OFFICERS AS MENTORS WITHIN THE NATIONAL GUARD CONTEXT

By

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(Under the direction of Karen E. Watkins)

ABSTRACT

Informal learning opportunities are one way that organizations approach the process of developing their most valuable asset: people. Mentoring rising leaders to assume greater organizational positions of responsibility and authority is one form of informal learning. This study focused on the mentoring experiences of mid-to-senior level officers in the National Guard. The purpose of the study was to understand the officers' beliefs and behaviors while they served as mentors to their traditional, part-time, junior officers.

An open-ended critical incident interview method was used to collect the data in this qualitative study. In-depth interviews were conducted with nine officers who were recommended as exemplar mentors. Thirty-nine critical incidents were described by the mentors. Thematic analysis of the data and open coding procedures led to four themes related to officers' beliefs and four themes related to officers' behavior. Three overall levels relating to the themes were identified as (a) military professional identity, (b) organization, and (c) people. The fourth belief theme emerged as the belief in the limitations of mentoring, while the fourth behavior theme emerged as other informal strategies.

The mentoring incidents were embedded within the National Guard context. Themes related to the context and its potential influence on the practice of mentoring emerged from the

data. Contextual themes included (a) size of the organization, (b) time constraints, and (c) the presence of dual careers. The findings of the study expand on the findings in the mentoring and informal learning literature by adding the unique perspective of officers while they provided mentoring within the National Guard context.

INDEX WORDS: Mentoring, Informal learning, Adult education, Critical incident technique, National Guard

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If you give a man a fish, he will have a meal.

If you teach him to fish, he will have a living.

If you are thinking a year ahead, sow seed.

If you are thinking ten years ahead, plant a tree.

If you are thinking one hundred years ahead, educate the people.

By sowing a seed once, you will harvest once.

By planting a tree, you will harvest tenfold.

By educating the people, you will harvest one hundredfold.

Anonymous Chinese Poet, c. 420 B.C.

I sincerely appreciate all the people who have traveled through my life and have educated me. Those people include my Mom and my Dad, my siblings, my dear husband Jim, colleagues, teachers, and my National Guard buddies. A feat such as this one requires the direct and indirect efforts of many people. To each of you – I thank you. I consider myself very blessed to have had the opportunities in life to pursue both education and experience. It is my vision to integrate my theoretical knowledge and practical experiences in facilitating others' education.

Finally, I want to thank the Georgia Army National Guard. They provided partial funding for this research project and have demonstrated their commitment to leadership by sponsoring programs and experiences that foster growth and development amongst junior leaders. The National Guard has become my extended family and I sincerely appreciate their faith in my efforts. I couldn't have completed this research study without the officers and I want to thank

them for their participation and, even more so, for their personal commitment to developing

current and future organizational leaders. One thing is certain – each of you cares deeply about

the National Guard.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Problem

Although mentoring is widely accepted as a practice that offers benefits to mentee,

mentor, and the organization alike, there is much to be learned from viewing this practice

through the contextual lens of the National Guard. Research has consistently proven that those

who are mentored gain significant benefits, such as increased job satisfaction, career opportunity

and advancement, and higher overall compensation (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Fagenson,

1989; Kram, 1980, 1985; Roche, 1979; Scandura, 1992b; Zey, 1984). Mentoring is viewed as a

mutually beneficial relationship for both the mentor and mentee, with mentors benefiting from an

opportunity to pass on wisdom and lessons learned, gratification of seeing others grow and

succeed, and enhanced career development (Allen, Poteet, Russell, & Dobbins, 1997; Ayree &

Chay, 1996; Kram, 1985; Zey, 1984). Lastly, organizations benefit from increased organizational

socialization, enhanced organizational commitment, and lower levels of turnover (Ayree &

Chay, 1996; Chao, Walz & Gardner, 1992; Kram, 1985; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993; Scandura,

1992b). Additionally, the use of mentoring may serve as a key career resource for developing

future managerial talent (Bernstein & Kaye, 1986; Byham & Nelson, 1999; Noe, 1988a; Ragins

& Scandura, 1997; Zey, 1984) as well as a tool for socializing new employees in various

organizational domains (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993). The benefits mentioned are specifically

associated with organizations found within the civilian sector. In order to examine whether these

benefits are likely to transfer to another context, the purpose of this research was to understand

the practice of mentoring within the National Guard context. The National Guard provides interesting parallels to the civilian sector because soldiers are members of both the civilian and military context. While their involvement in the civilian environment is full-time, their National Guard employment is part-time. As traditional members of the National Guard, part-time professionals are representative of a growing segment within the workplace. Informal learning opportunities aimed at part-time professionals include the practice of mentoring. This study is focused on developing a better understanding of mentoring practices within the National Guard context.

As one of the world's largest organizations, the military provides a rich ground in which to study many organizational development issues. Virtually every job that is found within the civilian sector is found within the military, from accountants to cooks to mechanics to senior level managers. In addition to parallel occupations, there are parallel organizational management processes within the military context. Management levels within the military correspond to levels of management traditionally found within civilian business organizations. The presence of similar management levels within both the civilian and military context provides a unique opportunity to view many organizational development and management concepts through this military lens.

As a state-level military organization, the National Guard has a dual purpose: to supplement civil authorities in support of state service and to ensure military readiness for providing national defense. Unlike business settings that have a market or service approach as their primary goal, the National Guard must focus its efforts and energy on training its members to be ready to serve the state and the nation in times of need. Serving on a moment's notice

requires trained and available personnel and necessitates having trained officers that can perform their duty when called upon.

The employees within the ranks of the National Guard are referred to as *citizen soldiers*. The term citizen soldier epitomizes the dual role that they play; they are a member of the civilian work force (citizen) and a member of the National Guard (solider). As compared to the other branches of the military, this direct link to the civilian sector makes the application and transferability of managerial practices and theories particularly strong. Although management practices vary throughout organizations, they are generally reflective of the type of employee they are managing. Typical management literature focuses on the traditional full-time employee; however, there are a variety of work arrangements that can be found within organizations. The emergence of the part-time work force is one such work arrangement.

The connection between business organizations and the National Guard citizen soldier can be found in the mutual need to attract and retain quality part-time professionals. The prevalence of the part-time worker in today's contemporary workforce points to the need for increased study and understanding. As a result of the combination of various types of employment within organizations and today's competitive workplace, managers are finding that they need new and creative ways to work with employees in order to ensure satisfaction and gain organizational commitment.

The prevalence of the part-time employee has experienced upward and downward movements over the decades and has been influenced, to some degree, by the way this type of worker has been defined. According to Belous's study (1989), the number of part-time employees increased 21% between 1980 and 1988. In his study, he labeled this group of employees as *contingent workers* and included part-time, temporary, and subcontracted workers.

In contrast, *core workers* were those workers who were full-time, traditional employees. He viewed the increased presence of contingent workers as a result of the shift from a share economy to a contingent economy. This shift was marked by increased flexibility, a reduction in the relative number of core workers, and an increase in the use of contingent workers (p. x-xi).

The Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) conducts a monthly study, called the Current Population Study (CPS), of approximately 60,000 households to solicit information about workplace arrangements. CPS results from the ten year period covering 1983 - 1993 showed that more than a quarter of all workers fell into the broad category of contingent worker. Temporary workers and self-employed workers are often combined into this single category of contingent worker. During this period, the total number of contingent workers grew at a rate roughly consistent with overall employment. More recent data showed that the number of part-time professionals grew by 50% between 1989 and 1997 to approximately 4.5 million workers (as cited in Sightler & Adams, 1999). In summary, although the part-time workforce had a significant increase during the 1980's, followed by a relatively stable growth from 1983-1993, the number of part-time workers has more recently experienced notable growth.

Providing mentoring to part-time professionals is one way to address the genuine and unique need for personal and career development. A significant amount of research has been conducted that points to the effectiveness of management practices involving mentoring (Chao, Walz & Gardner, 1992; Fagenson, 1989; Hunt, & Micheal, 1983; Kram, 1983; Orth, Wilkinson, & Benfari, 1987; Scandura, 1992b). Mentoring employees, whether informally or formally, is a function that can be found in most organizations. As both civilian and military organizations seek ways to enhance effectiveness and decrease employee turnover, they are increasingly looking toward managerial practices that may hold the key to addressing these needs. Mentoring

has also been linked to organizational socialization and has proven to be a viable means of successfully assimilating employees into an organization (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993). Social learning theory, with its focus on observations made within social settings, offers a backdrop to the practice of mentoring (Bandura, 1977). Observing others and learning from others' role modeling is a significant function of mentoring (Burke, 1984; Kram, 1985). In light of these potential outcomes, identifying and developing effective mentors is a priority in many organizations.

Providing guidance and direction, both personal and professional, is a function of military leadership. The military makes a distinction similar to the business environment in that they consider leadership and management to be different concepts. Management is more traditionally associated with a focus on projects or things; leadership is focused on people. An apt phrase in this context is *you manage things but you lead people*. Although the military acknowledges that distinction, they maintain their primary focus on leadership. Regardless of an officer's particular job or responsibility, every officer is a leader and thus primarily responsible for leading people.

The military is focused on many facets of human resource development found within the organizational development arena. The military has long been interested in the subjects of leadership and leadership development. One particularly relevant military publication is FM 22-100 Military Leadership (Department of the Army, 1990). This manual is dedicated to the subject of leadership and includes related topics such as mentoring, coaching, teaching, and professional development. This manual defines mentoring as

> the proactive development of each subordinate through observing, assessing, coaching, teaching, developmental counseling, and evaluating that results in people being treated

with fairness and equal opportunity. Mentoring is an inclusive process (not an exclusive one) for everyone under a leader's charge. (pp. 5-16)

An example of the Army's commitment to this leadership topic can be found within its educational system. The United States Army War College (USAWC) is the training institute for its most senior leadership. Attendance at this institution is an honor reserved for the most promising, upwardly mobile senior officers. Demonstrating the Army's current focus on leadership development, the Army War College designated Mentorship as its Special Theme for Academic Year 2002. This theme was integrated throughout the entire range of military topics, with particular emphasis being placed on mentorship as a topic for reflection and scholarly efforts. This designation and the subsequent student essays provided insight into the Army's oftentimes dialectical relationship with the topic of mentoring.

A recent Army War College research project involved an examination of essays regarding mentoring. Merill Anderson-Ashcroft, contracted by USAWC, conducted a content analysis on sixty-four (64) essays submitted by members of the class of 2002. Although most essays contained both positive and negative statements regarding aspects of mentoring, 71% of the statements addressed negative aspects (as cited in Martin, Reed, Collins, & Dial, 2002). Further analysis indicated that "misunderstandings regarding mentoring goals, strategies, and implementation methods are a core problem contributing to confusion and cynicism" (p. 116). The current treatment of the concept of mentoring combined with the Army's interest in developing a formalized mentoring program, led the authors to consider the relationship between mentoring and leadership. In its classic sense, mentoring is viewed as a special and personal relationship between a senior person and a junior person and "implies a genuine fondness and respect between the mentor and protégé" (p. 118). When viewed as such, Martin, et al. consider

the difference between mentoring and leadership as profound. The personal aspect of mentoring in this sense goes against Army Doctrine that spells out that leaders provide mentorship for all their subordinates, regardless of whether they are fond of them or not. One exclusive process in which military leaders do engage is *growing future leaders*. This is a process "whereby senior leaders identify promising juniors for key developmental and career-enhancing positions" (p. 124).

The authors acknowledge that identifying future leaders is exclusive by nature as the structure of the organization dictates limited inclusion. The problem lies in the arena of mentoring and leadership. If mentoring is simply considered as a subcomponent of leadership focused on leaders developing subordinates through actions of good interpersonal leadership and caring (through teaching, coaching, counseling, and leading by example) then it should be offered to all the subordinates.

Furthermore, if the military developed a formalized mentoring program, then they would be sanctioning a process whereby only certain junior officers would receive this treatment. That exclusivity conflicts with Army leadership doctrine and its underlying principles of equal opportunity and fairness to all. Instead, Martin, et al. recommends that the Army maintain a focus on the broader concept of leader development, rather than "the exclusive and virtually un-programmable classic mentoring relationships that are sometimes the by-product of a healthy leadership environment" (p. 126). Misunderstandings regarding the definition of mentoring and its intended outcomes have caused organizational members to view mentoring in different ways.

The Navy is one military organization that has isolated the practice of mentoring and examined its role within their officer ranks. An earlier study of Medical Service Corp Officers suggested that mentored officers reported higher job satisfaction ratings and a greater intent to

remain on active duty (as cited in Johnson, Huwe, Fallow, Lall, et al., 1999). Johnson, et al, in conjunction with the United States Naval Institute conducted a survey of 691 retired senior naval officers. They found that 67% reported the presence of a mentor during their military career, with an average of three significant mentors. They queried these senior officers for specific examples of how they most benefited from being mentored. Analysis of these examples resulted in four categories that represented the most frequent responses. The four prevalent themes included:

1. Benefiting from the mentor's advice,

2. Being recommended for key assignments,

3. Having the mentor express confidence in one's leadership ability, and

4. Benefiting from observing the mentor.

On a more local level, the Georgia Army National Guard has expressed a strong commitment to a human resource focus. Sponsorship programs are identified as a primary means of leadership development. Additionally, as a critical component of their leadership succession planning, they have publicly committed to formalizing all mentoring programs during fiscal year 2002 (Georgia Department of Defense, 2001). These findings clearly demonstrate the military's interest in and focus on the subject of mentorship.

Although there is still no formal mentoring process found within the current structure of the Georgia Army National Guard, it is widely understood that mentoring junior officers is a high priority for the organization (W. Hughes, personal communication, April 2, 2000). Developing those skills related to mentoring junior officers seems to occur in a haphazard manner. Various formal and informal avenues for learning are offered throughout an officer's career that may address the development of effective mentoring skills.

Formal learning opportunities include the various structured military training programs designed to train officers within their specific career functions as well as address psychosocial components such as decision making, problem solving, communication skills, and leadership development. Although each field grade officer (mid to senior level manager) is exposed to the formal military education process, it is often through the informal learning opportunities that officers begin to develop and hone their mentoring skills. A study by the Center for Workplace Development (CWD) reported that "62% of what employees need to know to do their jobs is acquired through informal learning in the workplace" (Verespej, 1998, p. 2). Various sources of informal and incidental learning include individual experiences in past or present mentoring relationships, learning from peers, and learning from supervisors. Incidental learning is another avenue for learning to mentor and includes the learning that occurs as a by-product of some other activity (Marsick & Watkins, 1990).

Providing mentorship within the National Guard is a unique process for a number of reasons. Although most businesses are struggling to retain qualified personnel, this organization is unique in it needs to develop people for future operations which can not be satisfied by drawing from a general applicant pool. In other words, retaining people is especially critical because the National Guard can not easily recruit people who can be effortlessly put in place. Mentoring may help toward this end. Another reason that underscores the need to retain qualified people is the financial investment that the system has made in developing and training its members. Throughout officers' career, they are sent to a number of schools, training sessions, and workshops at the direct expense of the military. The experiences, lessons, and learning that accumulate over the years represent an immense amount of military-related knowledge capital. Each officer who leaves the organization represents an irrecoverable loss for the National Guard.

Overall, the need to retain qualified officers makes the mentoring process both critical and unique within the National Guard.

An interesting dimension of the mentoring process within the National Guard involves the multiple roles of its members. Due to the part-time nature of its employment, the vast majority of members have additional careers. In excess of 75% of the members of this organization are *traditional members*, meaning they are part-time members (Department-of-Defense, 2001, p. ii). Although statistics are not confirmed, there is anecdotal evidence that indicates the majority of those members have additional careers outside of their employment in the National Guard. The dual career nature of their profession and, in turn, their multiplicity of roles, provides a unique situation in mentoring professionals for part-time permanent membership. Mentors need to be knowledgeable, empathetic, and skilled in providing mentoring that can assist officers in balancing their civilian and military careers as well as their personal obligations.

Because an officer is part of a system outside the guard, the personal and professional development that is gained through the military has the potential to impact a much broader organizational context. For example, specific skills that are learned within the military context can transfer to an officer's civilian job and potentially contribute to a service, process, or product. These multiple roles further expand to include the social dimensions of friends, family, and community. The potential to impact these arenas in a positive manner is an important reason for developing and mentoring members.

