementing this program, established lines of operations for its functional design for the way forward. Linked to the *Strong, Secure, Engaged* policy (SSE), the lines of operation highlight some of the critical focus areas meant to improve soldiers’ journey through their service.⁴² Two of the lines of operation deal with the concept of mentorship in one manner or another. The first, inclusive and respectful environment, specifically discusses implementing a mentoring program focused on diversity. The second discusses adaptive and progressive professional development. Again, the document sees mentorship mentioned as a tool to support the CAF’s strategic goals, just as it was described in the *Officership 2020* document. The CAF’s leadership recognizes the benefits of mentorship within the force. However, the CAF has not been able to operationalize such a concept for the force, and no details are available at this time for the new programs.

Canadian Forces Professional Development System

In order to meet its organizational needs, the CAF uses the CFPDS framework to develop its members for employment. The CFPDS is a career-long, comprehensive, integrated and sequential development process of education, training, self-development and experience.⁴³ The system imparts the necessary knowledge required for soldiers in order for the CAF to maintain professional soldiers. It finds its foundation in our leadership and capstone doctrine, clearly establishing member’s requirements for training and education, and experience and self-

⁴² Canada. Dept. of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (Ottawa, Ont.: National Defence, 2017), 22.

⁴³ Stouffer and Horn, *Educating the Leader and Leading the Educated: The Defence Learning, Education and Training Handbook*, 285.

development. Each of these pillars supports members through their careers to ensure they maintain a professional body of knowledge (PBK) supporting the profession of arms.⁴⁴

The first two pillars, education and training, represent the formal delivery of knowledge, which is standardized and dispensed through the institution to all members in their professional group. Experience on the other hand, is gained through deployments, employments and personal circumstances. It is non-conform, meaning all members will gain their experience through a varied set of experiences, different postings, positions and functions. Ultimately, the chain of command has control over many of these variables, and the member has his fair share of responsibility in the process as well. The final pillar, self-development, is entirely controlled by the member. Pursuing learning opportunities, whether formal or informal, enables members to continue to grow and support their personal objectives. Development and learning through mentorship would fall within this pillar.

In support of the CFPDS, the leadership development framework (LDF) was established to reinforce the four pillars. This to ensure leadership remains the focus in the progression of our soldiers.⁴⁵ The LDF categorizes five meta-competencies viewed through the developmental periods. This ensures members' performance expectations align with their career employment and progression. The first, expertise, focuses on the general systems of war and conflict, the second cognitive capacity centres on improving how soldiers think and cope with increased complexity. The third, social capability, deals with interpersonal qualities and attributes. The fourth, change capacity, deals with our ability to learn, and lastly, professional ideology deals with how the member accepts the CAF military ethos.⁴⁶ The pillars and LDF support the delivery

⁴⁴ Ibid., 287.

⁴⁵ National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, "Canadian Armed Forces Professional Development," last accessed 4 February 2021, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/training-prof-dev/index.page>

⁴⁶ Ibid.

of five developmental periods characterized by an increase in responsibility, accountability, authority, competence, leadership and knowledge.⁴⁷ Mentorship is well-positioned to support the LDF as many mentorship roles can support the meta-competencies and their development.

Developmental Periods

The first developmental period (DP1) takes officers from their enrolment to their arrival at a unit receiving their initial socialization and training. The second period (DP2) comprises of their first employment at their unit, a multitude of tactical training and on-the-job training. The Canadian Armed Forces Junior Officer Development (CAFJOD) program also supports development in DP2 for officers and supports officers acquiring the professional body of knowledge. The first two periods are described as the junior level, operating at the tactical level. The third developmental period (DP3) focuses on the operational level planning, labelled as intermediate. The aim is to employ members in national and international settings. The fourth period (DP4), labelled as senior, includes the National Securities Program (NSP). It is designed to produce strategic level leaders and planners. Lastly, the fifth development period called the Executive Leaders' Program (ELP), was created for newly promoted generals and flag officers to operate at the strategic and political level.⁴⁸ As members progress, the expectation is that their knowledge of the PBK and LDF increases to support their employment.

The construct for NCMs is very similar to that of the officers. The first development period is the same and consists of the member's enrolment and socialization through their initial trade qualification when they arrive at their first unit. The second period focuses on trade employment and preparation for supervision duties, includes the Primary Leadership

⁴⁷ Stouffer and Horn, *Educating the Leader and Leading the Educated: The Defence Learning, Education and Training Handbook*, 286.

⁴⁸ National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. "Canadian Armed Forces Professional Development," last accessed 4 February 2021, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/training-prof-dev/index.page>

Qualification (PLQ) and other trade-specific training. The third period focuses on supervisory employment and management skills with the Intermediate Leadership Qualification (ILQ), within their environment. The fourth period shifts to the operational level and prepares NCMs for leadership, managerial and staff positions. The period's requirement is the Advance Leadership Qualification (ILQ). Members may also participate in the Senior Leadership Program (SLP) to prepare for the fifth developmental period. Lastly, members will attend the Senior Appointments Program (SAP) to prepare for command positions at the unit and above level. The focus of the fifth period is to understand human factors and their impacts on organizations and have the ability to advise on plans and operations at the senior staff levels.⁴⁹ Like the officer progression, it is expected that members become more knowledgeable in the LDF and PBK as they advance in their careers. Mentorship can provide support to the developmental framework. Engagements focusing on the LDF and PBK can support the members' knowledge of the concepts. Additionally, it can also better prepare soldiers to become mentors with targeted instruction at deliberate points in their progression preparing them to function in that role. With this strategy, mentorship can potentially influence the cultural shifts required within the organization.

The Soldier

The majority of CAF members join the military in early adulthood when they are attempting to find or form their identity as adults. This is when the individual will look to form his values, career, and dreams.⁵⁰ The CAF supports or shadows this developmental process through socialization. Members are inculcated with the culture and values of the CAF through their first developmental period defined by CFPDS. As members progress in their careers, their

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Kram, *Phases of the Mentor Relationship*, 609.

growth will be influenced by their personal circumstances, which will affect their self-identity. Events such as marriage, parenthood, promotions will influence the way members see themselves. Finally, at some point in their lives, members will decide to leave the CAF and change career paths, retire or will be forced out of the military for whatever reason. As members navigate these events in their life, their work and personal needs will fluctuate and shift the demand for mentorship and which function is sought.

Another consideration to evaluate is the generational differences for members entering the CAF. Researchers have made many observations about the impact that these may have on the training and instruction. Members coming from different generations have different expectations about aspects of their life and work. Their needs differ from their predecessors, which may cause a disconnect in terms of learning and social interactions. This can potentially influence how they perceive mentorship and their needs associated with such relationships.

Within the CAF, the unit is comparable to a business unit in the corporate setting, where most soldiers create their work relationships, socialize and create their support network. Soldiers will periodically attend formal and informal training within their trades or in CAF's institution throughout their careers. The CAF also creates other avenues for social interaction where knowledge exchange can occur. The mess, whether within the unit or base, can provide an opportunity for members to seek or offer mentorship engagements. Sports and leisure clubs are also prominent in the CAF, where mentoring engagements can occur naturally.

Talent Management

Commanding Officers (COs) and Regimental Sargent-Majors (RSMs) have a great deal of influence over the management of careers for their soldiers. Through their assessments, they assign a classification, known as “tier”, to each soldier to identify those with greater potential.

When soldiers work outside their trade environment, senior trade members continue to evaluate their potential to represent them for future employment. With the assistance of the chain of command and the "tier" assessment, career managers dictate future employment to meet service needs and any developmental goals they have for the member.

The approach demonstrates characteristics of the exclusive people approach described by Coudé.⁵¹ This sees those identified in the top “tier” receiving challenging or advantageous training and job education through employment and assignments. Unfortunately, assignments and employment planning seem arbitrary for others, often creating a gap between employment and learning opportunities.⁵² Talent management is necessary to ensure the service has the right people in the proper employment at the right time. However, the system needs to pay greater attention to talent development for those not in the succession stream.⁵³ The CAF’s 2019 retention survey demonstrates a dissatisfaction with the career management system.⁵⁴ As employment is responsible for the majority of learning and development, the question becomes how do we transfer such knowledge to those, who will miss these specific employment opportunities.⁵⁵ Research continues in human capital theories as the societal fabric changes and companies continue to look to maximize performance.⁵⁶ In order to do so, models are shifting from organization focused to individual focused.⁵⁷ As the CAF continues to address these issues

⁵¹ Martin Coudé, “Interest-Based Career Management: A Potential Solution for the Canadian Armed Forces” (JCSP 45, Canadian Forces College, 2019), 6.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Lindsay Rodman, *Modernizing the Military Personnel System*, Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018.