The human resource situation that the National Guard is facing is one of diminishing returns. That is, in order to do its job effectively the National Guard needs to have people who are trained, ready, and most importantly – available. However, retention statistics

show that the number of qualified officers is decreasing as our needs appear to be increasing based on the current world situation (Department-of-Defense, 2001, p. ii).Studies of full-time employees within non-military organizations suggest that mentoring can serve as an effective tool for retaining people within organizations (Kram, 1985; Scandura, 1992b). The lack of available research on mentoring practices for permanent part-time professionals points to a decided gap in the research. By focusing on the beliefs and behaviors of National Guard mentors, this study is intended to understand the multiple ways in which officers facilitate the development of their part-time subordinates.

Statement of the Problem

The face of today's military is very different than in years past. The economic prosperity enjoyed by the majority in the United States has influenced the type of officer who joins the service, the expectations they bring with them, and their successful retention. The military itself is changing, both in scope and composition, and in many ways parallels the operations of civilian business organizations. Many organizational development concepts and practices that may have been almost exclusively found within the business context, are becoming more commonplace within the National Guard.

Because of the increased complexity and diversity of today's military, leaders can no longer solely depend on the hierarchical structure and traditional role dimensions as their leadership foundation. In response to the various challenges found within the military environment, officers are finding their roles evolving from more traditional aspects to more complex ones. Senge (1990a) pointed out the need for managers at all levels within organizations to become more like teachers, mentors, and coaches. This managerial shift, focused on facilitating the development of their subordinates, is especially pertinent within the National

Guard context as it strives to incorporate innovative practices in its effort to retain quality officers and develop future leaders.

One aspect of this role transformation includes providing a greater level of personal and professional mentoring to subordinates. This mentoring occurs at various levels throughout the National Guard and is especially important for those mid-to-senior-level officers who are charged with the responsibility of mentoring the development of career officers. As compared to those officers who enter the military for a limited time of service, career officers are those individuals who are likely to make the military a professional career. Retaining career officers in the military is imperative because of the significant institutional knowledge they've accumulated as a result of years of formal, informal, and incidental learning.

The presence of dual careers provides unique and complex circumstances for mentoring subordinates. For many career officers, these developmental mentoring relationships may play a significant part in their decision to stay in the guard. Identifying the beliefs and behaviors associated with successful mentoring will provide guidance to future leaders for developing and retaining career officers. Providing mentorship for the personal and professional development of these citizen soldiers is a critical aspect in ensuring leadership continuity for the future of the National Guard.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of my study is to understand officers' beliefs and behaviors while they serve as mentors within the National Guard context. Specifically, the research questions are:

1. What are the officers' beliefs about their role as mentor?

2. What are the officers' related behaviors, or strategies, that contribute to their role as mentors within the military context?

Significance of the Study

By examining the beliefs and behaviors of officers as they provide mentorship to part-time professionals, this study offers a number of theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it offers an expansion of the knowledge base involving mentoring and informal learning. By way of situating the study within a military environment, this study provides an additional context in which to view and understand the role of mentors and their contribution to the personal and professional development of their subordinates. Although there is a plethora of information about mentoring and its impact on newcomer assimilation (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993), career advancement and job satisfaction (Berry, 1983; Scandura, 1992a), and retention (Kram, 1985; Scandura, 1992b), there is a research gap in the knowledge of how mentoring affects part-time employees, such as National Guard members. This is especially relevant in light of the transformation taking place in today's workplace environment and the significant increase in the various employee participation forms arising from this transformation (Belous, 1989; Segal, 1996; Senge, 1990a). This study directly addresses the research gap that exists regarding the mentoring of part-time professionals.

Understanding the complex and unique role dimensions for part-time professionals can make practical contributions in several ways. Human resource practitioners can use the results to inform them in the development of programs that focus on attracting, developing, and retaining quality part-time professionals. This would be especially useful in developing formal and informal mentoring programs within their organizations. Considering the significant role that social learning plays in mentoring professionals the study offers insight into the practice of modeling within the larger mentoring practice. Providing insight into the nature of career

development for part-time or dual-career professionals, this study will inform those professionals who provide career counseling services or career preparation services.

Additionally, military leaders within the National Guard can learn how effective mentors contribute to the development of their part-time subordinates. Gaining valuable insights as to how the beliefs and behaviors of mentors influence individual development may raise the awareness level of military leadership and potentially influence the organizational structure of leadership development programs. The specific incidents identified by the participants in the study provided insight into the types of experiences that hold the potential for informal learning and mentorship development. This insight could, in turn, help shape the concept of succession planning for military leaders.

This study provides a profile of effective mentors and could help the military in several practical ways. The profile of beliefs and behaviors of effective mentors could be used to identify future mentors. Additionally, these results could be translated into the military curriculum and used as a training basis for developing related skills, knowledge, and abilities. Finally, the results of this study may provide the impetus for examining human resource or leadership practices, policies, and procedures within the reserve component.

Definitions

This study has a variety of concepts that hold particular meaning. The following definitions, as used in this study, are provided for the sake of clarity and shared understanding.

Contingent worker **–** a worker who is considered part-time or temporary.

Core worker **-** a worker who is considered full-time or permanent.

Formal learning **–** learning that is "typically institutionally-sponsored, classroom based, and highly structured" (Marsick, 1990, p. 12).

Incidental learning **–** learning that is often unplanned or unconscious; it is typically the byproduct of doing something else (Marsick & Watkins, 1990).

Informal learning **–** learning that is "predominantly unstructured, experiential, and noninstitutional" (Volpe, 1999, p. 4).

M-Day guard member **–** a traditional National Guard member who serves as a permanent part-time member of the organization. The "M" stands for mobilization and designates that the person would become activated upon mobilization of the forces.

Mentee – a junior, less experienced employee who is the recipient of personal and professional mentoring by a mentor.

Mentor **–** usually a senior, experienced employee who serves as a role model, provides support, direction, and feedback to less experienced employees regarding career planning and interpersonal development, and increases the visibility of the mentee to the decision makers in the organization who may influence career opportunities (Noe, 1988).

National Guard – a state sponsored military organization charged with supplementing civil authorities in time of crisis and maintaining readiness in support of the national defense. The organization consists of both full-time manning employees (FTM) and part-time (M-Day) employees.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter reviewed the three research areas that are relevant to studying how officers provide mentorship within the National Guard context. The first section addressed experiential education, which provided the broader context in which to view the study. Informal and incidental learning literature is reviewed in the following section. Research related to informal learning and developmental experiences was also included in this section. The third and final section reviewed the empirical literature associated with mentoring.

The University of Georgia GALILEO and GIL system were used to conduct computer searches of the following databases: EBSCO, The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), ABI INFORM, and UMI ProQuest Digital Dissertation. The following key words were used to guide the searches on the aforementioned databases: informal learning, incidental learning, mentoring, part-time employees, mentoring of part-time employees, and contingent workers. The researcher also reviewed books, journal articles, research studies, doctoral dissertations, and popular literature as literature sources for the current study.

Review of the Experiential Education Literature

This section reviewed the critical role that experience plays in learning and addressed classic studies and scholars as well as current themes and applications. Informal learning is strongly situated within the adult education literature, particularly experiential learning. The central role that experience plays in knowledge production can be found throughout the adult education literature (Dewey, 1938; Jarvis, 1987; Knowles, 1950, 1970, 1984; Kolb, 1984).

Experience alone, however, is not sufficient as a source of learning. In John Dewey's (1938) classic work, *Experience and Education*, he reminded us that "the belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative" (p. 25). What characterizes our learning is the quality, not the quantity, of our experiences. Dewey delineated two aspects of quality, the first being the immediate agreeableness or disagreeableness of the experience and the second being its influence on later experiences. While the first aspect is easy to discern, the second is much more complex.

Two principles distinguish experiences that are worthwhile from those that are not: continuity and interaction. Taken together, they represent the "longitudinal and lateral aspects of experience" (p. 44). The principle of continuity of experience rests upon the characteristic of habit. Habit, when interpreted biologically, is the concept that every experience takes something from prior experiences and contributes to the quality of later experiences. Learners need to be able to connect what they learn from their current situation to what they've learned in the past and then envision how it could affect future experiences. Dewey reminds us that, "every experience should do something to prepare a person for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality" (p. 47).

The principle of interaction addresses the balance between both factors of experience - objective and internal conditions. Experiences are a combination of what is going on internally and what takes place in the learner's environment (objective). Taken together, their interaction becomes the learning situation. External conditions focus on the experience, whereas internal factors influence what kinds of experiences are had by the individual. Dewey stated, "an

experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his environment" (p. 43). The trouble with traditional education, Dewey thought, was that it focused almost exclusively on the external factors.

Dewey's emphasis on reflection as an integral part of experience is apparent throughout his writing. Dewey (1938) defined reflective thought as the "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends." (p. 9). He believed that it was necessary to develop the habit of reflective thinking. His focus on experience as the medium for education helps situate informal learning, and one of its activities – mentoring – strongly in the adult education arena.

David Kolb's work on learning from our experiences provided further insight into experiential learning. Kolb (1984) hypothesized that learning from experience required four kinds of abilities: (a) an openness and willingness to involve oneself in new experiences (concrete experiences), (b) observational and reflective skills so these new experiences can be viewed from a variety of perspectives (reflective observation), (c) analytical abilities in order to create integrative ideas and concepts from their observations (abstract conceptualization), and (d) decision-making and problem-solving skills so these ideas and concepts can be used in actual practice (active experimentation) (p.31).

Taken together, these four abilities formed a model, or cycle, of experiential learning. Kolb depicted these capabilities as interrelated phases within a cyclical process, beginning with the concrete experience, moving into reflective observation and abstract observation, and then into active experimentation. In this cycle, experience and reflection are pictured as separate entities. His concept of reflection included both viewing experiences from a variety of

perspectives (reflective observation) and the analytical abilities of integrating ideas and concepts from reflection (abstract conceptualization).

Peter Jarvis (1987), an adult education scholar, provided a critique to Kolb's approach to experiential learning. While he acknowledged that Kolb's model "has provided a clear foundation upon which future researchers can build in order to achieve an even greater understanding of learning *per se*" he took exception to the limits imposed on experience (p. 18). Jarvis's (1987) critique of Kolb's model can be characterized by the following points: not every experience begins with a concrete experience, learning experiences aren't always concrete, learning isn't always sequential in nature, different types of knowledge produce different learning processes, and additional learning styles exist other than those identified by Kolb. Jarvis's (1987) model of the learning processes, while conceptually based on Kolb's (1984) model, accounts for multiple learning processes. He identified nine distinct responses to a potential learning situation, of which three are non-learning responses and six are learning. Overall, experiential learning, with its focus on learning derived from hands-on experiences, is well situated in the adult learning literature and has provided the broader contextual background for this study.

<div align="center">Review of the Informal and Incidental Learning Literature</div>

Learning that occurs outside of the traditional boundaries of a classroom has been discussed in a variety of ways throughout the literature. It has been referred to as experiential learning, non-formal education, everyday learning, self-directed learning, informal learning, incidental, and natural learning. Adult educators have long been interested in education that is practical, meaningful, and connected with learners' desire to grow and develop. While learning

of that nature can and does occur within traditional classroom settings, it often takes place in naturally occurring, social situations. Mentoring is one such example of informal learning.

Action science provided the theoretical underpinnings of much of what we know to be informal and incidental learning (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Jarvis, 1987; Marsick & Watkins, 1990, 1997). Chris Argyris and Donald Schon (Argyris & Schon, 1974,1978; Schon, 1983,1987), with views based on concepts examined by John Dewey and Kurt Lewin, provided critical thinking about action science. Action science is an interpersonal theory that explains interactions based on individuals' theories of actions. The two theories of actions are espoused theories, the ones we use to explain how we would like to be, and theories-in-use, the theories that illustrate the ways we act. The gap that exists between our two theories accounts for much of the miscommunication and misunderstandings within our interactions. Identifying, bringing to the surface, and publicly testing our underlying assumptions and tacit beliefs and values is required to understand the nature of our interpersonal interactions.

Two types of learning described by Argyris and Schon (1974, 1978) are single-loop and double loop learning. Single-loop learning involved the correction of a problem on a surface level, whereas double-loop learning addressed the issues beneath the problem. While it was not the researcher's intention to delve further into the intricacies of action science, it was important to illustrate its significance in understanding informal and incidental learning in general and Marsick and Watkins' (1990,1997) and Cseh, Watkins, and Marsicks' (1999) model in particular.

Marsick and Watkins (1990, 1997) provided a theoretical framework to understand informal and incidental learning in the workplace. As contrasted to formal learning, which is "typically institutionally sponsored, classroom-based, and highly structured," informal learning,

which includes incidental learning, is "not typically classroom-based or highly structured, and control of the learning rests primarily in the hands of the learner" (1990, p. 12). Incidental learning, a subcategory of informal learning, is defined by Watkins as "a byproduct of some other activity, such as task accomplishment, interpersonal interaction, sensing the organizational culture, trial and error experimentation, or even by informal learning" (1990, p. 12). This type of learning is never planned or intentional, but rather serendipitous or coincidental with some other activity and is largely embedded within the context of that other task. In comparison, informal learning can be planned or intentional, such as when a co-worker approaches another to help with a software program or when a person consciously seeks help from a mentor or coach. Informal learning is predominantly experiential and is different from formal learning by "degrees of control exercised by the learner, location, and predictability of outcomes" (p. 7). Examples of informal learning include self-directed learning, coaching, mentoring, networking, performance planning, and trial and error. Examples of incidental learning include learning from mistakes, internalized meaning constructions about the actions of others, and learning though a series of covert interpersonal experiments.

Both informal and incidental learning speak to learning that occurs outside the formally structured, institutionally sponsored, classroom-based activities. Both take place under non-routine conditions and typically occur without significant reflection. Consequently the opportunity to make mistakes and learn erroneous lessons are great. Marsick and Watkins (1990, 2001) point to proactivity, critical reflection, and creativity as three functions that can enhance informal and incidental learning. Proactivity involves the learner's taking initiative during the learning process. Proactive learners will take charge of their learning once they enter into the learning cycle. This is similar to concepts traditionally associated with self-directed learning,

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empowerment, and autonomy. Critical reflection is a higher-order reflection involving the surfacing and examination of values, beliefs, and assumptions. Examining assumptions allows learners to examine the beliefs that are embedded in their thinking and actions; this is especially important for incidental learning because of its largely tacit and"taken for granted" nature. Creativity involves thinking beyond one's own point-of-view and being able to look at multiple perspectives.

In their earlier book, *Informal and Incidental Learning in the Workplace*, Marsick and Watkins (1990) presented a theoretical framework and model for understanding informal and incidental learning in the workplace (see Figure 1). Serving as its theoretical base, they point to "the action perspective of Argyris and Schon (1978) that, in turn, has roots in John Dewey's (1938) theories of learning from experience and in Kurt Lewin's understanding of the interaction of individuals and their environment" (Marsick & Watkins, 1997, pp. 295-296).

When learning takes place under non-routine conditions, a person frames the situation they experience (Diagnosis) by using past experiences and knowledge (Problem framing). As individuals develop a strategy or invention for solving the problem, they view solutions through the lens of the context, assessing the constraints and limitations of that context against the feasibility of each solution (Contextualization). Once a strategy or invention is formulated (Invention), they may need to learn how to produce that strategy (Learning to produce invention). This may look like trial-and error experimentation, or learning from mistakes, a form of incidental learning. At this point, the strategy is implemented (Production) and the production leads to consequences that may be intended or unintended (intended and unintended consequences). Individuals then embed assumptions or generalizations into their consciousness

about whether or not that particular strategy worked. Based on the consequences, meaning is

made out of the experience and the subsequent learning is retained (Evaluation/generalization).
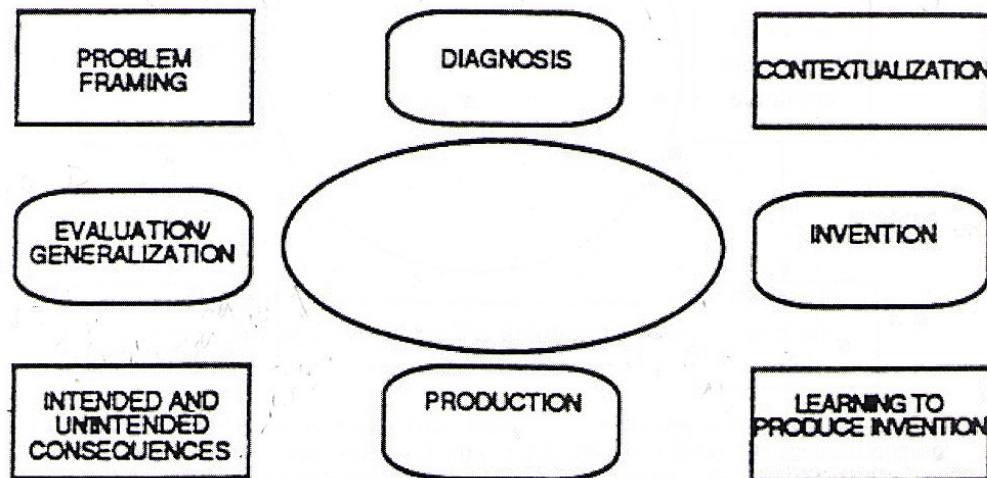

Figure 1. Incidental learning as part of a problem-solving mode. From: Marsick, V.J. and
Watkins, K.E. (1990). *Informal and Incidental Learning in the Workplace.* London: Routledge.
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Marsick and Watkins (1997) reminded us again that individuals may make errors at any

time throughout this cycle and that earlier errors will almost guarantee errors at later stages. For

these reasons, examining tacit beliefs and assumptions is critical in the process of informal and

incidental learning. They noted, "because this problem-solving so often occurs as an automatic

process and because so much of the process is tacit or unexamined, the potential for error is

great. There is a great need to surface these incidental learnings attendant to the problem-solving

process to increase our effectiveness" (p. 225).