⁵⁴ Canada. Dept. of National Defence. *The 2019 CAF Regular Force Retention Survey* (Ottawa, Ont.: National Defence, 2019), Table 11.

⁵⁵ Stouffer and Horn, *Educating the Leader and Leading the Educated: The Defence Learning, Education and Training Handbook*, 285.

⁵⁶ Human capital is described as the the skills, knowledge, and experience possessed by an individual or population, viewed in terms of their value or cost to an organization.

⁵⁷ Ans De Vos and Bart Cambre, “Career Management in High-Performing Organizations: ASet-Theoretic Approach,” *Human Resource Management* 56, no. 3 (2017): 501.

within the framework of the “Journey” and other programs, the opportunity to elevate organizational learning presents itself to deal with these gaps in employment-focused knowledge.

Deductions

Mentoring is currently present in the CAF. However, it is not formalized and widespread. It does not figure predominately in our doctrine and within our training system, causing some gaps in how the concept is approached. Concepts should therefore be incorporated within the CAF leadership doctrine and the training system. Mentorship can potentially provide the member and organization support in the transfer of knowledge in these gap areas. As a concept, mentorship can support the LDF for soldiers’ development. This can fill the gap in experiential learning for members who miss specific developmental opportunities and support the soldiers’ career progression. The mentorship career support function can also create a greater understanding of all the systems that make up the CAF and reinforce the mentees’ interactions to actively navigate their careers.

Mentorship can also support socialization efforts for our members’ progression through the ranks, ensuring values align with the organization. This can address diversity and cultural goals for the CAF, a shortfall that has plagued the CAF in the past few years. Although serious gaps have been identified, there are some interesting opportunities to influence our members’ performance. If the CAF identifies critical personal and career moments in the member’s life and offers support through mentorship, positive outcomes will likely follow. Opportunities to seek, offer or even direct a mentorship engagement at these crossroads are considerable. A good example could be to direct an engagement when a member is promoted to support the role transition.

The environment soldiers work in also differentiates what type of mentorship support they require. Soldiers spend a significant amount of time in training institutions or educational settings. This can significantly affect the mentee's needs from a mentorship relationship and the type of mentorship environment the institution should establish. It also shows that soldiers' needs are not only career-focused. Therefore when dealing with mentoring, the CAF needs to address the psychosocial aspect of the relationship within the construct of its program.

The workforce and workplace are changing and redefining work-life balance to influence the CAF's career management. This has created the need for an update to the talent management and human resource policies in place. Members are looking to have a greater say in their progression that increases the complexity in managing careers. Mentorship has a place in supporting the process with the psychosocial function for members going through career planning. But can also support the knowledge transfer alleviating specific employment needs through the career function.

Summary

The CAF can be described as an ecosystem comprised of multiple sub-systems. These have strong interactions and linkages between the sub-systems. Mentorship as a tool can support the systems' function and facilitate the interaction between the members and systems. With the current cultural issues afflicting the CAF, the importance of mentoring and its impact cannot be dismissed. The CAF is a highly hierarchical organization that influences the transfer of knowledge up and down the chain of command. Mentoring can create linkages that bypass the chain of command to transmit general information such as morale, trends in the environment, employment knowledge, etc. All this can support decision-making processes, improve performance and positively support members' service.

The challenge remains to link and integrate mentorship concepts to the CFPDS, developmental periods and leadership doctrine. Should a mentoring program be implemented, its aim and purpose need to be clearly articulated to support these concepts within the CFPDS. This would enable a targeted approach supporting both concepts. Then, dealing with the career function of mentoring, the goals need a solid link to the LDF to support members' transitions through the developmental periods. Lastly, any mentoring program implemented needs to find linkages to the programs designed to support psychosocial needs, diversity and cultural goals as defined the "Journey" lines of operations. If program design achieves these aims, programs will be able to create synergy and focus on supporting members' growth throughout their careers.

4 – Benchmarking

My job is not to be easy on people. My job is to take these great people we have and to push them and make them even better.

– Steve Jobs

In the previous chapters, the theoretical framework for mentorship and the CFPDS were described, including the soldier or mentee as the focal point of the relationship. This lays the foundation for future analysis to propose an implementation model for a mentorship program within the CAF. This chapter will benchmark eight programs that can provide some insights into lessons learned from these organizations to inform the analysis. The intent is to examine programs that target specific periods for members' careers. This includes young adulthood, academia and professional programs, such as those from IBM, Royal Military College (RMC), the Quebec Public Service and the United Kingdom Police Forces. Programs were also chosen for their similarity in employee composition and purpose to the CAF, such as the United States services. This approach, in theory, can better inform what type of intervention and program characteristics are required at specific times for a member's career. In an attempt to pinpoint the critical elements of successful programs and the weak points of those that have faltered, program literature, directives, academic reviews and articles were examined.

In the last 20 years, elements within the CAF have attempted to establish mentoring programs for their select communities. These, on occasion, start with great success only to slowly disappear due to lack of interest, resource or low-value proposition for the members or organization. A few examples are programs started at the Royal Military College (RMC), the Royal Canadian Air Force program and a program for public affairs officers. It is of note that the CAF's allies suffered similar issues, which will be discussed below.

International Business Machines (IBM) Corporation

IBM is one of the largest employers in the world and a world leader in technology development since its inception. The company is comprised of over three hundred and fifty thousand employees working across the globe. It offers various products and services in the technology sector, with the company striving for innovation in its approach to the market. The company has a significant research and development program that reached 7 billion dollars in 2012.⁵⁸ IBM has been a corporate leader in human resource policy and the inclusive workplace concept.

The company has a strong focus on continuous learning, information sharing, collaboration and innovation to support its global business strategy. The three tenets of its global business strategy, building organizational intelligence, connecting across people and sustaining business impact, all have strong ties to its mentorship program.⁵⁹ Their targeted portfolio of diverse mentoring programs supports its human resources and innovation departments, ensuring investment in its human capital and organizational learning goals. IBM conducted a revitalization of its mentoring programs in 2007 after an internal review of its current programs. Its review found barriers and deficiencies in the program to be addressed.

The first barrier to the program was that it was not well understood across the company. Employees and managers perceived mentoring as a tool for the company's executives. It was also seen as an employee morale booster and not a tool to support organizational learning or employee goals. As always, resources and time were an issue as managers, mentors and mentees

⁵⁸ The Guardian International Edition, "Company Profile for IBM," last accessed 27 April 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/profile-ibm>

⁵⁹ Audrey J. Murrell and Sheila Forte-Trammel, *Intelligent Mentoring: How IBM Creates Value Through People, Knowledge, and Relationships* (New York : IBM Press, 2008), 7.

found it extremely difficult to commit to a mentoring relationship in a time-constrained environment.

Programs that were offered often were not linked to business outcomes. They were also not appropriately advertised, creating confusion on the types of mentoring available and how they could potentially meet the workforce's needs.⁶⁰ The workplace setting also had an impact on the mentorship programs. Almost half of the employees currently work outside the traditional office environment, creating difficulty accessing potential mentor relationships.

The internal review concluded that the new approach needed the flexibility to meet the needs of its diverse employees while having strong institutional top cover. It was creating support for implementation and generating continued interest throughout all levels of the company.⁶¹ It also wanted to remove any barrier to access the program's tools and personnel. With the internal review in hand, the company executed a revitalization of its mentorship program with a multi-faceted approach.

The human resources division was given the mandate and led the revitalization effort, enlisting a cadre of senior executives across the departments and geographic locations. This group executed a promotional campaign providing top cover and visibility for the program. The team used these engagements to launch a new website linking current initiatives and providing a one-stop-shop for any corporate mentoring program information. This website provides an extensive array of mentoring tools and resources. It also serves as a method to connect what IMB calls communities of knowledge (or what is later called communities of practice) to facilitate the passage of wisdom and know-how from one business entity to another. The sites also encourage employees to seek outsiders for additional perspectives on their careers. Sub-programs were

⁶⁰ Ibid., 9.