Over the years, their 1990 model has been revised and refined. Marsick and Watkins

presented a revised model of informal and incidental learning in 1997 (see Figure 2). Drawing on

insights from action science, and reinforced by Dewey, the authors explained that problem-

solving is not straightforward. As a result of their thinking, their 1997 model is neither

straightforward nor prescriptive. They explained,

>steps such as observation and reflection are interwoven throughout various phases of the
>
>model, and the learning process varies because of the situation in which people find
>
>themselves. The problem-solving cycle is embedded within a sub-surface cycle
>
>compromising the beliefs, values and assumptions that guide action at each stage. (pp.
>
>296-297)

As learners move around the cycle, it is important that they identify and surface tacit values,

beliefs, assumptions, contextual factors, and unintended consequences that might shape their

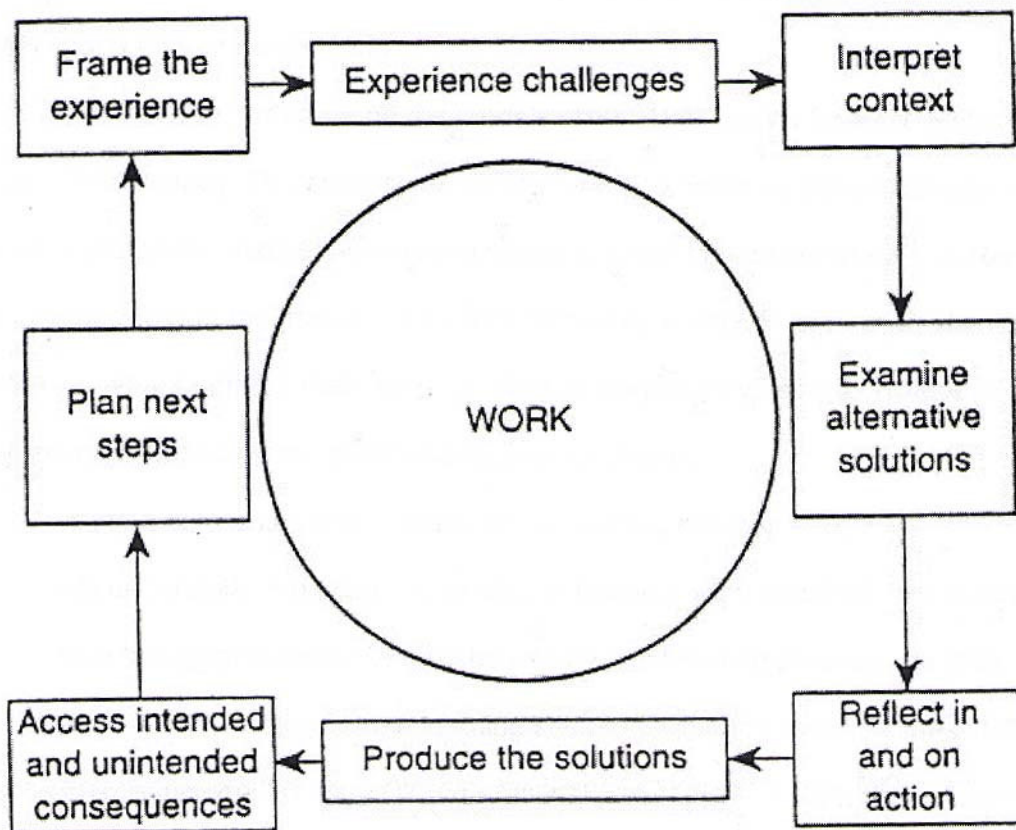understanding of their experience.

Figure 2. Informal and incidental model. From: Marsick, V.J. & Watkins, K.E. (1997). Lessons
from informal and incidental learning. In J. Burgoyne & M. Reynolds (Eds.), *Management*

learning: Integrating perspectives in theory and practice (pp. 295-311). London: SAGE
Reprinted by permission.

The need to further refine the models (1990,1997) came from the findings of Cseh's

(1998) study. The purpose of her study was to examine the critical learning experiences that

enabled owner-managers of small private companies in Romania to lead successfully in the

transition to a free market economy. In particular, she wanted to determine what triggered their

learning, what strategies they used, and what lessons they learned. Based on her study findings,

Cseh concluded,

> context permeates every phase of the learning process – from how the learner will
>
> understand the situation, to what is learned, what solutions are available and how the
>
> existing resources will be used in the learning process. (p. 352)

Although the context of the learning situation, which is used to assess feasibility of

solutions, was included in Marsick and Watkins' model (1990,1997), the pervasive influence of

context on each part of the learning process had not been previously depicted. Cesh's finding,

focused on the significance of context, provided valuable insights into the National Guard

context in which this mentoring study was examined. Also of importance was Cseh's finding

that the language used in the model did not fit the language used by the managers in describing

their experience. As a result, Marsick and Watkins re-labeled the components of the model and

have embedded the entire model within the context. See Figure 3 for a re-conceptualization of

Marsick and Watkins' model.

Based on extensive readings, experience, and review of empirical studies, Volpe,

Marsick, and Watkins (1999) have drawn a number of conclusions regarding informal learning.

They characterized informal learning as (a) integrated with work and daily routines, (b) triggered

by an internal or external jolt, (c) not highly conscious, (d) haphazard and happens by chance, (e) an inductive process of reflection and action, and (f) linked to learning of others (p. 90).
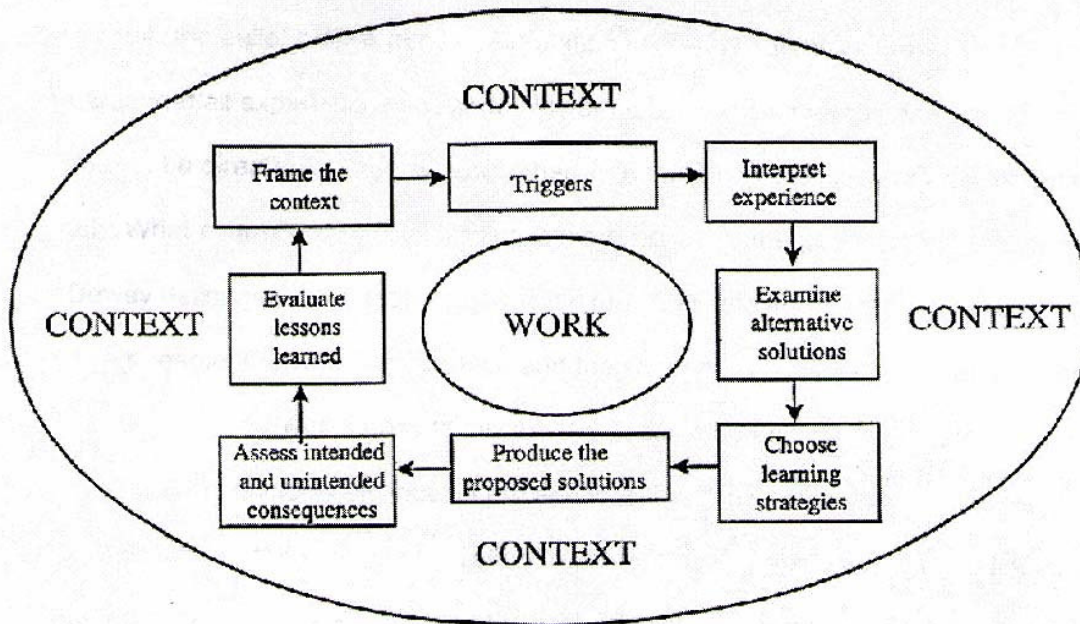
Figure 3. A re-conceptualized informal and incidental learning model. From: Cseh, M., Watkins, K.E., & Marsick, V.J. (1999). Reconceptualizing Marsick and Watkins' model of informal and incidental learning in the workplace. *Proceedings of the 1999 Conference of The Academy of Human Resource Development,* 349-356.

In summary, Marsick and Watkins (1990, 1997) and Cseh, Watkins, and Marsick (1999) presented us with a conceptual framework from which to understand informal and incidental learning within the workplace. These models account for the underlying and tacit beliefs, values, assumptions, and contextual factors that influence our learning. They posit that in order to fully utilize experiential opportunities in the work environment, learners need to critically reflect on prior experiences, day-to-day experiences, and examine underlying beliefs and assumptions.

Related Research

Several research studies within organizations have capitalized on the potential for learning from our everyday experiences (Benson, 1997; Davies & Easterby-Smith, 1984; Leslie,

Aring, & Brand, 1998). Based on interviews with 60 middle and senior level managers, Davies and Easterby-Smith (1984) examined the factors that led to higher or lower incidences of developmental experiences. Two factors identified were the degree of change perceived in the external environment and the existence or absence of a 'developing' culture within the company (p. 174). The degree of change in the external environment seemed to correspond to the opportunities from which managers develop. Expectations about whether the manager was supposed to adapt to changing circumstances and develop new ways of conducting business were reflected in the culture of the organization. Developing cultures viewed the managers as having the capacity to change and develop rapidly, whereas the non-developing cultures viewed the managers as adapting and changing slowly over time.

In examining the nature of developmental experiences, the authors found none of the experiences to be associated with formal training. Instead "they were all linked to the experience obtained in carrying out work duties" (p. 175). It was not formal learning, but rather informal learning experiences inherent to their work situations that provided the foundation for the managers' learning. Common features of developmental experiences were (a) confrontation with novelty, (b) being given responsibility for a distinct area of the business or organization, and (c) managers' perception that they had initiated the developmental moves. A developing culture, one that supports managers who develop new ways of dealing with problems and who look beyond existing procedures and rules, is important for developing managers. Additionally, nearly one-half of the managers perceived a benefit from "maintaining a long-term link with a particular manager who took an interest in their development" (p. 181). This person was typically called a mentor and was not necessarily their boss. They found evidence to support the fact that managers who had had a mentor were more likely to act as a mentor to others.

Davies and Easterby-Smith's (1984) overwhelming conclusion was that "managers develop primarily with confrontation with novel situations and problems where their existing repertoire of behaviours are inadequate and where they have to develop new ways of dealing with these situations" (p. 180). Organizations can facilitate the developmental process by creating a developing culture and ensuring managers experience uncertainty and new situations (non-routine). Today's turbulent external environment provides managers and organizations ample opportunity for developmental experiences.

Similar findings were reported in *Lessons of Experience*, written by McCall, Lombardo and Morrison (1988). Their classic qualitative inquiry into how successful executives develop on the job was based on five years of empirical research; their study involved 191 successful executives from six major corporations. Their intent was to help organizations "do a better job of development by making more efficient and thoughtful use of the developmental experiences they have to offer their high-potential managers" (p. 13). Informal learning, through experiential opportunities, was a consistent finding as they examined executive development. Analyzing over 616 events and 1,547 corresponding lessons, they found that the experiences that resulted in significant learning fell into the three broad categories of (a) assignments (what they were given to do), (b) bosses (and other relationships that impacted them), and (c) hardships (set backs and tough times) (p. 6). Diversity of experience, exposure to a variety of bosses, and the presence of adversity were the primary themes found in their study.

Two more recent studies provide further evidence of the prevalence of informal learning within organizations (Benson, 1997; Leslie, Aring, & Brand, 1998). Findings from the 1995 Bureau of Labor Survey (BLS) on employer-provided training concluded that regardless of the size of the organization, 70% of training was of an informal nature (as cited in Benson). In

addition to examining the amount and type of training received by employees, the survey also polled employers about training expenditures and how much informal training they offered. Figures from the BLS survey showed wages and salaries for time away from work to receive informal training to be $48.4 billion. The evidence that the majority of learning is based on informal learning, and the significant amount of funding spent in this pursuit, should alert employers to the critical need for maximizing informal learning opportunities and for ensuring positive outcomes of these opportunities.

The Teaching Firm Project, initiated in 1996 in six states and including more than 1,000 workers, undertook a study that examined the role of informal learning and its possibility for enhanced productivity (Leslie, Aring, & Brand, 1998). The study concluded that 62% of what employees need to know in order to do their jobs is acquired as a result of informal learning in the workplace. They identified thirteen work activities in which informal learning occurs: teaming, meetings, customer interactions, supervision, shift change, peer-to-peer communications, cross-training, exploration, mentoring, on-the-job training, documentation, execution of one's job, and site visits. The six most valuable activities were teaming, meetings, customer interactions, supervision, mentoring, and having the time to communicate during shift change (Verespej, 1998).

The Teaching Firm Project identified four key factors that determined the degree of informal learning that occurred in the workplace and the degree to which individual employees were predisposed to learn. The factors included, (a) external industry/economic factors such as level of competition, (b) the degree of congruency between formal company policies and practices experienced by employees, (c) social and environmental factors such as physical work conditions and social norms, and (d) the personal characteristics and developmental needs of the

individual employee. The contextual factor that had the strongest impact on informal learning was organizational culture, including organizational practices and social norms and values. This research confirmed the prevalence of informal learning within organizations and the impact that organizational culture had on informal learning outcomes.

Recent focus on the changes taking place within the workplace provided additional insight into this study. Segal (1996) used the phrase flexible employment as a way to describe the variety of workplace arrangements available, including salaried workers, part-time employees, contingent workers, self-employed, and hourly workers (Segal, 1996). He explained that each of these categories has varying degrees of flexibility and adjustability in their workplace. These flexible arrangements are particularly significant in light of the increased participation levels of the part-time work force (Belous, 1989; Nardone, 1995; Sightler & Adams, 1999). Although the literature was consistent in distinguishing between full-time workers and part-time workers, the way in which the part-time workplace arrangement has been defined was not consistent (Nardone, 1995). Feldmen and Doerpinghaus (1992a) suggested that "there are now pronounced differences *among* part-timers" (p. 61). In their study of part-time employees, they used Tilley's (as cited in Feldman & Doerpinghaus, 1992a) three broad categories of part-time workers as their groupings. The three categories were (a) short-term workers, (b) secondary workers, and (c) retention-quality workers. These three categories are helpful in that they make a distinction based on the expectation of work between worker and employee, that is, whether the work is temporary versus permanent. (Nardone, 1995). Retention-quality positions are created by organizations in order to attract highly skilled employees whose lives prevent them from working full-time. Clarifying the difference between temporary part-time workers and permanent part-time workers was significant in this study. Retention-quality

workers, both highly skilled and permanent, are most similar to the mentees in the mentoring study.

Using these three categories as the basis of comparison, Feldman and Doerpinghaus (1992a) studied 700 part-time employees in accordance to six key job factors: pay, fringe benefits packages, type of work, relationships with co-workers and customers, supervision, and schedule flexibility. The sample group for the retention-quality workers was permanent part-time professionals in the field of nursing. Their findings led them to suggest many ways of working with the part-time workforce; they outlined specific strategies that managers can adopt in maximizing productiveness of their part-time employees, specifically retention-quality workers. Feldman and Doerpinghaus (1992a) suggested the following: (a) salary need not be as high as the full-time force, but flexibility of scheduling is necessary to compensate for the differential; (b) more expensive fringe benefits, such as medical insurance, may have to be offered; (c) offer them training alongside their full-time counterparts; (d) include them in celebration rites and improve informal communication; (e) provide more positive and frequent feedback; (f) conduct performance reviews; (g) be more receptive to their suggestions and ideas; and (h) implement reasonable vacation and sick leave programs. Their study pointed to the need for managers to distinguish not only between their full-time and part-time employees, but also to realize that there are major differences amongst part-time employees.

Working to further define part-time employees, the CPS redesigned its monthly questionnaire in 1994. Previously, they had considered the broad category of contingent workers as including both temporary part-timer workers and permanent part-time workers. In this survey, they tied the definition of contingent worker to a measure of job security (Segal, 1996). Contingent workers were defined as "those individuals who do not perceive themselves as

having an implicit or explicit contract for ongoing employment" (as cited in Segal, 1996, p. 528).

According to this definition, National Guard officers would not be considered contingent workers since they have an explicit, contractual relationship with their state organization. However, a different form of flexible employment, the self-employed worker, holds relevance for this study. This worker is a part-time employee who serves as a separate, independent contractor and has a pre-arranged contract with his or her employee for a period of time. CPS defined the expectation of employment as an additional year under the assumption of a stable economic environment.

According to Segal (1996), self-employed workers are different from the all workers in a number of ways: (a) they are, on average, six years older than the average worker, (b) they have a larger male percentage (nearly 70%), (c) they are more likely to be white, (d) they are slightly better educated, and (e) they have a higher marriage rate. Self-employed persons tend to remain self-employed from year to year, thus the composition of this sector changes very slowly. The research surrounding self-employed workers holds relevance for the National Guard officers because of their ongoing contract specifying the continuous relationship. However defined, working with these part-time permanent workers presents a challenge for management in both the military and civilian sector.

Informal learning has been studied in a variety of contexts. A recent search on the UMI ProQuest Digitial Dissertations index yielded 128 dissertations on informal learning during the ten-year period from 1992 and 2002. Informal learning was studied in a variety of contexts, such as education (Grandone, M.E., 2002; Mott, V.M., 1994; Nikola, M.P., 1997), health care (Carter, 1995; Lee, C.W., 1997; Murray, M.E., 1993; Troyan, P.J., 1996), business (Bierema, L.L., 1994; Chao, C.A., 2001; Cesh, M., 1998; Ellinger, A.D., 1997; Maben-Crouch, C.L., 1997; Shapiro,

M.M., 1994; Skiba, M, 1999; Stevens, K.A., 1993; Volpe, M., 1992), technology (Wagner, D.N., 2001; Weintraub, R.S., 1998), and the military (Briks, M.I., 1994; Menard, S.A., 1993).

Because contextual factors played a primary role in this research, studies that either examined the changing nature of the workplace or placed a strong emphasis on the context of their study, were relevant to the researcher. Ellinger's (1997) study of twelve successful mid- and–senior-level managers, operating within a learning environment, examined beliefs, behaviors, triggers, and outcomes when they served as facilitators of learning. The author interviewed twelve managers and, using the Critical Incident Technique, collected fifty-six critical incidents involving managers serving as facilitators of learning for their employees. Many clusters and themes emerged within the four broad conceptual framework categories of beliefs, triggers, behaviors, and outcomes. Significant themes were: (a) managers' beliefs about their role; (c) high consequence issues and developmental opportunities were the most significant triggers; (c) behaviors included two categories of empowering and facilitating; and (d) outcomes pertained to the learner, manager, and organization. This study served as an excellent resource in my examination of officers as mentors within the military context.

Contextual factors played a significant role in Cesh's (1998) study of owners-managers of small private companies in Romania. In her attempt to examine the critical learning experiences, Cesh conducted in-depth interviews with fifteen managers using the Critical Incident Technique. The theoretical framework guiding this study was based on Marsick and Watkins' (1990, 1997) theory of informal and incidental learning. Seventy-two critical incidents were described by the managers, and analysis led to the four data categories of framing the business context, triggers, learning strategies, and lessons learned. As mentioned earlier, the context was found to permeate every phase of the learning process. Additional conclusions were

that learning from others and learning from experience were the major learning strategies and that lessons learned included those about oneself, business and business relationships, employee issues, and professional issues. The use of the informal and incidental learning model and the emphasis on contextual factors made this study particularly relevant.

Examining the perceived organizational culture as well as examining the unique critical learning factors of female Army nurse Vietnam veterans was the focus of Menard's (1993) study. Quantitative analysis of thirty-six surveys plus analysis of three interviews, using The Critical Incident Technique, resulted in the major themes of learning, context of war, professional relationship, emotional, and other. All the learning incidents described by the nurses were informal or incidental in nature. The majority of the triggers to learning (74%) were based on a crisis or emergency nature within the context of the war. Self-learning occurred in over one-half of the learning incidents, followed by learning from others and a combination of self and others. The examination of the military context and the radically different environment made this study applicable.

Also focused on the context of the military, was Briks's (1994) study of Canadian Armed Forces Reserves. His purpose was to examine voluntary attrition from an organizational learning perspective. The author conducted telephonic interviews with all non-commissioned reservists who voluntarily withdrew during a one-year period and who had twelve months or less time of service. In evaluating the data, he drew six conclusions. He concluded that the reason for attrition was not uni-dimensional, residing in both the military and the individual; that distinct phases of subjective or informal learning existed within the member's career development and that the emotional/social impact of any one phase weighed heavily in an individual's decision to remain or quit; that feelings of resentment and frustration at not being listened to by those in positions of

authority were prevalent; that inappropriate use of leadership and the perceived failure by the reserve to utilize achieved or potential skills, were frequently cited as factors in leaving; that there is a need for organizational "shifts" in planning and policy making to accommodate demographic changes in the reserve ranks; and that exit interviews, considered a valuable information gathering tool, were all but absent in the military. The context of the military and the reserve force status of Brik's participants provided relevance to this study.

In summary, this portion of the literature review regarding informal and incidental learning concerned primarily with Marsick and Watkins' (1990,1997) and Watkins and Marsick's (1993) theoretical framework. As a means of operationalizing their theory, Marsick and Watkins' (1990,1997) and Cesh, Watkins, and Marsick's (1999) models of informal and incidental learning were presented. Situating informal and incidental learning within a broader context in which to view this study was accomplished by examining experiential learning. In order to situate informal and incidental learning within the literature, an exploratory examination of related research studies was provided.

<center>Review of the Mentoring Literature</center>

The literature on managerial functions, practices, and roles points to an evolution that has taken place within organizations. This evolution is one in which managers and the context in which they work has moved from a hierarchical Taylorism system to a system that requires managers to operate in an environment of collaboration, continuous learning, and shared decision-making (Kanter, 1989; Senge, 1990a; Watkins & Marsick, 1993). These shifts place primary emphasis on practices that seek to create conducive working environments to empower employees, and to provide developmental opportunities for individuals. Managerial practices, such as coaching and mentoring, have been portrayed as ways to facilitate such a transformation

<center>35</center>

(Evered & Selman, 1989; Geber, 1992; Kanter, 1989; Mink, Owen, & Mink, 1993; Orth, Wilkinson, & Benfari, 1987; Zemke, 1996).

Although a singular definition of mentoring was not found within the literature, it is hoped that by outlining several definitions, a more definitive picture can be created. The literature was consistent in its use of the terms "mentor" and "mentoring". Both the term and the concept of mentoring date back to Greek mythology. The great warrior Odysseus, upon leaving for battle, placed his trust and confidence in his loyal friend Mentor to look over his estate and, more importantly, to teach and provide advice to his son. Thus began the concept of mentoring that included role modeling, teaching, counseling, guiding, and caring. Although the term protégé was found to be more consistently used, the term mentee was also present in the literature. The context of the military, with its view of developing officers to serve the nation in times of need, seemed more receptive to the term mentee. For that reason, the term mentee will be used throughout this paper, unless the associated context dictated the use of protégé. To further orient the reader, mentoring is considered to be a broad concept encompassing both career functions and psychosocial functions (Kram, 1983,1985; Noe, 1988; Scandura, 1992a).

Although a universal definition of mentoring has not been accepted (Daresh, 1995; Gailbraith & Cohen, 1995), scholars have attempted to define mentor and mentoring in a number of ways. Gailbarath and Cohen (1995), after extensive review of the mentoring literature, suggested that common themes run through the definitions. They found that,

> mentoring is a process within a contextual setting; involves a relationship of a more
> knowledgeable individual with a less experienced individual; provides professional
> networking, counseling, guiding, instructing, modeling, and sponsoring; is a
> developmental mechanism (personal, professional, and psychological); is a socialization

and reciprocal relationship; and provides an identity transformation for both mentor and mentee. (pp. 90-91)

One of the most often-cited studies in the mentoring literature is Kram's (1980) classic in-depth qualitative study. Her examination of managers in a corporate setting, involving eighteen developmental relationships, bore evidence that both career and psychosocial functions existed within the mentoring relationship. She defined mentoring functions as "those aspects of a developmental relationship that enhance both individuals' growth and advancement" (p. 22). Career functions include those aspects that prepare a protégé for career advancement and are made possible because of the mentor's position, experience, and organizational influence. They include sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protection, and providing challenging assignments.

In comparison, she described the psychosocial functions as pertaining to those aspects that enhance the protégé's sense of competence and effectiveness in his/her professional role. These functions are a result of the interpersonal relationship that is formed between mentor and protégé. Role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship are part of this function. Psychosocial functions affect both parties on a more personal level and generally go beyond the organizational context and extend into other dimensions of life (Kram, 1985).

The functions are not entirely distinct, Kram (1985) believed. For example, supporting career advancement may also enhance an individual's sense of effectiveness and competence in the managerial role. Relationships that provide both types of functions are characterized by "greater intimacy and strength of interpersonal bond and are viewed as more indispensable, more critical to development, and more unique than other relationships in the manager's life at work" (p. 24). Relationships that provide only career functions are characterized by less intimacy and

are valued primarily for the instrumental ends that they serve. Research suggested that the greater the number of functions present, the more beneficial it will be to the protégé (Kram, 1980, 1985; Noe, 1988).

As mentioned earlier, coaching is one practice found within the career function of mentoring. Coaching and mentoring are often viewed similarly in regard to providing developmental learning opportunities to future leaders. Kram's (1985) vision of coaching caused her to situate it within the career function. In this sense, it is a function designed to prepare the protégé for organizational advancement. She described coaching as a function that "enhances the junior person's knowledge and understanding of how to navigate effectively in the corporate world" (p. 28). Coaching occurred by way of the senior person suggesting specific strategies for accomplishing work objectives, gaining recognition, and for achieving career aspirations. The close relationship between coaching and mentoring highlights Kram's (1985) belief that the two functions are not entirely distinct.

<div align="center">Key Theories and Models</div>

An exploratory examination of underlying theories is provided in order to situate these practices within a theoretical home. Although theories could be drawn from a variety of social science and behavioral science disciplines, the scope of this chapter limited the examination to social learning theory and stage development theory. Social learning theory posits that people learn from observing others or from others' role modeling. Observations take place in a social setting, thus the term social learning. The notion of self-efficacy, a closely-related concept to social learning, is the extent to which an individual believes in him/herself and their ability within specific arenas. Within the mentoring literature, there is some movement from expanding the two primary mentoring functions of career and psychosocial (Kram, 1985; Scandura, 1992a)

toward including a third distinct function of role modeling (Burke, 1984). Role modeling is seen as a significant activity that occurred within the mentoring relationship, and is most often encompassed within the psychosocial function (Kram, 1980).

Self-efficacy Theory

Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy is a key theory underlying the practice of mentoring. Self-efficacy, generally defined as the belief that one can successfully perform the behavior that is required to produce outcomes, affects whether we initiate coping mechanisms, how much effort we will expend, and how long we will persist in the face of adversity (p. 191). These are key concepts in the workplace environment as we encounter a constantly changing environment. Motivating employees to perform beyond their current level of performance is a concept often associated with mentoring and coaching (Everend & Selman, 1989; Mink, Owens, & Mink, 1993; Popper & Lipshitz, 1992).

Bandura (1977) discussed two cognitively based sources of motivation that may provide insight into the technique of mentoring. The first source of motivation is through cognitive representation of future outcomes. Assisting the individual in creating expectations that their attitudes or behaviors will affect future outcomes is a key mentoring skill. A second source of motivation is through the influence of goal setting and self-evaluative reactions. Goal setting and feedback are identified as primary dimensions of mentoring and coaching (Mink, Owens, & Mink, 1993; Popper & Lipshitz, 1992) and can be the result of internal or external initiatives. Receiving feedback from others, such as a mentor, is essential in developing mastery (Bandura, 1977) and plays a key role in goal setting. It is through feedback that an individual makes adjustments to his or her performance and, in its absence, may maintain incorrect or inappropriate behavior. Individuals engage in self evaluation by comparing their performance to

their pre-determined goals. This aspect of motivation can be greatly enhanced by providing a structure for reflection and a process for reflective practice. Schon's (1983,1987) work on reflective practitioners helps shape our understanding of the importance of professionals reflecting on and learning from their actions.

Bandura (1977) identified the four sources of efficacy expectations as (a) performance accomplishments, (b) vicarious experiences, (c) verbal persuasion, and (d) emotional arousal. Performance accomplishments, which included a variety of modes based on the person accomplishing some version of the behavior, are especially influential in developing self-efficacy because they are based on personal mastery experiences. A positive by-product is that enhanced self-efficacy tends to transfer to other situations. In fact, improvements in behavioral functioning transfer not only to other similar situations but also to activities that are substantially different. Unfortunately, our performance, whether it is good or poor, reinforces our learning. This pointed to the critical nature of examining both our beliefs and behaviors and receiving feedback on our performance.

The second source, vicarious experience, involved live and symbolic modeling. Two implications can be drawn from Bandura's research: the power that modeling has as it relates to learning from observation, and secondly that live experimentation with behaviors, presentations, or work conditions are the best way for mentees to learn. The significance of modeling is that the opportunity exists for learning either correct or incorrect ways of performing, depending on the model. For organizations considering formal mentoring programs, matching mentees with mentors who model appropriate behaviors and attitudes is critical.

Verbal persuasion, Bandura's third source of self-efficacy, involved others telling an individual what to expect in a given situation and leading him or her to believe that he or she is

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capable of accomplishing the task. Although this method is often a part of mentoring, self-efficacy induced this way is not as effective as that arising from an individual's own accomplishments because it does not provide an authentic experiential base (p.198). The fourth source of self-efficacy, emotional arousal, addressed the role of emotions in providing valuable information concerning personal efficacy. Because people rely on their physiological arousal in judging their own level of anxiety and vulnerability to stress, this source provides individuals with information about their anxiety levels and their expected performance level.

For strengthening self-efficacy in mentees, there seems to be overriding evidence that performance-based experiences produce higher, more generalized, and stronger efficacy expectations. Self-efficacy is closely linked with increased performance and may provide helpful insight into mentoring practices. Social learning theories suggested that mentees acquire important managerial skills by observing an effective mentor and by engaging in developmental experiences. Consequently, role modeling in particular helps situate mentoring within the social learning domain and highlights the potential influence that mentors have in shaping mentees.

A practical application of Bandura's (1997) theory was seen in an examination of mentoring outcomes. Dreher and Ash (1990) pointed to two primary processes that might explain why mentoring relationships with senior managers are beneficial to the career success of the mentee. First, mentoring allowed for special entry into important social networks that resulted in the building of alliances and coalitions. Second, the modeling and vicarious learning that occurred within the mentoring relationship provided mentees with significant benefits toward their career development. This empirical study provided a practical implication of Bandura's (1977) theory in that it offered evidence that role modeling helped mentees learn important skills by watching their mentors.

Stage Development Theories

Theories focused on stage development help frame our understanding of mentoring. Erickson's (1968) classic theory of adult development and change has been conceptualized as an underlying framework of mentoring (Kram, 1983,1985; Levinson, et al, 1974; Roche, 1979). He identified eight stages of development that individuals resolve over a lifetime. Each stage represented a series of crises involving a choice between two opposites, one positive and one negative. Successful negotiation allowed progression to the following stage. The three stages that are often associated with mentoring are "role identity versus role confusion" and "intimacy versus isolation" for protégés in early adulthood, and "generativity versus stagnation" for mentors at mid-life (Kram, 1983,1985). Involvement in a mentoring relationship, for both parties, can assist in the resolution of stage dilemmas. For example, in the early stages of his or her career, a protégé can receive assistance in learning the organizational ropes and developing a professional identity (role identity versus role confusion). Whereas for mid-life managers, mentoring provides an avenue for meeting generativity needs by redirecting their energy into creative and productive avenues and enabling others (generativity versus stagnation).