⁶¹ Ibid., 10.

established with specific cultural, international, generational and diversity aims. This focused on various employee segments with targeted activities corresponding to the employees' needs.

From a human resources perspective, the company also included overall program tools within the employees' learning plans that support their mentoring relationships. They also instituted an awards program related to mentorship to recognize employees leading the way for the program. Mentoring is included in the career development, from the recruiting process to retirement of the employee, providing an additional link to the benefits of the concept. The concept also included frameworks for employees wishing to leave and return to the company for outside opportunities. The program and its tools are designed to support IBM's goal of "fostering an environment that promotes continuous learning, enabling all employees at all levels to become problem solvers, creative thinkers and global citizens."⁶²

The evolution of the IBM's mentoring program offers three key insights. First, the engagement of the executive cadre is vital. In contrast, ensuring bottom-up involvement and addressing employee needs is just as critical. Second, the use of multiple mentoring methods in addressing employees' needs has been the key to the program's success. Formal and informal means, e-mentoring, communities of knowledge, diversity groups, learning tools met the employees' needs and ensured continued support. Lastly, the program was nested within the company's global strategy in order to support its overall business goals. This approach enabled the program to benefit the company and its employees simultaneously.

United Kingdom Police Force

The first organizational study examined is the mentoring program established by the North England Police Force (NEPF) and the Central England Police Force (CEPF). Some of the

⁶² Ibid., Forward.

lessons learned from their study in 2017 by a leading researcher in the field of mentoring, Jenni Jones, will be identified.⁶³ The comparison is interesting as police forces have a similar culture and structure as military forces. Police forces in the U.K. have also experienced a culture change in the past 10 to 20 years in terms of policy, purpose, fiscal constraints and oversight. These changes have affected the institutional setting creating new management styles and attitudes towards programs.⁶⁴ Many of these issues are somewhat similar to what the CAF has experienced in the post 9/11 era and the current environment for outcome-based programs. Lastly, the two police forces have approximately the equivalent number of personnel as the Canadian Army for scale purposes.

Jones' research identified three main factors that hindered the program and its participants' perception of mentoring within the organization. The first factor was time. This is a common theme in any resource-limited environment where members are often over-extended in terms of tasks and commitments. Both the mentors and mentees within the examination felt this constraint. Directly linked to this observation was the perception of support from supervisors for the mentee. Mentees with supportive supervisors perceived the program more positively and experienced more favourable outcomes than mentees with indifferent or unsupportive supervisors.⁶⁵ The third factor was the matching process and personal factors. Both were identified as hindering the program. However, these were secondary to the support from supervisors. These factors should remain at the forefront of planning for any program implementation to support the best possible learning environment.

⁶³ Jenni Jones, "How can Leaders and Managers in the Police Support the Learning of Others and at the Same Time, Support their Own?," *International Journal of Emergency Services* 7, no. 3 (2018): 232.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 229.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 238.

The program outcomes were perceived as positive for both mentor and mentee while touching cognitive, skill-based, affective-related and social networking aspects of learning. Increased confidence was a typical response from both the mentee and mentor and a better network resulting from the experience. The examination demonstrated the program to have a positive impact on the organization. However, the hindering of the program at the line supervisor level did not maximize the program's possible success.

Fonction Publique du Quebec

In 2001, the public service from the province of Quebec launched a mentoring program. Its practical aim was to onboard newly certified employees and support their transition to the professional environment of the public service. In addition, the public service was fast approaching the mass transition of its baby boomers into retirement. Therefore, the transmission of knowledge from the old guard to the new generation was also at stake.⁶⁶ The program was subsidized by the provincial government and, over the following two years, matched over 200 dyads of mentees and mentors. As part of a formal program, the coordination team completed matching with volunteer mentors identified. Short training sessions were held with all parties, and the mentoring concepts were discussed to frame expectations amongst the group.

The following section examines the conclusions and observations reported in the program evaluation report. As part of the program, participants were requested to share their thoughts on the experiences through surveys and interviews.⁶⁷ Surveys were also conducted with departmental leaders to assess the impact of the program from an organizational perspective. The

⁶⁶ Centre for Expertise in Management of Human Resources. *Program Evaluation for the Governmental Mentoring Program in Quebec's Public Function* (Quebec : Treasury Board, 2004),12.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 15.

program was found to have achieved its aim of onboarding its employees and facilitating the knowledge transfer between the generational divide.

The evaluation emphasizes a few conditions that must be met in order for the program to succeed. First, a small support staff team needs to be established to ensure the program is coordinated and maintained to assist should issues arise. Second, a training event or indoctrination to the program should be completed so that all participants understand the program's parameters.

A recurring observation from the mentees, mentors and department leads was the necessity to provide enough separation between the participants. Relationships that comprised of a mentor who was also a direct supervisor to the mentee did not provide the right conditions to establish a successful mentor and mentee relationship. Building a trusting relationship in those instances proved to be extremely difficult as confidentiality and openness were often mentioned as issues.⁶⁸

The review also discusses the mentoring agreement between parties. The participants focused on the goals of the relationship, expectations, confidentiality and the expected outcomes as critical to the agreement. Dyads agreed that the duration, timelines and the number of feedback sessions detailed in the agreement were not as critical.

Mentor qualities that were important from the mentee's perspective were listening, being open, and providing honest feedback and competence in their field. Two additional comments were also included in the analysis. Mentors must be passionate and motivated to participate in the relationship. Mentee qualities listed by the mentors include accepting feedback, taking the lead in his development, and being introspective.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 15.

The aim of the program was centered on the integration of new employees and the transfer of knowledge. Therefore, participants mainly focused on the career function of mentoring during their interactions. The relationship provided an excellent socialization opportunity and focused on institutional issues. It is interesting to note that few ventured into the psychosocial function of mentoring during the engagement. However, it is important to mention that the program's aim did not encompass that aspect of mentoring.

A major hurdle in the program was the availability of mentors for the mentees. Both sides of the dyad observed this.⁶⁹ On occasion, mentors felt friction from their peers, believing there was favouritism in the workplace for taking part in the program. Other complaints of the program were the unavailability of tools to conduct meetings electronically and the lack of support from local managers. Software tools have evolved since then, and the capability to conduct business virtually is now common. However, the other complaints are quite applicable to the current environment and the CAF.

Another interesting perspective was that a common theme from the respondents was that they would suggest that separate departments establish their programs to meet departmental needs.⁷⁰ An additional suggestion from the participants was that the program needed better linkages to the human resources practice and career progression. Integration in the human resource practices was needed overall. The coordinating staff echoed this.⁷¹ Networking amongst mentees and mentors to support learning for best practices in mentoring was recommended in order to add to the effectiveness of the program,

⁶⁹ Ibid., 32.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 54.

⁷¹ Ibid., 64 and 66.

Overall, the program was described as successful, meeting its aim to onboard employees into the public service. It also provided an excellent opportunity for career development and somewhat of an opportunity for psychosocial support, with few mentions of reduced stress and team building. The program somewhat bridged the intergenerational gap between the employees contributing to the transfer of knowledge. One of the interesting findings suggested that the dyad's performance was not shown to have been positively affected, which counters most mentorship studies. The program study offers valuable insight on an onboarding mentoring program, which should be considered in detail for any type of program implementation.

United States Air Force

The United States Air Force (USAF) mentoring program was revisited in 2019 under the deputy chief of staff for the workforce. The new mentoring handbook was issued in May 2019 as the Air Force Handbook 36-2643. Its program offers insight into formal and informal mentoring to 334,000 members, providing tools to those who wish to find mentors on their own or require assistance doing so.⁷² The mentoring functions described in the handbook are career-focused and not psychosocial. This is not to say that USAF leaders do not practice this function, but the publication does not discuss this aspect of the concept.