Research studies confirmed the developmental aspect of mentoring (Kram, 1983, 1985). Through her in-depth biographical interviews, Kram was able to identify and confirm four predictable phases of the mentoring relationship as (a) initiation, (b) cultivation, (c) separation, and (d) redefinition. The first phase is a period of six months to one year in which the relationship begins and becomes important to both parties. The protégé views the mentor as someone whom he or she admires and respects and someone he or she could emulate. In turn, the protégé feels cared for, supported, and respected by someone who is admired and can provide

career and psychosocial functions. The mentor, during this phase, sees the protégé as someone with potential, someone who is coachable, and someone with whom it is enjoyable to work.

The second phase of the mentoring relationship, cultivation, lasts from two to five years and marks the period containing the maximum range of career and psychosocial functions. Generally, career functions emerged first as the mentor provided challenging work assignments, coaching, exposure and visibility, protection, and /or sponsorship. The range and strength of career functions are dependent upon the mentor's organizational rank, experience, and tenure. As the interpersonal bond strengthens with time, psychosocial functions, such as modeling and acceptance and confirmation, begin to emerge. Psychosocial functions depend on the degree of trust, mutuality, and intimacy that characterize the relationship. As the protégé begins to develop a sense of competence, self-worth and mastery, and the mentor begins to trust the protégé to perform well, the relationship begins to shift from a one-way helping relationship to one of greater mutual exchange. This phase ends when changes in individual needs and organizational circumstances disrupt the balance.

The separation phase was the third phase in the mentoring relationship and was characterized by significant changes in the functions provided by the relationships and the experiences of both individuals. This occurred six months to two years after a change in structure or psychological experience. Turmoil, loss, and anxiety mark this phase of the relationship. Protégés experience a greater level of autonomy and independence, and both people reassess the value of the relationship, as it becomes less central to their work lives. For the mentor, he/she is able to demonstrate to self, peers, and superiors that he/she has been successful in developing new managerial talent. This phase ends when both individuals recognized that the relationship is no longer needed in its previous form.

The final phase of the mentoring relationship was redefinition. This occurs after several years of separation and involves either the relationship taking a significantly different form or ending entirely. Kram (1985) found that the predominant form between individuals was friendship. The mentor continued to be a supporter of the protégé and took pride in his or her accomplishments, while the protégé continues to feel indebted to their mentor but no longer places him/her on a pedestal. The redefinition phase is evidence of change occurring within both people.

This phase model illustrated how mentor relationships evolved over time. Each phase was characterized by particular affective experiences, developmental functions, and interaction patterns that are shaped by individuals' needs and surrounding organizational circumstances. Additionally, it demonstrated how mentoring can contribute to the development of both mentees and mentors. Recent research has supported the idea that mentoring should be viewed as a series of developmental activities with different functions being of relative importance at different stages of development (Allen, Russell, & Maetzke, 1997).

<center>Mentoring Conceptual Framework</center>

Hunt and Michael (1983) developed a conceptual framework for studying mentoring. Their model included outcomes for the relationships, stages and duration of the mentor-mentee relationship, mentor characteristics, mentee characteristics, and context. The mentoring literature will be assembled and overlaid on their framework. The outcomes of the relationship, both positive and negative, included those for mentee, mentor, and organization. Based on the literature review, it appeared that the bulk of the research on mentoring has focused on the outcomes for the mentee. The stage and duration of the mentoring relationship was addressed in the previous examination of Kram's (1983,1985) phase model. In examining contextual factors,

the author limited the scope to (a) informal and formal mentoring relationships and (b) organizational context.

Outcomes for Mentees

Evidence has been found that supports a number of mentee benefits. As compared to non-mentored individuals, mentees attain higher promotion rates (Fagenson, 1988,1989; Scandura, 1992a) and salary levels (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Scandura, 1992a). Fagenson (1988,1989) examined 518 managers in the health care industry including both high and low level managers and both men and women. Fagenson (1988,1989) found that mentees experienced greater career opportunity / mobility and higher promotion rates than non-mentored individuals.

Conclusions can also be drawn that are associated with the intangible domains of work. Mentees report more career satisfaction (Chao, Walz & Gardner, 1992; Fagenson, 1989; Roche, 1979; Scandura, 1992a), learn how to behave at more successive managerial levels (Hunt & Michael, 1983), and view the mentoring relationship as a safe place in which to introduce and try out new ideas (Schultz, 1995). Fagenson (1988, 1989) found that mentees rated themselves as having significantly more organizational policy influence, resource power, and greater access to important people than their non-mentored counterparts. On a similar note, Kram (1985) found that protégés benefited from having access to people who would typically be unapproachable. Protégés reported having greater levels of organizational socialization (Chao, Walz & Gardner, 1992) and their loyalty to their mentor and organization made them less likely to leave (Kram, 1985; Scandura, 1992b). Although the bulk of the research involved individual self-reports, it is clear that involvement in a mentoring relationship yields significant benefits for the mentee.

Even though the preponderance of evidence supports positive results for mentoring, the potential exists for negative consequences as well. In her classic study, Kram (1980) noticed the existence of negative outcomes of the mentoring relationship and contended that some mentoring relationships became destructive. Within the mentoring literature, Scandura (1998) noted that very little effort had been made to document or discuss negative mentoring outcomes. In response, she presented a typology of negative mentoring styles as well as a model of outcomes that may be associated with dysfunctional mentoring. She acknowledged that mentoring relationships can become dysfunctional for mentees, mentors, and organizations alike. Scandura (1998) described dysfunction as occurring "when the relationship is not working, for one or both of the parties. One or both of the parties' needs are not being met in the relationship or one or both of the parties is suffering distress as a result of being in the relationship" (p. 453). Negative outcomes for mentees may include negative interpersonal interactions and the potential for lack of goal attainment within that relationship.

As a result of her literature review, Scandura identified two key aspects of dysfunction in mentoring relationships: (a) whether the mentor is an immediate supervisor and (b) whether the mentoring relationship was perceived as being assigned. Ensuring that both parties have input into the mentoring match and making some sort of exit provision available to both parties are two recommendations she offered to counter the potential negative consequences. Lastly, she pointed to the role that power plays in the emergence of dysfunction as an area worthy of further study.

Outcomes for Mentors

Being involved in a mentoring relationship was found to provide benefits for mentors in both personal and career domains. On a personal level, mentoring provided an avenue for

meeting mid-life career and psychosocial developmental needs and a sense of accomplishment and success in contributing to the mentee's needs (Levinson, et al, 1978; Kram, 1985). The relationship also provided an opportunity to enhance leadership and coaching skills (Schultz, 1995).

Within the career domain, mentees assisted mentors with work assignments and contributed fresh ideas for projects or technical assistance (Burke, R.J., McKeen, C.A., & McKenna, C, 1994; Kram, 1985; Zey, 1985), and mentors gained recognition and respect for developing future managers (Kram, 1983,1985). Finally, the mentoring relationship created a lasting source of power through mutually beneficial relationships with individuals they had mentored (Orth, Wilkinson, & Benfari, 1987; Zey, 1984).

Outcomes for Organizations

Organizational culture can be positively influenced by the presence of mentoring relationships. Mentors proved to be a significant source of information for newcomers and served as a critical source for learning about organizational issues (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993). Also, because mentees enjoyed multi-tiered membership status, they promoted communication between various organizational strata by serving as a link (Zey, 1985). In the process of serving as a link between upper and lower management, and because they are often privy to certain company policies and procedures, they can then pass on information and influence their colleagues (Schultz, 1995). In other words, mentees facilitate the flow of communication between various levels within the organization. Zey (1985) concluded that mentoring relationships served the organization by fostering the growth of relationships between junior and senior managers.

Organizations interested in developing empowered employees could benefit from mentoring as there is evidence to support mentees experiencing significantly more organizational-policy influence, resource power, and access to important people than non-mentored individuals (Fagenson, 1988,1989). In terms of career / job outcomes, mentoring worked equally well for women and men and for high-level and low-level individuals (Fagenson, 1989). This finding is significant and offered further support that mentoring relationships can provide developmental needs for those employees who traditionally have a hard time receiving sponsorship from senior management, namely women and minorities (Zey, 1985).

In viewing mentoring from an instrumental standpoint, many linkages can be made. Habler and Lowe, (as cited in Fagenson, 1988) found mentored individuals' contribution and productivity to be relatively high because of the power that allowed individuals to operate more effectively in organizations. Potentially, training costs could be reduced as new hires are mentored by experienced employees and require less training and orientation to organizational goals and policies (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993). As a result of their mentoring relationship, individuals become productive quicker (Schultz, 1995). As mentioned earlier, mentored employees reported more organizational socialization (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992) and retention was found to be higher with mentored individuals (Kram, 1985; Scandura, 1992b; Zey, 1985). Long-term benefits include the obvious and significant outcome of identifying and developing managerial talent for the organization (Kram, 1985; Zey, 1984) and the conclusion that mentored individuals were more likely to serve as future mentors (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Allen, Poteet, Russell, & Dobbins, 1997; Allen, Russell, & Maetzke, 1997; Davies & Easterby-Smith, 1984; Roche, 1979). Organizations might experience a negative consequence as a result of those mentoring relationships that become less constructive. Potential

consequences included increased negative energy, increased absenteeism and turnover, and a decrease in the possibility of a mentee becoming a mentor (Scandura, 1998).

Mentee Characteristics

Roche's (1979) classic study found nearly two-thirds of successful executives had mentors, as did 75% of those under forty years of age. Although limited in scope, Roche (1979) found 100% of the female executives had had a mentor. He found that women had more mentors, averaging three, whereas men had two mentors. This finding is in contrast to more recent studies of mentors that found women were not significantly different than men in having a mentor (Burke, 1984) or in the number of mentoring relationships (Ragins & Scandura, 1997).

Noe's (1988) study on the characteristics of mentees in assigned mentoring relationships provided a number of findings. He found no correlation between locus of control, job involvement, relationship importance, or career planning to the amount of time spent with mentors or to the effective utilization of mentors. Gender was affected in that female mentees reported more psychosocial outcomes from their mentor than did the males. Those in heterogeneous relationships reported more effective utilization of their mentor. The gender findings may be related to the educational context of the study in which upward mobility for women had generally not been stymied or discouraged for women (p. 475). Older mentees and those with a higher level of education reported receiving significantly more career functions from their mentors.

Mentor Characteristics

In a study examining a formal faculty mentorship program, Mullen, VanAst, & Grant (1999) identified two factors that predicted mentor benefits as being gender and mentoring functions. Female mentors who provided greater mentoring functions, both career and

psychosocial, tended to report greater benefits from their mentoring role. Gender studies of

mentors have tended to focus on male mentors and female mentees, consequently there is a

paucity of research on female mentors in traditionally male-dominated career fields (Hunt &

Michael, 1983). Kram's (1985) study identified two mentor characteristics that assisted mentees

in achieving success as (a) helpfulness and (b) organizational influence. Research focused on

mentors' willingness to mentor provided insight into identification and development of future

mentors. In addition to the research that points to one's experience as a mentee being a likely

factor in becoming a mentor (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Allen, Poteet, Russell, &

Dobbins, 1997; Allen, Russell, & Maetzke, 1997; Davies & Easterby-Smith, 1984; Roche,

1979), recent findings indicated individual characteristics and situational factors as influencing

the willingness to mentor.

Allen, Poteet, Russell, and Dobbins (1997) found that gender did not make a difference

with respect to intention to mentor. Individual characteristics that did make a difference

included: education, previous experience as a mentor, previous experience as a mentee, internal

locus of control, greater degree of upward striving, and a greater quality of relationship with

one's supervisor. One contrary finding was that age was not positively related to an individual's

willingness to mentor. In fact, the relationship of age to the likelihood of mentoring as not as

predicted, as older supervisors expressed fewer intentions to mentor compared to younger

supervisors.

A qualitative study conducted by Allen, Poteet and Burroughs (1997) examined four

areas of inquiry focused on factors influencing a mentor's decision to engage in a mentoring

relationship. The four areas included individual reasons, organizational factors, mentor-mentee

attraction, and mentoring outcomes. In examining individual characteristics, they found two

overall higher-order functions: (a) other-focused and (b) self-focused. Other-focused factors included the desire to pass information to others, desire to build a competent workforce, general desire to help others, desire to help others succeed, desire to benefit the organization, and a desire to help minorities / women move through the organizational ranks. The self-focused factors included gratification to see others succeed / grow, free time for other pursuits, personal desire to work with others, increased personal learning, pride, desire to have influence on others, and respect from others.

Individual characteristics of altruism and positive affectivity were found to be positively correlated with motivation to mentor amongst managerial employees (Ayree & Chay, 1996). Altruistic managers were defined as generous, helpful, and kind. Positive affectivity was defined as the tendency of people to be happy or experience positive affect across situations. Two situational characteristics were also found to be related to motivation to mentor and are included in the following section.

Context

The general influence that organizational context has on the managerial practices of mentoring is firmly established (Everend & Selman, 1989; Kram, 1985; Orth, Wilkinson, & Benfari, 1987; Scandura, 1998). One contextual factor is related to the type of mentoring relationship that exists, either formal or informal. In examining the contextual dimensions between these types of mentoring, it is important to begin by examining their difference. The primary distinction between formal and informal mentoring lies in the formation of the relationship. Informal relationships, typically spontaneously initiated, are not managed, structured, or formally acknowledged by the organization. In contrast, formal mentorships are a

result of programs managed and sanctioned by the organization (Noe, 1988; Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992).

Noe's (1988) examination of assigned mentoring relationships suggested that "organizations should not expect protégé's to receive the same type of benefits from an assigned mentoring relationship as they would receive from an informally established, primary mentoring relationship" (p. 473). This statement is based on his research that found that assigned mentoring relationships, while providing psychosocial functions, did not provide significant career functions. He defined primary mentoring relationships as those that provide both career and psychosocial functions for their protégé.

Chao, Walz, & Gardner's (1992) study examined types of mentoring relationships, functions (career and psychosocial) served by the mentor, and outcomes of the mentoring relationship. Their research included informal protégés, formal protégés, as well as non-mentored individuals, and assessed outcome measures of organizational socialization, job satisfaction, and salary. Overall, their study showed that, while the informal group typically scored higher than formal mentees on most outcomes the results was nonsignificant. Results were significant in that informally mentored protégés reported more favorable outcomes for all subscales of organizational socialization, satisfaction, and salary than the non-mentored. One implication was that a formal mentoring program should instill a climate of mutual interest and participation without obligation or intimidating participation. Secondly, great care must be exercised in the matching process.

In addition to the context of the relationship, organizational context was a factor examined within the mentoring literature. Organizational context, or situational context, was found to be a factor in examining the motivation to mentor among managerial employees (Allen,

Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Ayree & Chay, 1996). Ayree and Chay (1996) found that situational characteristics that influenced motivation to mentor included (a) an organizational reward system that emphasized employee development and (b) opportunities for managers to interact with organizational newcomers on the job.

In their in-depth study of 27 mentors, Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs (1997) found organizational context played a significant role in mentoring activities within organizations. Results indicated that specific functions found within organizations tended either to facilitate or to inhibit mentoring activity (p. 78-79). Two dimensions that were most likely to facilitate mentoring were (a) organizational support for employee learning and development and (b) company training programs. Other facilitating dimensions included manager/coworker support, team approach to work, comfortable work environment, and structured environment. In contrast, the two most significant inhibiting dimensions appeared to be (a) time and work demands, and (b) organizational structure. Other inhibiting dimensions included competitive / political environment and unclear company expectations. These results offer theoretical and practical implications for organizations that may be planning to develop a mentoring program and for those organizations that have such programs in place.

In summary, the literature on mentoring seems to have produced two streams of research: (a) the functions of a mentor (Burke, 1984; Kram, 1980, 1985; Noe, 1988) and (b) the outcomes of mentoring (Fagenson, 1988,1989; Hunt, 1983; Scandura, 1992a,1992b). The functions of a mentor are generally categorized as career oriented and psychosocial (Kram, 1985), although it has been suggested that role modeling might play a third function (Burke, 1984). Outcomes for mentoring extend to mentees, mentors, and organizations. Although the vast majority of the empirical studies point to the positive benefits of mentoring, one study was introduced

(Scandura, 1998) that considered the potential for dysfunction that mentoring relationships may hold for individuals and organizations.