The program's goals are well stated, focusing on members developing their potential and creating an environment where the mentee and learning are at the forefront of the process.⁷³ Diversity and inclusion are also part of the program's goals linking the benefits to strategic directives. The program's organizational goals are clearly defined as creating a positive environment, promoting professional and individual growth. This enhances the institution and

⁷² The World Factbook, "United States," last accessed 15 April 2021, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/united-states/#military-and-security>

⁷³ United States. Dept of the Air Force, *Air Force Handbook 36-2643* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Dept. of the Air Force, 2019), 3.

occupations, continues socialization to the service and supports all ranks of aviators and civilian employees in leveraging institutional knowledge.⁷⁴

The program details chain of command responsibilities while delineating fundamental nuances in leadership and mentoring to ensure responsibilities are clear. It also provides the mentor and mentee with guidelines to support activities from both perspectives. The handbook continues to detail the methodology for finding a mentor through its resources portal, *MyVECTOR*. The portal offers all USAF personnel, including civilian employees, developmental tools to support their career goals. The mentoring program offers training resources for mentors and assessment tools for mentees to support their learning in or out of their mentor relationship. The portal offers a matching process. Voluntary mentors and mentees provide the program coordinators a simple worksheet with some basic information. The coordinator will match mentees with a mentor in support of the mentee's goals.

An interesting aspect of this online platform is that it integrates the learning and assessment tools that can be instantly shared with mentors. Mentees can take personal questionnaires for their trade or leadership competencies and instantly share the results with their mentor(s) to facilitate and support learning opportunities and goals. Tools such as the 360 evaluations are available and offer the same type of sharing features. Even though the platform supports multiple other aspects it provides synergy to the mentoring program as part of learning opportunities for those using the tools available.

United States Army

Mentoring in the United States Army (U.S. Army) has evolved in the last 30 years in the same manner as most other military institutions. One thing is for sure, mentoring is a key concept

⁷⁴ Ibid., 4.

for the U.S. Army's development of its 482,000 soldiers and officers.⁷⁵ The concept is prevalent in the doctrinal manual FM 6-22 *Leader Development*, issued in 2015. Mentoring is mentioned approximately 180 times in the 188-page document.⁷⁶ Comparatively, in the three CAF leadership doctrine manuals, mentoring is mentioned approximately 35 times in 359 pages.⁷⁷ Although this comparison cannot measure efficiency and efficacy, it does demonstrate that the U.S. Army does consider the concept as a core element of their leadership development process and provides focus within the doctrine.

The U.S. Army's description of mentoring focuses on the career support function and does not factor in the psychosocial function. The doctrinal manual offers simple templates and guides to develop the mentor relationship for use by the chain of command or the members alike. The manual reinforces that mentorship should be established outside the chain of command and that formal matching of mentor and mentee should be avoided.⁷⁸ Members ranked mentoring one of the three most important activities that develops their leadership skills and development in their careers.⁷⁹ Another facet that provides support to the concept within the U.S. Army is that training for counselling, coaching and mentoring is now incorporated in the curriculum of professional military education courses.⁸⁰ Mentoring provides the force with transformational tools to develop maturity, team building and expertise.

⁷⁵ The World Factbook, "United States," last accessed 15 April 2021, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/united-states/#military-and-security>

⁷⁶ United States. Dept. of the Army, *Leader Development - FM 6-22* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Dept. of the Army, 2015), 3-17.

⁷⁷ CAF's three doctrinal manuals, Leadership in the Canadian Armed Forces; Doctrine, Conceptual Foundations and Leading the Institution, were searched for the word "mentor".

⁷⁸ United States. Dept. of the Army, *Leader Development - FM 6-22*, 3-17.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 3-1.

⁸⁰ Gleiman and Gleiman. "Mentoring in the Military," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 2020, 62.

In support of organizational learning objectives and career management, the U.S. Army established the Army Career Tracker (ACT), a web-based portal where soldiers can plan their careers with a series of tools. The program appears to fall short of expectations, as the system is not user friendly and fails to produce mentorship opportunities as detailed in the doctrine and directives.⁸¹ As a result, the U.S. Army communities have turned to outside groups to manage their mentoring needs to fill the gaps within the institution. An excellent example of this is the Army Strategist Association, a non-profit organization providing the mechanisms of a mentorship program for Army strategists. “Its mission is to promote the U.S. Army's Functional Area 59 community, foster mentorship and fellowship, and enhance the study and practice of strategy.”⁸² Outsourcing the program diminishes the administrative aspects required of a formal mentoring program. This can be regarded as an advantage as administrative resources are always minimal.

Another result of limited mentor availability and changing mentee’s needs saw the establishment of peer mentoring groups set to provide support to what can be described as a community of practice (CoP). Researchers describe these communities as “self-organized groups of people who share common interests and a desire to share knowledge in constructing understanding and skills.”⁸³ For the U.S. Army, members seeking support from other members initiated Platoon Leader and Company Commander forums as spaces to connect with peers. Members of the CoP were at the same point in the career or had just been through the same experiences in the last few years.⁸⁴ This was initially done outside the purview of the U.S. Army

⁸¹ Ibid., 64.

⁸² Army Strategist Association, “Official Website,” last accessed 25 February 2021, <https://www.armystrategist.org/>

⁸³ Gleiman and Gleiman, “Mentoring in the Military,” *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 2020, 63.

⁸⁴ Raymond Andrew Kimball, “Walking in the Woods: A Phenomenological Study of Online Communities of Practice and Army Mentoring,” ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2015. 3.

in 2000. However, with its success, was brought into the fold and is available through U.S. Army websites in 2002 and now available through the ACT. This provides another avenue for knowledge transfer and mentoring opportunities. Although arguably, these relationships are not defined as mentoring, it offers a space where the matching process can begin.

United States Navy

Mentoring in the U.S. Navy (USN) is held in high regard by the senior leadership. However, this does not necessarily mean the vision permeates throughout the organization. In 2015, Andersen and Johnson, scholars on mentoring in the services, surveyed approximately 150 personnel. Their aim was to identify the possible gap in the service's vision for mentoring within the USN's ranks.⁸⁵ The positive news was that the vast majority perceived mentoring as a useful tool to develop sailors. Respondents were more critical at the implementation aspects of programs causing barriers for access to mentors, and how mentorship relationships were established.

One of the major critiques in the survey demonstrated that formal matching mechanisms are not favourable to establish a mentorship relationship. Formal programs that attempt this are seen as unnatural and doomed to fail. They are also perceived as administrative burdens when they are implemented in this manner. However, formal programs were seen as supportive for members who may be overlooked or for members who may not believe in mentoring. This provides more information for them to participate. Another critique in the survey was that there is much emphasis on mentoring. However, there are no positive feedback mechanisms received

⁸⁵ W. Brad Johnson and Gene R. Andersen, "MENTORING IN THE U.S. NAVY: Experiences and Attitudes of Senior Navy Personnel," *Naval War College Review* 68, no. 3 (2015):78.

for taking part in such activities. Members suggest that having such relationships included in their fitness reports to demonstrate commitment and leadership in the organization.⁸⁶

The survey demonstrated serious concerns on who mentors in their organizations, stating that many should not be mentors for their lack of the required competencies. Additionally, ineffective mentor relationships can negatively impact the mentee and his surroundings, effectively discouraging others to look for such relationships.⁸⁷ The study produced two main thoughts. First, the USN currently provides an environment where mentoring is valued and understood to be critical in personal and organizational performance. Second, formal programs need careful consideration when developed to avoid forced matching between participants and attempt to avoid becoming administrative burdens.⁸⁸ In 2020, the USN abandoned its formal program and now offers training and resources to produce targeted programs at the lower echelons.⁸⁹ An excellent example of this is the reverse mentoring program established in the aircraft carrier community.⁹⁰ Its aim is to provide senior members with situational awareness of the issues plaguing junior ranks while supporting an inclusive culture.⁹¹ It also provides a means to gap the community's generational differences, removing barriers and biases between the ranks and age gaps while maintaining the career mentoring function.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 85.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 120.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 89.

⁸⁹ Gleiman and Gleiman, "Mentoring in the Military," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 2020, 65.

⁹⁰ United States. Dept. of the Navy, "Mentoring the Total Force," last accessed 25 February 2021, <https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Support-Services/21st-Century-Sailor/Inclusion-Diversity/Mentoring-the-Total-Force/>

⁹¹ Gleiman and Gleiman, "Mentoring in the Military," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 2020, 66

United States Marine Corps

The United States Marine Corps (USMC) took a different approach in the last few years. It mandated a mentoring relationship within the chain of command, formalizing the process and mandating when and where the mentor and mentee interaction would occur. This framework made it extremely difficult to separate the chain of command duties from mentorship activities. This often confused what function the mentor or supervisor was attempting to portray. With a good deal of negative feedback and practical evidence, the USMC reversed course and scraped their mentorship methodology for their 181,000 members.⁹² Mentoring is still considered an influential activity, as detailed in Marine Corps Order 1500.61.⁹³ The order, issued in 2017, highlights that soldiers will require support throughout their careers in relation to career events but also through life events that affect their work and life balance. It goes on to say that “These events present opportunities for leaders to pass along perspective, wisdom and encouragement.”⁹⁴

The USMC ties the mentoring concept to their Marine Leader Development, a framework focused on six functional areas; fidelity, fighter, fitness, family, finances and future.⁹⁵ The framework resembles some key aspects of the “Journey” where programs are focused on ensuring the soldiers’ career path is supported. Focusing on all aspects of their life and not just on professional competencies. The USMC no longer prescribes mentoring but aims to create an environment where mentoring opportunities flourish. It incorporates mentoring in its leadership

⁹² The World Factbook, “United States,” last accessed 15 April 2021, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/united-states/#military-and-security>

⁹³ United States. Dept of the Navy. *Marine Corps Order 1500.61* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, 2017).

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ United States. Dept of the Navy, “Marine Corps University,” last accessed 25 February 2021, <https://www.usmcu.edu/Academic-Programs/Lejeune-Leadership-Institute/Marine-Leader-Development/>

curriculum and ensures support by the chain of command for those taking part in mentoring opportunities.

In support, the USMC has developed a mentoring guide that is similar to the CAF *Mentoring Handbook*. However, it goes into more details on possible areas or topics of focus during mentoring activities. Included in the guide are some reputable sources of management knowledge training resources to assist both the mentor and mentee. The Marine Corps University (MCU) also provides core materials to support any mentoring or development engagement for the USMC, accessible by anyone. The USMC also encourages its members to check out civilian organizations that match potential mentors and mentees with similar backgrounds, such as *eMentors*⁹⁶ and *MilitaryMentors*^{97, 98}.

Royal Military College Athena

In the fall of 2020, two RMC professors launched a networking program on *Facebook* with the intent to support women cadets navigate their careers and studies while at RMC. The program quickly opened to all cadets as it offered an additional platform for professional interaction during a constrained period with the current pandemic. Although still in its developmental stage, the program offers some key insights into implementing a mentoring program within a professional and academic setting. The program currently manages 150

⁹⁶ eMentor is a cutting-edge online mentoring program for military personnel, veterans and military spouses. Having a mentor who can provide insights into civilian careers and corporate hiring practices removes some of the anxiety of navigating a major life change, such as transitioning from active duty, reentering the civilian workforce or starting your own business. - <https://www.ementorprogram.org/>

⁹⁷ MilitaryMentors elevates, educates, and facilitates mentoring for the military and beyond. They "stretch conversations" by expanding the thoughts, beliefs and narrative surrounding mentorship through social media engagement, interactive events, workshops, academic and professional connections, guest speaking, and other live and online means. They conduct leader development by mentoring for the growth of individual knowledge, skills and abilities, such as self-awareness, motivation, education and managerial know-how. - <https://militarymentors.org/>

⁹⁸ Gleiman and Gleiman, "Mentoring in the Military," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 2020, 65.

mentors, organized and facilitated by the two professors on their own time but assisted by a group of cadets for organizational purposes.

The program is a grass-roots movement that sees the cadets well involved in determining what learning value they are seeking from the program. This has been a critical source of success, although this may be attributed to the current constrained environment. Cadet involvement has shown that the mentee is central to the equation for program success. Another positive aspect of the program is the establishment of a mentor community or network. Again, this revolves around the needs of the mentee, their ability to establish more than one relationship and the availability of mentors in their environment. One of the main reasons cadets look to participate in the group is to receive career information about their trades. Moreover, they are full of questions about first postings, policy, regimental life, and others, which may be difficult to receive through regular interaction at the college.

The facilitators identified one key issue for the program, the resource required to manage and facilitate the group. The facilitators are currently looking for resources to continue their work within the military staff and the RMC Club. One last issue is that the program is still drafting its guiding documents to ensure relationships are developed and maintained within the program according to formalized guidelines. This is interesting as in 2007 two programs existed at RMC. One was established with initial success to offer support to the cadets, and a second to offer support to members of the University Training Plan Non-Commissioned Member (UTPMCM) program. The disappearance of those programs is not surprising as most mentoring programs falter within two years of implementation.⁹⁹ In order to maintain their initiative the

⁹⁹ Eric A. Vance *et al*, "An Eight-Step Guide to Creating and Sustaining a Mentoring Program," *The American Statistician* 71, no. 1 (2017): 23.

organisers enrolled LGen (Ret) Chris Whitecross as one of their champions, continuing their campaign with high profile engagements.

Overall Observations

Each organization benchmarking exercise presents challenges and successes that can inform the way forward for program implementation. Observations from benchmarking are displayed in Table 1. They are demonstrated as positive or negative and the level of impact the observation potentially has on the program.

Table 1 – Overall Program Observations

International Business Machine		
Negative	Program not well understood by employees.	Operational
Negative	Program was not well resourced.	Operational
Negative	Program was not advertised well within the company.	Strategic / Operational
Positive	Program nested in strategic vision.	Strategic
Positive	Promotion campaign established with strategic engagements.	Strategic / Operational
Positive	Tools developed and available to employees.	Operational
Positive	Program integrated within HR policies.	Operational
United Kingdom Police Forces		
Negative	Participants noted not enough time to participate in mentoring activities.	Tactical
Negative	Participants noted lack of supervisor support.	Operational
Negative	Participants noted forced matching was somewhat an issue.	Operational
Negative	Participants noted not enough time to participate in mentoring activities.	Tactical
Fonction Publique du Quebec		
Positive	Program had a focused aim.	Strategic
Negative	Mentee and mentor separation within the chain of command on occasion was not followed.	Tactical
Negative	Program was not linked to HR policies.	Operational
United States Air Force		
Positive	Program linked to diversity goals.	Strategic
Positive	Program guidelines and documentation are clear.	Operational
Positive	Voluntary matching process.	Tactical
Positive	MyVECTOR portal and associated tools.	Tactical
United States Army		
Positive	Concepts incorporated in doctrine.	Strategic

Positive	Training curriculum across the service.	Operational
Negative	ACT portal not functional.	Tactical
Positive	Communities of practice established and supported by the institution.	Operational / Tactical
+ and -	Outsourcing to non-military organisations encouraged.	Operational
United States Navy		
Negative	Formal program rejected by members.	Operational
Negative	Formal program perceived as an administrative burden on system.	Tactical
Negative	Formal program does not offer incentives for mentors participation.	Tactical
Negative	Selection of mentors not formalized, to ensure suitability of mentor.	Tactical
United States Marine Corps		
Positive	Vision was well communicated and supported by upper echelon.	Strategic
Positive	Supporting tools available through the MCU.	Operational
+ and -	Outsourcing encouraged by the chain of command and available tools.	Operational
Royal Military College - Athena		
Positive	The program is supported by the mentees as a grassroots movement.	Operational
Positive	Multiple relationships encouraged, constellation of mentors possible.	Tactical
Positive	On-boarding for cadets for their career.	Operational
Negative	Resourcing is a problem.	Tactical

Key Observations

A few key observations can be drawn from this review, and these are presented below.

Strategic Purpose / Operational Design. In order to be successful in the implementation of a mentoring program, organizations must ensure programs fulfil strategic aims to remain relevant. IBM's approach to their program demonstrates strong linkages to the company's business goals and value proposition. This supports longevity for the program as it engrains itself in the company's structure and function. The importance of strategic alignment transcends in the company's organizational culture. This observation is not new, Brad Johnson and Gene Anderson, researchers in the field of military mentoring, made it in 2010. He stated that very few

organizations had strategically aligned their mentoring programs to achieve long-term objectives.¹⁰⁰ This is usually a main reason for their failure.