Positive benefits at an individual level included the mentee's career satisfaction and success in terms of promotion, salary rate, and job performance (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Fagenson, 1989; Scandura, 1992b). Mentor benefits involved a sense of accomplishment in contributing to mentee's needs (Levinson, et al, 1978; Kram, 1983, 1985) and maintaining a lasting source of power within organizations (Orth, Wilkinson, & Benfari, 1987). From an organizational perspective, it has been suggested that mentoring assisted in the socialization process (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993), ensuring a steady supply of managerial talent (Kram, 1985; Zey, 1985), and for increasing organizational commitment and loyalty (Hunt & Michael,1983).

Summary

This chapter began with a review of the literature on experiential education and informal learning, suggesting that significant learning takes place outside the confines of the classroom. This learning holds the potential to significantly affect the personal and professional development of employees. The empirical research on informal learning suggested that managers help facilitate the development of their subordinates through a variety of activities, including mentoring. Theoretical constructs that provide particular insight into mentoring were discussed and included self-efficacy theory and stage development models. The empirical research on mentoring suggested many and varied benefits for mentees, mentors, and organizations. Despite the growing body of literature that suggests that managers should assume mentoring roles, specific practices that aid in the development of employees have not yet been detailed.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

Not everything that can be counted counts,
and not everything that counts can be counted.
- Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

Introduction

This chapter described the qualitative methods employed for the current study. It was designed to provide the reader a comprehensive look at how the study was conducted and the process behind the findings. Sections include conceptual framework, design of the study, researcher subjectivity, participant selection and criteria, data collection methods, pilot study, data collection procedures, data analysis methods, and reliability and validity.

Conceptual Framework

Scholars and practitioners alike acknowledge the importance of informal learning opportunities within organizations (Benson, 1997; Burke, 1984; Davies & Easterby-Smith, 1984; Kram, 1985; Marsick & Watkins, 1997; McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1988; Senge, 1990a; Scandura, 1992b). The increased focus on individual development and human capital management has pushed mentoring to the forefront of organizational development practices. The practice of mentoring is widely accepted as a mutually beneficial process for the mentee, mentor, and organization. While mentoring has traditionally been viewed within the context of civilian organizations, whether occurring in business or educational settings, it has rarely been examined within the military context. Additionally, mentoring research has tended to focus on mentees who are full-time employees, while overlooking mentees who are part-time workers.

The purpose of my study was to understand officers' beliefs and behaviors while they served as mentors within the National Guard context. Two research questions guided the study:

1. What are the officers' beliefs about their role as mentor?

2. What are the officers' behaviors, or strategies, that contribute to their role as mentors within the National Guard context?

Design of the Study

The design of the case study was a descriptive qualitative approach using the critical incident interview technique as the primary method of data collection. Choosing qualitative research as the approach in this study was a result of considering its purpose and the strengths of qualitative methodology. The research design chosen for this study sought to understand multiple perspectives of reality and focused on how participants construct their own meaning. The research questions were chosen to understand mentoring within this context and to understand the multiple perspectives inherent within the participant group. The researcher viewed the construct of beliefs as providing the underlying foundation for explaining how officers perceive their role as mentors, how they view the mentee, and how they see the mentoring process. The behaviors, or strategies of mentors, provided valuable insight into their practice of mentoring because officers described how they actually mentor. This combination of questions served to examine their multiple perspectives. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between researcher and the phenomenon studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

The advantages of quantitative research lie in its ability to provide generalized results and its presentation of neat, orderly, and numerical data. In contrast, qualitative research seeks to understand selected areas in greater depth. Although the ability to be generalized is reduced,

qualitative research results in rich, thick descriptions that provide a deeper understanding of the targeted phenomenon (Patton, 1990).

Examining the researcher's theoretical framework was useful in situating the research problem. Serving as the research foundation is the epistemological perspective of constructionism. Constructionism is a view of knowledge that is based on the belief that knowledge is socially constructed and therefore resides within individuals, as compared to an objective reality. A theoretical framework of interprepretivism, which has researchers seeking "*culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world*" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67) described the philosophical stance that informed the methodology. Thematic analysis of the data, with its focus on making sense of data and identifying emergent themes and patterns, was the methodology. Using inductive analysis and constant comparative analysis of the data and its emerging themes helped ensure that themes, and associated inferences, were firmly grounded within the data.

In order to understand the perspectives of mentors, the researcher needed to hear their stories and understand how they constructed their meanings. Qualitative interviews allowed the researcher to gain in-depth knowledge about the participants' experiences of mentoring (deMarrais, 2004, p. 52). Using the critical incident interview allowed the researcher to obtain a detailed and full understanding of the participants' perspectives involving critical mentoring incidents. Epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, and methods, are the four elements that informed one another within the research study (Crotty, 1998, pp. 2-5).

Creating a congruent framework for understanding the researcher's philosophical perspective, research intentions, and methods helped ensure that this research was of high quality. Inherent in this framework is an examination of the assumptions and beliefs about

people, construction of knowledge, and general worldview. Additionally, a researcher is obligated to examine subjects of a more personal nature. The subjectivity statement answered the question of *who I am in relation to my study*. Considering the backdrop to the study as being influenced by the researcher's culture, gender, education, socioeconomic status, and experiences, helped the reader understand how the researcher might have shaped the research and how the data was viewed. Peshkin (1988) advocated that researchers systematically seek out their subjectivity early in their research. He contended that subjectivity is present in both research and non-research aspects of our life and rather than trying to remove our subjectivity, he recommended taming it because "untamed subjectivity mutes the emic voice" (p. 21).

Researcher Subjectivity

Qualitative research places primary emphasis on the researcher for what Wolcott (1990) refers to as "getting it right" or trying not to "get it all wrong" (p. 127). As such, it is critical that researchers carefully examine their personal biases and assumptions about the nature of their research. Reporting any personal and professional information that may have affected data collection, analysis, and interpretation enhanced the credibility of the researcher (Patton, 1990).

Merriam (1998) offered two strategies that can help to address the researcher's influence as the primary instrument of data collection. These two strategies served to strengthen the reliability and validity of the study. First addressing reliability, she recommended an examination of the investigator's position. This background information should include the researcher's assumptions and theory, position in relation to the group being studied, basis for selecting informants, and a description of participants and the social context in which the data were collected (pp. 206-207). Secondly, she added researchers' biases to the strategies that address internal validity. This involved clarifying the researcher's assumptions, worldviews and

theoretical orientation at the outset of the study. Clarifying assumptions and biases at the onset of the study provided the reader a way to examine the researcher's viewpoint; maintaining focus on these assumptions and biases throughout the study helped the researcher ensure internal validity throughout the process.

The lens through which I viewed the data was similar to a prism in that there were multiple etchings, shapes, and colors that affected my view. These lenses included my theoretical frameworks, as discussed earlier, as well as assumptions and biases. "Who I am" in relation to the research provides the reader with information necessary to understand my assumptions and biases. In relation to the group being studied, I am an insider. I have been involved in the military, in one capacity or another, for the past nineteen years. For the majority of my professional life I have balanced both a civilian career and a military career, in essence being a citizen solider. Serving in the capacity as a traditional guard officer, I have had similar mentoring experiences as the mentees described in this study. I have had the experience of watching many junior officers come through the organization. Some of these officers received effective mentoring, some receive ineffective mentoring, while others didn't receive any mentoring at all. Looking back over my career I can identify many traditional guard officers who drifted in and out of the organization and I believe that had they received mentoring they may not have drifted away. Even though the focus of the study involved mentors, as opposed to mentees, the practice of mentoring traditional guard officers presented many parallels to my own personal experiences.

I brought an assumption that mentoring can work effectively within a hierarchical context, such as the military. As a mentee, I experienced both positive and negative mentoring and believed strongly that mentoring could have a positive and long-lasting effect on the

personal and professional development of individuals. My view extended toward the belief that

developmental experiences, such as mentoring, may present a dialectical setting within the

military context. I acknowledged that nurturing the growth and development of individuals

within the context of a competitive, masculine "gung ho" fighting environment presented

opposing theoretical orientations.

As a middle-class, educated white woman I brought certain biases to the research. My

education biased me toward a view of both formal and informal learning as natural, highly

sought after, and positive in nature. I viewed learning in the workplace as a natural extension of

our professional life and believed that all people want to excel. Serving as a foundation for this

belief was my view that individuals have an inherent desire to grow and develop, want feedback,

and seek personal and professional improvement. My privileged status as a member of the

majority held layers and layers of biases and assumptions.

Although not regarded as a critical inquiry, there were several points in this study that

presented an opportunity for such inquiry. For example, the majority of the formal mentors (field

grade officers) in the National Guard are white males as are the mentees (company grade

officers), whereas over 42% of the members of the organization are black soldiers (Georgia

Department of Defense, 2001). This provided an interesting dialectical situation in that white

male officers mentor white males who, in turn, provide leadership to black soldiers. Additionally,

my status as a minority member of the National Guard (approximately 11% of the organization

is female and approximately 10% of its field grade officers are female) presented an additional

critical perspective for this research (Uniformed Services Almanac, 2001). For the most part, I

have experienced effective mentoring and recognize its value in learning the ropes of this

traditionally male-dominated organization. The system of rank, inherent in this hierarchical

context, provided another lens for the researcher. As a field grade officer holding the rank of Major, the majority of the participants outranked me. I didn't perceive any power issues involved in being outranked but I also wondered if perhaps a mitigating factor was my involvement in a doctoral program. Keeping these critical aspects of the research in mind helped ensure that it didn't negatively affect my ability to convey the meaning of the participant's experiences.

In summary, acknowledging my assumptions and making them explicit, to both readers and myself, helped situate the researcher in regard to the topic. Although a variety of perspectives and assumptions were brought to this research, the strongest was my bias as a member of the military organization. This insider status, based on shared experiences and perspectives, helped me listen for and accurately represent the emic perspective. On the other hand, this very same situation held the potential to serve me in a negative manner, thus keeping my biases in mind and remaining vigilant toward accurately representing the participant helped toward greater validity and reliability.

Participant Selection

Significantly different philosophical assumptions provide the foundation for qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning of an experience holistically, whereas quantitative research takes apart a phenomenon in order to understand the parts (Merriam, 1988). As compared to quantitative research that involves larger numbers of random participants, qualitative research involves a small, purposeful group of participants. Carefully choosing the participants and limiting their numbers allowed the researcher to create a rich and detailed account of mentoring. The emergent nature of qualitative research suggested flexibility and adaptability on the researcher's part in determining the point at which saturation was reached. The researcher's intent was to interview just enough officers to gain understanding

of the phenomenon of mentoring. Nine officers participated in this study and the data from those participants satisfied the requirement for saturation. In this case, the point was reached when similar patterns were seen in the mentors' responses and "little new information was received from the interview process" (deMarrais, 2004, p. 61).

Recognizing that the quality of the research benefits from sound decisions on how best to answer the research questions, the researcher looked closely at participant selection. The subject of mentoring within a military context presented an opportunity to examine this topic from a number of perspectives. In order to understand the overall practice of mentoring, the researcher could have selected either mentors or mentees for this study. However, wanting to understand successful mentoring from the perspective of a mentor, interviewing mentors became a logical choice.

Criteria for Participant Selection

Understanding the mentors themselves as well as the critical incidents of mentoring provided an opportunity to consider two units of analysis: the officers themselves and the mentoring incidents. As a researcher, the goal was to select a sample from which the most could be learned. This type of sampling is referred to as criterion-based or purposeful sampling. According to Goetz & LeCompte (1984), this type of sampling required that "the researcher establish in advance a set of criteria or list of attributes that the units for study must possess. The investigator then searches for exemplars that match the specific array of characteristics" (p. 73).

Returning to the mentoring literature assisted the researcher in identifying criteria. The literature suggested that mentoring practices which contain both career and psychosocial functions provide the greatest benefits to mentees (Allen, Russell, & Maetzke, 1997; Burke, 1984; Kram, 1980,1985; Noe, 1988). Specifically, career functions are made possible because of

the mentor's position, experience, and organizational influence (Kram, 1980). As a result of status, full-time employees, as compared to traditional guard officers, have a greater amount of organizational influence and are in a better position to provide career functions such as sponsorship, exposure and visibility, and protection to their mentees. As a result of their position, the full-time officers were also able to suggest, or in many cases actually provide, challenging positions to the traditional guard officer.

In regard to providing psychosocial support to mentees, it is difficult to say whether full-time employees would have any advantage as compared to traditional guard officers. The mentor's ability to form an interpersonal relationship with his/her part-time mentee and, in turn, provide psychosocial functions was more difficult to assess. Therefore, it was primarily due to positional power and influence that the researcher focused on full-time officers in the study. In summary, the researcher sought the following participants: (a) full-time employees of the National Guard, (b) mid-to-senior-level officers, and (c) those who were recommended as exemplary mentors.

During the researcher's successful May 2002 prospectus defense, committee members dialogued about the issue of participant selection criteria. Their concern, also shared by the researcher, was that the selection process yield true exemplars of mentoring rather than merely a group of highly experienced senior officers. Selection procedures that allowed a broader representation across the organization were also critical to the process. At that point, one pilot interview had been conducted and two additional officers had been identified for the current study. These two officers had been recommended as strong mentors and the researcher felt confident that they would service as exemplar mentors for the study. In order to identify additional participants, committee members recommended developing a confidential nomination

process that would solicit recommendations. An opportunity arose a few months later in the form

of a Statewide Leadership Conference that took place August 23-25, 2002. Attendees included

company grade officers, commanders and staff officers alike, representing all major commands

from across the Georgia Army National Guard. This was the National Guard's current company

grade leadership and the audience closest to the mentoring process.

The researcher developed and personally distributed a one-page introductory memo to a

wide range of participants. This nomination form can be found in Appendix A. Care was taken to

ensure that a cross-sample was solicited from various organizational entities as well as from

women and minorities. This survey provided an avenue for several interesting and insightful

discussions with conference participants. Based on these discussions, the researcher got the

message, directly and indirectly, that mentoring was very important for the future of the guard.

Another interesting result was that many names were submitted that did not meet the criteria

outlined on the nomination form. Several people commented that they realized the names were

not congruent with the researcher's intention, but they felt obligated to submit their names

because they were such good mentors. The researcher viewed this as evidence that mentoring

occurred within this particular context and was carried out by a variety of organizational

members.

A total of thirty-three (33) names were submitted from the Leadership Conference. The

researcher began the process of sorting through the names and verifying the selection criteria.

Since the researcher was not familiar with many of the officers, this process was an arduous one

and involved researching each nominee's rank, employment status, and current contact

information. Twenty-three (23) names were eliminated because they either (a) did not meet the

criteria, or (b) were nominated more than once. Eventually, ten officers (10) were identified as

potential participants and contact was made with them primarily through electronic mail.

Because no women had been nominated through this process, one female officer was identified

as a potential participant in order to solicit a more representative sample. Although not

nominated, she had been recommended to the researcher as a good mentor and someone who

could add a unique perspective to the study. An introductory letter, via an email attachment, was

sent to all potential participants. The letter of introduction can be found in Appendix B. Three

officers did not respond and one officer declined. Six officers agreed to participate. These six

officers, plus the two previously selected officers and the pilot interview participant, became the

sample group for this study. This sample selection, typically referred to as reputation-based case

selection, relied solely on the recommendations of other officers (deMarrais, 2004, p. 60).

<div align="center">Data Collection Methods</div>

deMarrais (1998) provided a qualitative research framework centered on the ways we

understand phenomenon using qualitative research approaches. Researchers use three ways of

knowing: (a) archival knowing, (b) narrative knowing, and (c) observational knowing. Each of

these approaches, in turn, is associated with specific methods that "privilege" (p. x) that

particular type of knowing. Interviewing involves a dialouge between an interviewer and a

participant, seeking to understand the lived experience of the participant. The researcher chose

in-depth qualitative interviewing, which privileged narrative knowing, as the primary method of

data collection. In looking at how the researcher might consider interviews, deMarrais (in press)

suggested thinking of an interview as,

> a unique form of discourse between two people where one is an informed learner who is
>
> there to learn more about another's experiences or series of experiences, views, or
>
> perspectives, or reactions to a particular phenomenon or event. (p. 68)

The following sections are focused on this type of narrative knowing, examining the specific approaches involved in the critical incident interview.