In addition to the strategic culture, support of the program should go beyond the professional development approach. IBM, the USMC and the USAF all have created strong links within their learning frameworks for their professional competencies. How these are addressed through education, training, and professional development must be interconnected to achieve synergy and provide the member with the best learning opportunities for growth and support.

Formal vs informal. The majority of surveys or articles from the organizations examined agree that programs which are voluntary and do not force matches for mentors and mentees will be successful versus programs that force participation and matches. The ability to choose to participate and chose their mentor is paramount and a key takeaway from each organization's analysis.

Engagement Strategy. Leadership involvement is a key factor in program success; leaders who take time to participate, champion and advertise the program will increase its chances of success. IBM's leadership were instrumental in setting up the program and its continued success. This sets the stage for workers and supervisors to understand the role mentoring plays in the organization and their roles in the implementation. This was a recurring subject in each of the organizations examined as it directly related to the supervisors' attitude towards mentoring activities. In the RMC and U.K. Police Force studies, these were identified as critical.

Flexible Program. Most organizations are comprised of many different sub-groups who possess their own attributes and cultures. This often fragments what each groups' needs are and how they need to approach mentorship relationships. This means having the ability to offer

¹⁰⁰ Johnson and Andersen, "FORMAL MENTORING IN THE U.S. MILITARY: Research Evidence, Lingering Questions, and Recommendations," *Naval War College Review* 63, 115.

multiple types of mentoring, such as group mentoring, diversity-focused mentoring, reverse mentoring, online mentoring, is critical to meet members' needs. IBM's program is a great example, offering something of value for all employees. The USN also demonstrated this approach by recognizing gaps in the inter-generational workforce and implementing reverse mentoring programs in specific communities.

In the same vein, new approaches to mentoring need to be incorporated into program definitions. Mentees should now look to multiple mentors to meet their diverse needs in what Kram described as a "constellation of mentors."¹⁰¹ This was referred to in the IBM program and the USN approach. Another avenue that needs to be reflected in the programs is the mentor/mentee definitions. Although this was discussed in many of the review articles, it has not permeated in the program reference materials. A good example of this is IBM's approach with discusses learning alliances as part of mentorship, which intertwines with the culture of learning and focuses on learning opportunities and relationships.

Training, resources and culture. Each organization, especially the militaries examined, indicated that mentoring occurs whether a program is established or not. However, there were always deficiencies in training and resources to support the activity. In order to be successful, the CAF must define and teach the concept clearly within the established training system. This ensures a common understanding of the concept and influences the culture to create an environment open to the activity. Resources should also be made available to the mentor and mentee to support their relationship, including tools such as 360 evaluations, competency tests, emotional and cultural intelligence assessments and professional development curriculum. An excellent example of this approach is the MCU or IBM's access to learning materials. The USAF

¹⁰¹ Ragins and Kram, "The Roots and Meaning of Mentoring," *The Handbook of Mentoring at Work: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 6.

uses their portal, *MyVECTOR*, to interconnect all these tools to support the mentoring relationship. Resources available should provide general learning and dive into sub-culture needs to maintain the value proposition for all.

Targeted. Closely related to the previous culture aspect, CoPs can address gaps in large organizations composed of many different groups. CoPs are groups of people who interact to discuss issues and transfer knowledge. The creation and maintenance of such spaces provide a venue to find a mentor and conduct peer mentoring. They support sub-groups of employees or serving members.¹⁰² These were present within the U.S. Army and IBM and provided value to its members and the organization to transfer knowledge through members worldwide. They can also address diversity concerns or offer spaces that provide some psychosocial support if required.

Outsourcing. Two of the U.S. military services are encouraging their members to seek mentorship opportunities outside the service. This continues to develop but shows some promise, as members are in the driver seat to set the conditions of the relationship in order to meet their needs. It also takes some pressure off the institutions that are understaffed and under-resourced. Mentors are also in short supply therefore increasing the mentor pool with veterans or people who can offer a fresh perspective is value-added. However, drawbacks include loss of oversight from the chain of command and control of the learning narrative, leading to adverse effects.

Onboarding. RMC and the Government of Quebec examples demonstrate a clear value to members and the organization for onboarding purposes. Both studies show members' socialization process to their professional group improves with an onboarding focused mentorship program. This concept can translate to the CAF's integration efforts with diversity and socialization.

¹⁰² Gleiman and Gleiman, "Mentoring in the Military," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 2020, 63.

Summary

The observation detailed above range from strategic to tactical and should be addressed accordingly. These observations are all relevant to the CAF environment and any program implementation taken. The review also shows that most of the programs examined, six of eight, do not focus on the psychosocial function of the mentor relationship. This important aspect was reflected in chapter 3 and will be further discussed in the next chapter.

5 – The Canadian Armed Forces and Mentoring: A Way Forward

Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.

– Benjamin Franklin

After a careful examination of organizations and their successes and failures with mentorship, it is important to look at other possible factors related to mentoring. Whatever approach is chosen for mentorship, the outcomes of implementation can be viewed through a few different lenses. First, will the program meet the needs of the soldier, either career or psychosocial focused? Psychosocial development is a theme that is touched throughout the paper. However, it is important to review it as a base concept for the soldiers' journey through the CAF. Second, will the implementation of the program improve the institution's performance? This will be approached through mentoring's impact on organizational learning and learning theories. Third, will mentoring improve the cultural aspects of the CAF? A cursory review of aspects of the CAF culture will be discussed. Lastly, tools and resources will be examined to provide insight for any impact on mentoring program implementation.

Psychosocial Development

In order to establish what soldier's needs are at each stage of their life, a modified version of Erikson's stages of psychosocial development will be used.¹⁰³ This can inform us on the different needs of soldiers as they progress through their career and how best to support. The stages relevant to the examination are: adolescence, 12 – 18 years of age; emerging adulthood, 19 – 29 years of age; young adulthood, 30 – 40 years of age; and middle adulthood, 40 – 60 years of age. The emerging adulthood stage is not found in Erikson's model. However, recent academic research suggests that young adults are exploring the job market differently in the

¹⁰³ Very Well Mind, "Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development," last accessed 2 March 2021, <https://www.verywellmind.com/erik-eriksons-stages-of-psychosocial-development-2795740>

Western world than before, thus, creating a buffer zone between adolescence and adulthood described as emerging adulthood.¹⁰⁴ Each of these stages focuses on different needs for the individual's development. Therefore having resources, specific focus and support in place for each phase potentially supports the member's growth.

Although limited, some members fall into the adolescent category when they enrol as the age brackets are somewhat flexible. The CAF does have a small number of reservists who join at the age of 16/17 with parental consent. During this stage, adolescents explore who they are and require encouragement and support to develop their sense of self, independence and control. According to Erikson, this enables them to live up to society's expectations.¹⁰⁵ At this stage, the psychosocial function of mentoring is required to support the member's self-development. Socialization and mentoring's focus is on establishing values and ideals to shape behaviours.

The addition of the emerging adulthood stage results from societal changes, which see young adults take a longer time to find their professional identity. This stage demonstrates an unstable career identity that creates changes in professional behaviours. It is also the "me stage", where the member's focus is on their professional development within their set of priorities and not necessarily on their surroundings.¹⁰⁶ The individual also starts to establish their hopes and dreams in a big way.¹⁰⁷ This results in the requirement to support the member's search for their professional identity with a need for career-focused interventions within the training and work environment.

¹⁰⁴ Ilke Grosemans *et al*, "Emerging Adults Embarking on their Careers: Job and Identity Explorations in the Transition to Work," *Youth & Society* 52, no. 5 (2020): 795-819.

¹⁰⁵ Very Well Mind, "Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development," last accessed 2 March 2021, <https://www.verywellmind.com/erik-eriksons-stages-of-psychosocial-development-2795740>

¹⁰⁶ Ilke Grosemans *et al*, "Emerging Adults Embarking on their Careers: Job and Identity Explorations in the Transition to Work." *Youth & Society* 52, no. 5 (2020): 795-819.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

The next stage, young adulthood, focuses on creating intimate relationships. The idea is that once a person has established who they are, they are now able to develop intimate relationships that are secure and enduring. This potentially implies that building a mentorship relationship may not be possible in the previous stages. Mentorship relationships rely on trust and intimacy to enable the transfer of knowledge. If members do not have the skills set to do this, the dyad's relationship may be doomed from the start. Therefore, mentorship may be a concept better suited for the DP2 versus DP1 environment where other tools may be better suited or different approaches required.

Middle adulthood looks to create positive change in peoples' surroundings. This includes the family, community and workplace. Aligned with the traditional mentoring model, this is where people that have found success will look to become mentors. Consequently, targeting this demographic is critical to set the conditions for their involvement in mentoring. Another psychological aspect to consider is the impact of life and work changes that affect an individual's perception of self. As discussed in chapter 3, soldiers' lives change when their status change, when they start a family, when posted or when promoted. This will change their needs in terms of which mentoring function they seek and where they look for that support.

Learning

The CAF learning environment and methodologies are also shifting to address new realities in the workplace and the changing characteristics of the learner. Strategically, it has become evident that learning and development are central to the organization attaining its business needs.¹⁰⁸ In contrast, Canadian organizations have decreased funding to learning and development activities by 40% in the last 15 years. It is assessed that informal learning makes up

¹⁰⁸ Stouffer and Horn, *Educating the Leader and Leading the Educated: The Defence Learning, Education and Training Handbook*, 111.

to 56% of all learning.¹⁰⁹ However, it is unsure how this decrease in the funding has affected the ratio of informal and formal learning. What is known is that informal learning is taking a more important role for members' learning activities.

Researchers developed a taxonomy for informal professional learning, which is of interest. They organized learning in 12 categories, with one focusing on mentoring.¹¹⁰ Although mentoring is separated as an individual category, it can also support and facilitate the other categories in their execution. This positions mentoring as a source of informal learning and as a facilitator that supports other learning activities. In an environment where professional development is focused on experiential learning and self-development, mentoring has the potential to have a significant impact on members' growth and their contribution to the organization.

Another aspect to discuss is organizational learning, which is crucial for the CAF to remain relevant and support operations. Learning organizations promote learning, learn from experience, embrace diversity and lead in support of learning.¹¹¹ American systems scientist, Peter Senge, proposes five disciplines that enable us to do these things to create the conditions to foster a culture of learning.¹¹² These concepts are aligned with American educational theorist David Kolb's learning process, composed of experience, reflection, conceptualization and experimentation.¹¹³ When mentoring is examined, the concepts can be transposed onto these models to support individual and organizational learning creating possible synergy in the developmental system.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 115.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 112.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 25.

¹¹² Hong Bui and Yehuda Baruch, "Creating Learning Organizations: A Systems Perspective," *The Learning Organization* 17, no. 3 (2010): 211.

¹¹³ Makoto Matsuo, "Instructional Skills for on-the-job Training and Experiential Learning: An Empirical Study of Japanese Firms," *International Journal of Training and Development* 18, no. 4 (2014): 229.

Culture

The CAF's socialization process heavily influences the culture and the ability to change. The structure and recruiting process do not lend themselves to the introduction of new ideas and people. Compared to civilian organizations, the CAF does not receive new talent from outside the organization at every echelon of the organization. In order to attain the upper echelon, members must progress through the organization. This inherently influences member's biases and ability to adapt to new organizational priorities and cultural realities. Although necessary, recent media events demonstrate that changing the culture is a complex and time-consuming process. The current shift in focus for the CAF sees the "Journey" focused on people as the most valuable resource. If mentoring programs are to take root, the key resource must become knowledge, and the organization must become focused on learning and the transfer of knowledge. These aspects support organizational diversity.¹¹⁴

Another aspect of the CAF's culture is that it is fractured. With its diverse geographic layout, its multiple professional groups, language groups, and other sub-groups, it can be difficult for mentees to find mentors to meet their needs. Though, this does present an opportunity for those willing to seek support outside what is considered their normal channels. However, seeking a mentor from a different organization altogether may have some disadvantages, such as the mentor not having an understanding of the organization. It does offer some major advantages, such as diversity of perspectives and possible expertise not available within the CAF.

¹¹⁴ Stouffer and Horn, *Educating the Leader and Leading the Educated: The Defence Learning, Education and Training Handbook*, 99.

Surveys conducted by the U.S. military also demonstrated that prioritizing and rewarding mentoring would support organizational goals and member's progression.¹¹⁵ This is an interesting assertion as the CAF's reporting tool is often a subject of negative attention from soldiers. The CAF's personal evaluation report (PER) is in the process of being redesigned to simplify and streamline how the chain of command conducts it. This is a potential opportunity to improve the feedback process and support mentorship outcomes. The drawback, it is often observed, is that mentoring sometimes contrast with the manner which the organization conducts feedback. The evaluation of the soldiers can potentially cause confusion for those within the chain of command.¹¹⁶

Tools

Current CAF leadership doctrine is lacking when dealing with mentorship and the CAF *Mentoring Handbook* is not well known or classified as a doctrinal manual. Therefore, any attempt to implement such a program would require foundational documents be amended to support program implementation if ever produced. The next officer and NCM vision documents need to address these concepts as well since revised documents for *Officership 2020* and *NCM Corps 2020* have not been published at the time of writing.

The CAFs current training delivery website, the Defence Learning Network (DLN), is versatile enough. It could host additional tools for mentoring purposes, including online CoPs, mentoring courses, assessment tools, 360 assessments and others. It is already accessible to CAF members online and could be used to conduct matching activities or mentor repository type of

¹¹⁵ Johnson and Andersen, "FORMAL MENTORING IN THE U.S. MILITARY: Research Evidence, Lingering Questions, and Recommendations," *Naval War College Review* 63, 116.

¹¹⁶ Kimball, "Walking in the Woods: A Phenomenological Study of Online Communities of Practice and Army Mentoring," 57.

information. The system could be used in a similar manner, such as *MyVECTOR*, the USAF learning support tool.

With the rise of mentoring in the corporate world, companies have identified gaps in human resources tools to support mentoring programs. Software companies now offer solutions to address and simplify the execution of mentoring programs. Off-the-shelf and customized solutions are available from companies such as *eMentor Connect*, *Together Platform*, *Pushfar* and *Mentor Complete*. Costing of such tools was not included in the scope of this work. It is of note that such software tools could support a CAF mentoring initiative as part of a proper program or initiative design.

Resources / Cost

Most programs examined in the benchmarking exercise singled out personnel resources and time as significant constraints for their programs. Mentors or possible mentors are usually in high demand within the organization, which creates a bottleneck for availability. Benchmarking shows us that there are outside resources that can augment the pool of mentors for the organization. Leveraging employment, associations, or partnerships to support mentoring endeavours can be successful. This somewhat aligns with some concepts from the “Journey” which would offer veterans a way to remain connected to the service and continue to serve. Veterans could potentially continue to leverage their experience through mentoring after their exit from the military. It could be done through contracting or associations, which could be existing or purpose-built.

The CAF can also look to other organizations for mentorship. Although the CAF differentiates itself with the fact that leadership is always developed in-house, it does not mean it cannot learn and exchange with people outside the CAF. Other governmental departments, non-

government organizations, local industry and academia, offer a great pool of talent to tap into for these purposes. Increasing the pool of mentors would relieve some of the demand, enabling more members to have access to mentorship.

Observations

As discussed above, each of Erikson's stages requires a different mentorship function for the mentee. Therefore, programs and mentors must develop their relationships with goals related to the members' developmental period. Program design must align its purpose with the targeted audiences to ensure mentees and mentors are working towards the same objectives. Mentees in the adolescent and emerging adult categories will require more interventions focused on socialization and career identity. Those in the young adulthood category will look to develop relationships requiring more psychosocial support. This can affect matching mechanisms depending on whether or not matching is done by a third party or by the mentees.

Organizational learning and mentorship is a topic that would require a separate study. As a cursory review, a few key points are considered. Mentorship supports learning, growth and leadership, all things the CAF expects soldiers to continually master as they progress. These activities are key in supporting a culture of excellence and the values expected of the CAF's members. The leadership doctrine and training curriculum needs to reflect these concepts to enhance day-to-day leadership and mentorship engagements. Additionally, the CFPDS needs an update to incorporate these concepts, as detailed in the "Journey".