Critical Incident Technique (CIT)

The Critical Incident Technique is a set of procedures for collecting specific information about a particular phenomenon. Flanagan (1954) formally introduced this technique as an outgrowth of the studies in the Aviation Psychology Program of the United States Air Force. Several studies were undertaken with the intent of gathering specific incidents of effective or ineffective behaviors of pilots that, in turn, were used to select Air Force pilots during World War II. Since then, the Critical Incident Technique has been used in a variety of research efforts. Fivars (1980) noted that it has been used as a research method in over 700 research studies and in various settings such as education, military, industrial, government, and health care.

Flanagan (1954) explained the Critical Incident Technique as "a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behavior in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles" (p. 327). An incident is defined as "any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act" (p. 327). An incident is considered to be critical if it "makes a 'significant' contribution, either negatively or positively, to the general aim of the activity" (p. 338).

Flanagan (1954) described five steps in the Critical Incident Technique. The first step involved specifying the *general aim* of the activity. He described the functional description of an activity as "precisely what is necessary to do and not to do if participation in the activity is to be judged successful or effective" (p. 336). The second step involved *plans and specifications.*

Specifications and instructions must be established and made explicit prior to collecting data. Flanagan described four areas requiring specification:

      1.   The situation observed. The observed situation must include information about the place, people, conditions, and the activities;

      2.   The relevance to the general aim. Determining whether the incident is relevant to the aim of the activity;

      3.   The extent of effect on the general aim. How important the effect of the observed incident was on the general aim;

      4.   Persons to make the observations. The persons making the observations (or recalling them from memory) must have sufficient familiarity with the activity.

Collecting the data was the third step in the Critical Incident Technique. The person involved in the observation must be able to recall the behaviors or results observed and be able to evaluate, classify, and record them while they are still fresh in his/her mind. Four procedures for collecting data include interview, group interviews, questionnaires, and record forms. Of the four procedures, Flanagan viewed the interview as the most satisfactory procedure and maintained that the most crucial aspect of data collection was the questions asked (p. 340). He cautioned the interviewee against leading questions and suggested maintaining neutrality and objectivity. While collecting data, the interviewer should apply the following criteria: (a) whether the actual behavior reported had occurred, (b) was it observed by the reporter, (c) were all relevant factors in the situation given, (d) did the observer make a definite judgment regarding the criticality of the behavior, and (e) did the observer make it clear why he believes the behavior was critical (p. 342).

The fourth step was *analyzing the data.* The goal in this stage is to summarize and describe the data in a manner that is both efficient and useful. Three parts of this step include: (a) the selection of a general frame of reference that will be most useful for describing the incidents, (b) the inductive development of a set of major area and subarea headings, and (c) the selection of one or more levels along the specificity-generality continuum to use in reporting the data (general or specific behaviors). The fifth step was *interpreting and reporting.* This final step involved examining the four preceding steps to ensure accuracy, relevance, and freedom of bias, and lastly to report the data.

Although the five steps appear very concrete in nature, Flanagan (1954) emphasized that the Critical Incident Technique does not consist of a single rigid set of rules governing data collection, but instead it is very flexible and its underlying principles have many types of application. He clarified the two basic underlying principles as:

1. The reporting of facts regarding behavior is preferable to interpretations, rating, and opinions based on general impressions; and

2. The reporting should be limited to those behaviors, which, according to competent observers, make a significant contribution to the activity (p. 355).

In their examination of research involving the use of Critical Incident Technique, Ellinger and Watkins (1998) found considerable evidence of modifications. They reported variations found within the medical, military, and management context as reflective of the evolution of the Critical Incident Technique as a tool used by researchers and practitioners alike. They contrasted the traditional view of the Critical Incident Technique, focused on counting incidences of behavior in order to determine patterns and norms, with a more constructivist perspective of viewing behavior within the individual's meaning perspectives (p. 288). Understanding the point

of view of the participant from his or her world of lived experiences, the aim of the

constructivist, requires a shift from the original construct of the Critical Incident Technique.

They suggested an approach that still maintains an ability to count behaviors and develop

patterns and norms but also develops rich narratives of critical incidents that capture both context

and meaning from the perspective of the participant (p. 288). A recent application of this

modification was Ellinger's (1997) study of managers. She examined the perceptions of

managers regarding their role as facilitators of learning within learning organizations. In addition

to a strict adherence to the principles set forth by Flanagan (1954), she expanded her list of

interview questions in order to obtain elements of individual perspective and context. The

incorporation of elements of Marsick and Watkins' (1990, 1997) model of informal and incident

learning into her interview, "allows the researcher to develop a more comprehensive interview

protocol to gather data which extends far beyond the reporting of actual behaviors and the

constructivist approach encourages a different approach to data collection, analysis, and

reporting" (p. 290). This approach expanded the benefits traditionally associated with the Critical

Incident Technique by way of incorporating a more constructivist worldview.

Kain (2004) presented similar responses to the positivist roots of the Critical Incident

Technique. Reminding us of Flanagan's (1954) theoretical framework, he stated, "when

Flanagan (1954) originally articulated this research approach, he was operating from a research

paradigm that generally did not question a detached, objective approach to scientific research"

(p. 71). An underlying assumption was the presence of a fixed reality that was accessible to the

careful, detached observer. A more qualitative rendering can be accomplished by stressing the

individual construction of meaning by the participant. Kain (2004) pointed out that the premise

of the CIT, "is that in seeking the unique experiences and meanings of individuals, we can

illuminate patterns that may apply to other persons and contexts" (p. 82). In this sense, the

Critical Incident Technique identified specific incidents that speak to the significance that people

place on their experiences. Additionally, it provided the requisite perspective to view the

technique as a means of understanding the individual participants' perspective surrounding their

critical incidents as well as understanding the studied phenomenon.

The use of the critical incident interview technique offered many advantages. It allowed

the researcher to examine the mentoring incident as the unit of analysis and, as such, provided

the opportunity to gather real-world examples and very specific information regarding the

activity of mentoring. Such a detailed list of critical behaviors, according to Flanagan (1954),

provides a sound basis for making inferences as to requirements in terms of aptitudes and

behaviors; therefore this collection of information allowed the researcher to formulate critical

requirements involved in the practice of mentoring. Secondly, modifying the technique, with

open-ended questions, and allowing for rich narratives and contextual influences contributed to a

deeper understanding of both mentoring and the National Guard context from the perspective of

the participant.

Kvale (1996) described the qualitative research interview as a "construction site for

knowledge. An interview is literally an *inter view*, an inter-change of views between two

persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest" (p. 14). This view emphasized the

interdependence of human interaction and knowledge production. He reminded us that

statements are not collected, but rather they are co-authored by the interviewer. This interchange

can spring forth from a variety of interview formats. Interviews can be viewed along a

continuum from structured interviews to non-structured interviews. Structured interviews involve

specific, ordered questions developed ahead of time. Such interviews, while often soliciting very

specific answers, often fail to gather information that leads to understanding the perspective of the participant. Instead, the researchers' perspective is communicated within the questions that are asked, including the particular wording of the questions and the decisions to add or delete questions, and often misses the opportunity to distinguish the participant's perspective. On the opposite end of the continuum lies the open-ended interview. These interviews flow similarly to a conversation and explore various dimensions of the phenomenon in an open and unstructured manner.

The researcher's critical incident interview fell in between these two ends and involved the use of "more-and-less-structured questions" (Merriam, 1998, p. 73). Although armed with a list of interview questions, the researcher was also willing to stray from the questions in hopes of exploring related areas that deepened her understanding of mentoring. This more open-ended approach assumed the participants viewed their world in unique ways and, as such, may take the interview into different directions. Remaining open to different directions heightened the opportunity to learn from the participants. The advantage of a semi-structured interview lies in its dual function as both purposeful and adaptable. The purposefulness of the structured dimensions of the interview allowed the researcher to make comparisons within the interviews; the flexibility inherent in the critical incident interview format provided the opportunity to remain open-ended enough to understand the perspective of my participants. In summary, using the critical incident interview technique allowed the researcher to focus on the narrative as the unit of analysis and to gain valuable insight by allowing the more open approach of the interviews to increase her understanding of the participants' perspective.

Pilot Study and Data Collection Procedures

A purposeful sample of nine officers was selected from the nomination process and served as the sample group for this study. A pilot study was conducted with one senior-level officer and is described in the following section.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted with one officer from the Georgia Army National Guard. The researcher contacted the pilot participant in person and inquired as to whether he would be interested in participating in the study. After providing a brief explanation of the study and a description of his role, the officer responded very enthusiastically and agreed to participate. After receiving this positive response, the researcher then sent a letter of introduction and an information packet to the participant. After allowing several days for the officer to familiarize himself with the information in the packet, the researcher contacted him and scheduled an appointment. The interview was conducted on May 23, 2002.

Before the interview started, the researcher briefly reviewed the meaning of a critical incident and answered a few questions from the participant regarding the nature of the research and the mechanics of the interview process. The participant signed the consent forms and agreed to the tape recording. In preparation for the interview, the officer had done a significant amount of reflection on his mentoring experiences over the course of his military officer profession. He brought five sheets of notes to the interview. He had selected five critical mentoring relationships, identified three criteria, and was prepared with both an opening statement and a closing statement. This level of detail was not repeated in any of the other interviews. The interview lasted approximately one and one-half hours.

Following the interview, the researcher began the transcription process. When it concluded, the researcher had transcribed fourteen single-spaced pages. After meeting with the researcher's methodologist and chair, several lessons were identified. The lessons included:

1. A clearer format was designed for the information packet that stressed the mentoring incident as the unit of analysis. During the qualitative interview, the researcher probed to collect incidents rather than mentoring relationships.

2. A higher quality recording device was purchased. Additionally, a separate microphone was purchased that allowed the researcher to position the recording device in closer proximity to the participant.

3. An additional question was added to the interview guide that solicited information regarding the mentor's experience as a mentee.

4. A follow-up interview was conducted with the pilot interview participant to solicit information that was inaudible on the first tape and to ask the additional interview question.

Overall, there were several advantages to this pilot interview. As a researcher, this experience provided an opportunity to *try out* the interview questions, gather initial data, and to incorporate lessons learned into future interviews. Additionally, the mentoring incidents and relationships chosen by the participant gave the researcher considerable information about the nature of mentoring within the military context and offered keen insights into this qualitative research journey.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher incorporated the lessons learned from the pilot study and began to plan the mechanics of the study. An initial contact, including a letter of introduction, was made with each

participant. In all but one case, this was done electronically. The letter, explaining the nomination process and inquiring as to their interest, can be found in Appendix B. After receiving a response from the participants, the researcher called the officers, confirmed their approval, and scheduled the face-to-face interviews. After receiving verbal approval and scheduling the interview, each participant received an email with several attachments. These electronic attachments included the information packet and a consent form. These two documents can be found in Appendixes C and D.

Personal, face-to-face interviews were conducted with each of the nine officers. The interviews were conducted over an eleven-month period, from May 2002 through April 2003. The pilot study was conducted during May of 2002, whereas the other eight interviews were conducted between November 2002 and April 2003. The extended period of time between the pilot study and the remaining interviews was due to geographical separation and outside obligations on the part of the researcher. Fortunately, this period of time allowed the researcher to fully study the data and involve herself in the interactive process of data analysis.

All interviews were tape recorded with the consent of each participant. The length of the personal interviews averaged approximately one and one-half hours, with two interviews exceeding that time and lasting two and one-half hours each. Since the critical incident was the unit of analysis, the researcher attempted to gather a similar amount of incidents per participant. An average of 4.3 incidents was collected from each officer, despite the additional time with two officers. The researcher attempted to ensure that these two officers did not overly represent the emergent themes. This was done by reviewing their interviews, the coding schemata, and the themes. Their data appeared to be fairly represented in all cases.

The researcher began by taking field notes during the interview, but the pace of the interview made this impractical. Following each interview, the researcher developed a process memo that recorded the observations, insights, and reflections on the participant and the interview process. These insights served as a guide for future interviews and helped to retain the flavor of the interview. Each interview was transcribed verbatim by the researcher within a reasonable time period. It was the researcher's intention to transcribe each interview before another one was conducted, but that was not always possible, as the researcher's geographical restrictions meant that several interviews had to be scheduled back-to-back. The researcher stayed close to the data by listening to the tapes on three separate occasions, once to listen to the entire interview and absorb it holistically, one time in the transcription process, and finally to confirm accurate transcription. A total of one hundred and fifty-eight (158) pages of single spaced interview text were transcribed. A total of thirty-nine (39) effective and ineffective mentoring incidents were reported by the nine officers participating in the study. The titles of the incidents collected by the mentors in the study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. List of Critical incidents by Mentors

Mentor	Critical incident
Charles	1. Repeatedly crossing paths within the organization 2. Providing functional mentoring to someone learning their trade 3. The *blank slate* of a newly commissioned officer 4. Providing formal mentoring to someone who crossed the line 5. A competent officer seeking career advice
Doug	1. Snatched out of the HMMWV in the middle of a convoy 2. Time, space, and distance are pitfalls to mentoring 3. A teachable moment for the entire staff
Cliff	1. Relieving a lieutenant of duty after days of teaching him the basics 2. Treating an officer fairly after catching him in a violation of integrity 3. Helping an officer understand the old guard's perspective 4. Evaluating someone who had previously been a peer
Maryanne	1. Burning bridges affects an officer's career 2. Deciding to enter a commissioning program 3. Talking with a soldier about career opportunities

	4.	Making life-long career decisions
	5.	Juggling career and marriage
	6.	Recognizing and grooming a talented person
Dan	1.	Selecting the *other* officer for promotion
	2.	Giving really hard news to a friend and colleague
	3.	Seeking advice on pursuing employment with the guard
Jason	1.	Giving performance-oriented mentoring to officer candidates
	2.	Identifying leadership traits and grooming subordinates for advancement
	3.	An officer's progression in spite of his actions
	4.	Re-directing an officer's efforts after being relieved of command
	5.	Working with the leadership to meet individual and organizational goals
	6.	Recognizing a subordinate's potential for increased responsibility
Darin	1.	Deciding whether to stay in the guard or pursue a civilian career
	2.	Remembering what's really important about why we do what we do
	3.	Not meeting the military standard and not being willing to listen
	4.	Keeping personal issues separate from his military profession
Jim	1.	Taking responsibility to support your subordinate's decisions
	2.	Having the moral fiber to look him in the eye
	3.	Training peers on the basics of leadership
	4.	Taking the time to figure out the problem and how to fix it
Mitchell	1.	Not loosing sight of the importance of people
	2.	A lieutenant's last opportunity for success
	3.	Restraining himself from *returning heat for heat*
	4.	Recognizing that some people just haven't been taught

Data Analysis Methods

The primary method of analysis was the general approach of thematic analysis of the

data. Two units of analysis were examined: the incidents and the individual mentor. The Critical

Incident Technique relied upon analysis to seek out and analyze the critical incident as the unit of

analysis. The researcher also examined a second unit of analysis, the individual officer, which

provided an additional lens through which to examine the data in the study.

Thematic Analysis of the Data

During thematic analysis, the researcher's intent was to answer the question: what are the

general themes or patterns embedded in the data. More specifically, the researcher examined the

data in the hopes of identifying themes and patterns and to reach a better understanding of the

participants (Bogdon & Biklen, 1998; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Wolcott, 1994). Content

analysis was simply the process of analyzing the text of the data by way of comparing,

contrasting, and categorizing. Coding provided such a process and involved "condensing the bulk of our data sets into analyzable units by creating categories with and from our data" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p.26). This dialectic process involved the reduction and simplification of data as well as the expansion and transformation of data. The practice of coding, Coffey and Atkinson (1996) explained, "usually is a mixture of data reduction and data complication. Coding is generally used to break up and segment the data into simpler, general categories *and* is used to expand and tease out the data" (p. 30).

In keeping with the intent to stay close to the data and retain focus on the experience of the participants, the researcher based the codes or themes directly on the raw data source. Once codes and themes were established, the researcher attempted to find linkages between codes and perhaps draw some tentative hypotheses from the patterns. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) commented that although our work with codes goes beyond the stage of linking codes, "the establishment of ordered relationships between codes and concepts is a significant starting point for reflection and for theory building from qualitative data" (p. 48). The move from coding to interpretation was a critical one. Keeping the participant's experience within the context in which it originated, rather than chopping it up into "data bits" (p. 46) helped reinforce the need to return to the larger, more comprehensive picture. The researcher was cautious to retain sight of the whole picture and not become overly focused on the bits of data. Using constant comparative analysis, a method involving the constant comparing of data throughout the entire data collection and data analysis phases, helped ensure that emergent themes were firmly grounded in data. Overall, the researcher's goal was moving down the continuum from managing and organizing data to interpreting and theorizing about them.