There are excellent examples of tools, resources and sourcing models currently used by allies and other companies. The benchmark review from chapter 4 details only eight organizations with key positive and negative observations leaving many more to be studied. Any

program implementation should be developed from the ground up, using the implementation detailed by Vance et al.¹¹⁷

The development of the soldier displays many key moments in their lives that present vital opportunities for mentorship engagements that can offer great value to their development. Each of these moments should be approached to support the member's needs and if possible the organization's. Organizational learning also needs to be included in the CAF's approach to systems and information flow to improve learning for its members.

Implementation

Leadership in the CAF is currently in a fragile state. The current crisis occurring at the upper echelon has shaken the institution, demonstrating some gaps in leadership and the CAF's cultural foundation. Mentorship can be an effective method to address some of these deficiencies. Mentorship is present and effective in the organization. However, is it occurring as often as it should or could? Below are a few models to support the trends in mentorship. These four courses of action (COA) are explained generally, as implementation would require a complete program design and further resourcing estimates. From the status quo, each COA builds upon the previous one. They are examined through the lens of culture, organizational learning, tools and resources.

COA – Status Quo

Current CAF leadership doctrine, training curriculum and environment are adequate to meet the needs of soldiers and organizational goals. This is based on the assumption that the "Journey's" current developments will target mentorship to support CFPDS's training delivery

¹¹⁷ Eric A. Vance *et al*, "An Eight-Step Guide to Creating and Sustaining a Mentoring Program," *The American Statistician* 71, no. 1 (2017): 24-28.

addressing and supporting organizational goals. This would, in turn, support mentoring in the organization.

There are three issues with this assumption. First, at this time, the goals stated for the mentorship program focus on diversity. In itself, that is not a negative, but it is not focused on the members' needs for growth. There is therefore a risk that the program will be rejected by the base group. Second, the focus on CFPDS reform is said to be on program delivery and not necessarily on experiential learning and self-development. This approach would not necessarily meet the psychosocial and career needs of the soldier or improve organizational learning. Lastly, this approach does not make tools and resources available to support mentoring for the force.

COA – Reinvigorate Curriculum and Tools

This approach suggests amendments to CAF's current doctrine, leadership training and tools to support mentorship theory and its application. This tactic would see the CAF training system impart in-depth mentorship theory curriculum at all levels, with multiple training engagements throughout soldiers' careers to integrate mentorship theory as described in chapter 2. The CAF's training system can easily incorporate additional curriculum, and the resource requirements would be minimal. The *CAF Mentoring Handbook* also needs a refresh to support developments and approaches in the field in the last decade. The vision for officers and NCMs, if written, needs to reflect the concepts with further detail. It should aim to focus the chain of command on the benefits and outcomes mentorship can have on the organization and its people.

This COA does force a small culture shift in the development of members. It continually engages them to consider mentorship as a tool in their development and leadership style. This in turn supports the members' abilities for personal growth, organizational learning and the CAF culture creating a solid foundation for mentorship within the CAF. This is the minimal approach

the CAF needs to take. It would ensure soldiers are equipped with the concepts to conduct the activity as they see fit. However, it does not provide the supporting tools or the continuous strategic engagement required to jumpstart this culture-shift.

COA – Mentorship Program

This approach sees the establishment of an informal mentorship program in addition to reinvigorating curriculum and tools. With a strong training foundation in mentoring, the CAF would establish the program using the methodology explained in the how-to guide, *An Eight-Step Guide to Creating and Sustaining a Mentoring Program*. It describes a method, which would position the program for success.¹¹⁸ Mentors and mentees, on a voluntary basis, would participate, with formal or informal matching options. The program administration would require resourcing, on a permanent basis, in order to centrally manage the dispersed program using tools and resources determined as necessary.

This would build on a solid academic understanding of the mentoring concepts by the members and then create a venue for the soldiers to participate in mentorship relationships that may not be available to them otherwise. This methodology would require resourcing to manage the program and make tools available for use in an attempt to remove any barriers to mentoring from the mentee and mentor perspective. The tactic supports organizational learning and cultural aspects for the force, and offers direct support for the members' personal growth. It places the onus on the member to look for support.

COA – Mentorship Vision

The last option sees the CAF establishing a mentorship program but an environment where knowledge transfer is enabled and barrier-free. This approach is a continuation of the

¹¹⁸ Eric A. Vance *et al*, “An Eight-Step Guide to Creating and Sustaining a Mentoring Program,” *The American Statistician* 71, 23.

previous COA. It sees the CAF establish spaces such as CoPs, learning environments such as *MyVECTOR*, and direct specific targeted engagements for soldiers during their careers.

In order to be successful, the implementation would require mentorship to be fully nested within career progression and the CFPDS. This could involve mandated targeted mentorship engagements at specific times in members' careers. As with most cultural changes, a substantial engagement campaign would support the changes in doctrine and policy. This would involve executive-level leadership participating in targeted engagements and assigning a champion for the program. To maintain momentum and engrain the program into the CAF culture, this engagement campaign would need to be sustained for a prolonged period of time. As seen in chapter 4, most programs disappear after two years of inception.

The CAF needs to invest in tools and personnel to support mentoring at the lowest levels. This would involve program managers serving as facilitators in matching mentors and mentees. But, also assists members looking for learning tools and resources, including resources outside the military sphere of influence. They could also manage CoPs to maintain alignment with organizational goals and quality control.

This program design forces personal involvement and emphasizes organizational learning in all our activities. However, this can be seen negatively if continuously forced on members. However, it does facilitate continuous engagement for those looking for it. It offers resources and tools to support mentorship and it would come at a significant cost to the department.

6 – Conclusion

When you equip people, you teach them how to do a job. Development is different. When you develop people, you are helping them improve as individuals. You are helping them acquire personal qualities that will benefit them in many areas of life, not just their jobs.

– John C. Maxwell, *Mentoring 101*

Current events with CAF leaders' conduct has shaken the institution and offers an opportunity for change. If the organization can capitalize on the momentum these events have created, genuine, purposeful change can occur. The CAF needs to reinvent itself into a learning organization to meet the challenges of tomorrow. Mentorship is a central tool that can support the cultural shift that is required of the institution. However, the chain of command needs to establish the conditions to make this a lasting change and not just a momentary shift. This study demonstrates an additional need for mentoring engagements within the CAF to support organizational learning, diversity, performance and human resources strategies.

In order to demonstrate these findings, mentorship concepts, the CAF's systems, benchmarking and other factors were examined. To be successful in its approach, mentorship concepts must be reflected within the foundational doctrine in its training and engagement strategies. But, most notably it must be present in the soldiers' daily interactions. The program needs to target specific career stages and be flexible to meet mentees' needs, whether career-focused or psychosocial. As this study has highlighted, the keys to a successful approach are:

- Creating a learning-focused culture where the transfer of knowledge is a priority;
- Integrating programs within the overall framework of professional development and its concepts;
- Engaging members continuously with strategic engagements and messaging from institutional leaders;
- Incorporating a mentoring culture and organizational learning as part of socialization and training;

- Supporting the “Journey” with a soldier engagement strategy;
- Producing flexible programs to meet varied needs; and
- Resourcing tools and personnel to support the vision.

Mentorship has been a known tool to increase performance for a long time. However, the CAF continues to wrestle with the best way forward in its execution. In order to support the CAF’s role and mission, a mentorship vision should be implemented to support the soldiers and organizational capabilities. The CAF’s approach needs to permeate through all its systems and remove barriers to mentoring while supporting knowledge transfer between soldiers and within the organizations. In doing so, the CAF would enhance its effectiveness and support soldiers’ journey. This undertaking is not a small project but a generational endeavour. Implementation requires proper resourcing in terms of budget, personnel and most importantly, engagement and buy-in from the institutional leaders of the CAF. At a minimum, the CAF needs to refresh its curriculum and update the CFPDS.

The current government defence policy, SSE, describes people as the greatest resource the CAF possesses. One could argue that knowledge is at the center of activities and enables soldiers to accomplish their mission. Mentoring is a tool that can increase members’ overall capabilities through the transfer of knowledge and supports members through their work and personal challenges to excel.

Sir John Whitmore saw coaching as the way to unlock people’s potential to maximize their performance. Mentoring has the potential to maximize peoples’ professional and individual growth. If the CAF can create an environment, where mentoring is available to all and part of the day-to-day interactions for soldiers, its goals for performance will be surpassed. Most importantly, it will reinforce the CAF’s values and culture of excellence.

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