Data Analysis

Throughout the process of analysis, the researcher attempted to capture ideas, themes, and potential patterns. Because the researcher sought to analyze both units of analysis found within the critical incidents and the individual mentee, two forms of data analysis were used for this study. Narrative analysis, more specifically Labov's (1972,1982) sociolinguistic approach, was used to analyze the incidents, whereas thematic analysis was used for the entire set of data. Although they were done separately, using two methods served as a form of internal validity for the emergent themes.

The focus of the analysis began with the individual mentees. The researcher's intent was to construct as complete a picture as possible from the words and experiences of the mentors (deMarrais, 2004). The researcher began this process by returning to the transcripts and reading and re-reading each one. The analysis began with several steps that were descriptive in nature and focused on the raw data. The first phase began with a clean transcript and involved in-vivo codes. These codes are derived from the language or terms of the participants and are used to develop a "bottoms up" approach to deriving codes from the content of the data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 32). In this case, the coding unit used to aid in the reduction of data was a word or phrase. This procedure involved looking at each individual line in the transcript and isolating the word or phrase that best encapsulated the theme of the line. This process ended with a lengthy list of words and phrases. The next step, the second pass at coding, began with this list and involved a combination of grouping same or similar words and phrases and counting them. The result was a much shorter list of tentatively clustered similar words or phrases as well as some outlier words and phrases. The researcher isolated the prevalent clustered categories and discarded the outliers.

What followed next was more inductive in nature. Beginning with this list of clustered codes, the researcher began to look for generalization or themes. At this point, they were not yet grouped according to any particular framework, but were clustered and grouped based soley on their prevalence and their internal similarities. This ended with a much smaller list of clustered groups of similar themes or words. The researcher now sorted these groups based on the particular framework that guided this study. This involved moving from these clustered categories and sorting them based on the organizing principle of mentor's beliefs and mentor's behaviors, while maintaining the coding units at the word or phrase level. The next step in the analysis process was to identify a smaller group of themes, approximately six to eight, that were defined as beliefs, and a similarly sized group of themes defined as behaviors, per participant. Pattern codes, as described by Miles and Huberman (1994), are inferential codes that explain a theme. These pattern codes serve to summarize sets of data into a smaller number of themes (p. 68). The researcher returned to the interview transcripts on many, many occasions to seek out surrounding context in order to determine the proper pattern of coding of these themes.

This phase ended with a smaller sub-set of themes for each participant, grouped according to the framework of beliefs and behaviors. Each theme retained the number of data strips that corresponded to its internal clusters. Using a visual representation of the mentor's beliefs and behaviors and drawing connections between the two categories helped the researcher see how patterns were created, how the themes related to each other, and helped create further distinctions within the data set. This individual analysis resulted in the creation of a visual representation of their thematic groupings. The number of themes, per participant, ranged from three to six beliefs and from four to nine behaviors. The number of codes that were contained

within each theme was recorded and that number was considered to be the number of *data strips* corresponding to that theme. At an individual level, these groupings were their themes.

The second method of analysis used for each participant was narrative analysis. Every critical incident was isolated and then examined according to its structure. Labov (1972,1982) believed that narratives have formal, structural properties in relation to their social functions and that, "these formal structural properties have recurrent patterns that can be identified and used to interpret each segment of narrative" (as quoted in Coffey & Atkinson, p. 57). Each elementary unit of narrative structure answers a question of the narrative. The researcher was especially interested in two units of narrative analysis: (a) the evaluation, which answered the question of *what's the point*; and (b) the result, which answered the question of *what's the final outcome or lesson*. Focusing on the significance of the narrative (evaluation) and the lessons learned (result) helped provide additional insight into the participant's perspective. The elementary units guided the researcher in making conclusions and verifications regarding the individual's mentoring perspectives and served to illustrate the mentor's beliefs and behaviors.

The final phase of analysis for the individual mentors involved the identification of a core mentoring theme. This theme was derived from the thematic analysis of their beliefs and behaviors and the analysis of their critical incidents. Identifying the mentor's core theme, completed in conjunction with the researcher's methodologist, involved an inductive process that looked across their emergent themes, sought out connections, and identified patterns. The researcher then wrote a memo outlining each mentor's core theme and identified thick quotes from the transcript that provided illustration. The core theme, detailed in the memo, served as an audit trail for the researcher in ensuring that the mentor's emergent core theme was grounded in the data. These parallel forms of analysis, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion

drawing and verification of analysis, were completed for each mentor (Miles & Huberman, 1984). In an effort to protect their identities, participants were given a pseudonym. Participant portraits are included in Chapter IV and include their core theme, one mentoring incident, and their experiences as a mentee.

After this iterative analysis was completed for each individual, the researcher progressed to cross-case analysis. This analysis began with the individual mentor's themes. Using two sets of 3x5 cards, yellow cards for beliefs and blue cards for behaviors, each of the mentor's primary beliefs and behaviors themes were recorded on the corresponding card. According to the individual mentor, each of these themes had an associated number of data strips. This number was also recorded on the corresponding index card. Making the shift from the individual themes to a broader unit of analysis meant that individual themes, and their inclusive data strips, would now be observed over the entire set. Therefore, the individual themes were now viewed by the researcher as categories in this next phase of data analysis.

At this point, the researcher had a consolidated pile of forty-one (41) cards representing categories related to beliefs and fifty-six (56) cards representing categories related to behaviors. The next coding phase of the analysis involved open coding. Open coding began by collecting all the cards that had to do with the beliefs and beginning the process of sorting. The researcher followed the process described by Guba and Lincoln (1981) in which the researcher, in this case beginning with the stack of yellow cards, looked at the first card. The researcher then looked at the second card and assessed whether it was similar to the first card or whether the researcher needed to create a new pile. Each subsequent card was assessed in the same manner to see if it was more like an existing pile or whether it wasn't and therefore necessitated the creation of a

new pile. Both sets of cards, representing beliefs and behaviors, were done using this same sorting method.

This process was completed twice by the researcher and resulted in eight stacks of beliefs and six stacks of behaviors. There were also several cards that were in a miscellaneous pile and were set aside in the process. Each theme was given a tentative name derived from one of the associated in-vivo codes. The researcher met with two committee members to review the initial emergent themes. The members suggested moving one theme from the behavior pile to the belief pile and suggested writing a process memo for each theme. Writing up the themes, they believed, would solidify the researcher's understanding and serve as verification for the exclusivity of the individual themes. This additional analysis resulted in isolating four themes related to mentors' beliefs and four themes related to mentors' behavior, each will be described in Chapter V.

Reliability and Validity

The concepts of reliability and validity have limitations when applied to qualitative research. Quantitative research, with its conventional and positivistic roots, addressed the concepts of truth and generalizability in a more straightforward and logical manner. Applying these same concepts in a like manner toward qualitative research presupposes similar roots. Instead, these research approaches have categorically different philosophical stances, which, in turn, have different outcomes. One outcome is their articulation of different research questions. Whereas quantitative research sets out to answer questions related to casual and/or correlational relationships, qualitative research asks questions that relate to the interpretations that participants have of their experiences.

The literature points to no single stance or consensus on how to address these traditional topics in qualitative research. Reactions can be found along a continuum from adaptation of

standards to outright rejection (Eisenhart & Rowe, 1992; Merriam, 1998; Wolcott, 1990). In considering approaches to this situation, Creswell's (1994) perspective is to "suggest the importance of addressing the concepts of *validity* and *reliability* in a qualitative plan and to frame these concepts within the procedures that have emerged from qualitative writings" (p. 158). Considering the limitations inherent in validity and reliability assuaged the reader that efforts have been made to address these topics as well as consider them within a qualitative paradigm.

Merriam (1995) posited that the notion of validity and reliability needed to be grounded in the worldview of qualitative research and that there are compatible strategies that can be employed to ensure trustworthiness (p. 53). She described the three major aspects of rigor as internal validity, reliability, and external validity. Internal validity answers the question of whether we are measuring or observing what we think we are. The key to understanding internal validity, she believed, was the notion of reality. The question is whether reality is fixed as the positivists believe or constructed and interpreted, as qualitative researchers believe. In describing the worldview of qualitative researchers, she stated, "reality is constructed, multi-dimensional, and ever changing; there is no such thing as a single, immutable, reality waiting to be observed and measured" (p. 54). She identified five strategies that can help ensure that the interpretation of reality being presented is as true to the phenomenon as possible. They are: (a) triangulation; (b) member checks; (c) peer/colleague examination; (d) statement of researcher's experiences, assumptions, and biases; and (e) submersion/engagement in the research situation. This notion of reality was addressed by the researcher through the presentation of the subjectivity statement and the engagement in the research situation. This research study was conducted over

an extended period of time and the researcher had extensive time to reflect, write, and became emerged in the process.

Reliability addresses the question of whether the study findings would be repeated. The traditional assumption underlying this concept is that truth or reality is static. Merriam explained, "qualitative researchers are not seeking to establish 'laws' in which reliability of observation and measurement are essential," but instead, "qualitative researchers seek to understand the world from the perspectives of those in it" (p. 56). Replication of qualitative inquiry will not yield the same results because of the ever-changing nature of human behavior. Instead, she suggested striving for consistency and dependability, a sort of internal reliability in which the findings of an investigation reflect, to the best of the researcher's ability, the data collected (p. 57). Strategies proposed toward that end included (a) triangulation, (b) peer examination, and (c) an audit trail. Detailing the process of data collection and data analysis in a thorough audit trail helped the researcher address the issue of dependability. Additionally, having two units of analysis helped the researcher keep the consistency of the mentor's perspective in focus.

External validity answers the question of whether the research findings can be applied to other situations. Generalizability is not an issue for qualitative researchers, whose goal, Merriam said, is "to understand the particular in depth, rather than finding out what is generally true of many" (p. 57). Merriam proposed four strategies that redress external validity from a qualitative paradigm: (a) thick descriptions, (b) multi-site designs, (c) modal comparisons, and (d) sampling within. Ensuring that thick descriptions and quotes were included in the findings of this study made strides toward addressing the issue of external validity.

In the analysis of data, the researcher used several strategies that ensured the quality of the research. Deciding on a method of analysis that was sound and congruent with both the

researcher's theoretical perspective and purpose contributed to its quality. Wolcott (1990) offered nine strategies that helped him in answering the question of validity in his research. His points were incorporated into this research study. In conducting interviews, he recommended talking little and listening a lot. Detailed, rich accounts gathered through active listening contributed to the researcher's understanding of participant perspectives. By collecting data in the best way possible, interruptions were minimized, interpretations and premature analysis were avoided, and focus was placed on genuine understanding.

Recording comments or notes during the interview, expanding the notes after the interview, and recording thoughts, opinions, and observations helped ensured accurate representation of my participants' meanings. Using tape recording devices, employing accurate transcription procedures, and labeling and storing tapes properly helped contribute to accuracy. Returning to the original data, by re-reading transcripts and listening to interviews repeatedly, ensured that the researcher stayed close to the research. The researcher employed triangulation in a number of ways to ensure that the research was trustworthy. For example, the need for multiple sources was addressed by including nine mentors in my study. The need for multiple investigators was addressed by having committee members review emergent themes and tentative analysis throughout the entire process.

In writing up the findings, the researcher incorporated strategies that helped ensure the quality of the research. Including rich detail and using direct quotes from the mentors allowed the data to speak for itself. Wolcott (1990) advocated technical accuracy, checking the appropriateness of the verbs we've used, making sure that our generalizations are grounded in what we've seen or heard, and making sure that our hunches are represented as tentative (p. 134). The researcher returned time and time again to the interviews to ensure that the words used in the

writings was from the mentors and that the meaning of the words were not dramatically different than the context in which they were used. Lastly, developing an audit trail that described, in detail, how the researcher conducted the research and how the results were derived from the data, helped illuminate the path of research.

Summary

This chapter described the qualitative methods that were employed for the study. The study was an in-depth qualitative inquiry using the critical incident interview technique as the primary method of data collection. Thematic analysis of the data and narrative analysis were the methods of data analysis. Issues of reliability and validity were discussed and specific measures were addressed that ensured a quality study.

CHAPTER IV

PORTRAITS OF MENTORS AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the beliefs and behaviors of officers while they

served as mentors within the National Guard context. Two research questions guided this study:

1.   What are the officers' beliefs about their role as mentors?

2.   What are the officers' behaviors, or strategies, that contribute to their role as

        mentors?

Beliefs were defined as a set of closely held personal and professional assumptions. The

framework category of mentor beliefs was considered as the underlying foundation for

understanding how officers perceived their role as mentor, their view of the mentee, and the way

they see the mentoring process. Behaviors, or strategies, were defined as a set of actions that

were performed by the officer when they perceived that they were mentoring junior officers. The

framework of mentor behaviors was viewed as the strategies that mentors used in the actual

process of mentoring.

The design of the study was a qualitative approach using the critical incident interview as

the primary method of data collection. In-depth interviews were conducted with nine mid-to-

senior-level officers within the Georgia Army National Guard. While the majority of the

interviews were conducted at the officer's place of work, two interviews took place at their

residence. Results of the study were derived by thematic analysis of the data. Eight of these

officers were nominated as exemplary mentors within the military context. One officer was not

nominated by the process described in the previous chapter. Through informal channels, she was identified to the researcher as a good mentor and she was included in the study to gain a more representative perspective.

This chapter presents an individual portrait of each of the nine officers participating in the study. The intent behind presenting these portraits was to provide an in-depth look at individual mentors and to understand them as unique contributors to the overall findings. By focusing first on the individual officers in the study, it is hoped that their unique beliefs and behaviors will contribute to the overall understanding of mentoring with the National Guard. Each portrait will describe the mentor's core theme, and one mentoring incident will be presented for each officer that best illustrates this core theme. Each portrait also describes the officer's experience as a mentee and relates one or two key mentoring incidents or relationships that proved to be instrumental in his/her development as mentors.

The unique aspects of the context provide a significant framework in understanding these officers. Each theme needs to be viewed through the contextual lens of the National Guard. In order to provide an in-depth analysis of the context, the chapter begins with an examination of the contextual aspects from the officers' perspective. Three themes emerged from the data related to the unique context and these themes will be described and illustrative quotes presented.

The National Guard Context

The context in which mentoring takes place significantly affects the mentoring process. In order to provide a greater understanding of this unique context, this section of the chapter will focus on the themes that emerged from the data associated with the context of the National Guard. Mentors described three primary themes as (a) the size of the organization, (b) the time constraints, and (c) the existence of dual careers for organizational members. The actual

size of the organization refers to the number of officers in the National Guard as well as the way the organization is structured. Time refers to the limited direct exposure mentors have with mentees and the overall structure of the guard as a reserve, or part-time, organization. The theme of dual careers relates to the mentees having additional professional responsibilities outside of the National Guard. These three themes affect the context in which mentoring takes place.

Size of the Organization

From the outside, it may appear that the National Guard is a rather large organization, perhaps indicative of our views of the enormity of the military itself. However, when you break down the entity of the National Guard to individual states, and then states down to their individual major commands, the organization begins to shrink in size. A major command is a separate military entity that has its own internal command structure. Typically, there are three to five major commands within each state; additionally there is a headquarters element that serves as a coordinating body for these major commands. It is not unusual for people to move throughout a single command, or perhaps two, their entire career.

While a command may also appear large, the largest being about 4,500 people, the organization again shrinks when viewed by specific military occupational branch. For the sake of clarity, an officer has a military branch and a functional area. The branch is a broader occupational career, while a functional area is a narrower specialty within each branch. There are twenty-three (23) branches in the Army and each one further narrows their focus into a variety of functional areas. Generally, an officer remains within their occupational branch and tends to stay within this focused and narrow group of people, and job specialties, throughout his or her career. This seemingly large organization can now be narrowed down to a much smaller group of people who share the same or associated officer occupational specialties.

Mentors describe this theme as (a) crossing paths both earlier and more often, and (b) increasing the political dimensions. Because the organization is small, officers tend to meet each other more quickly and begin to form networking systems. Thus, the likelihood exists that mentors and mentees will interface more quickly and more often. As officers progress through the system, the number of positions associated with higher ranks becomes smaller and smaller. Commonly depicted as a pyramid, the number of officers becomes less and less as you progress in rank and move up the pyramid. Politics are an inherent aspect of officers' progression through the organization.

Charles described the National Guard as a very small organization and believes its size is an important factor in the mentoring process. He points out that the same group of people interface with each other throughout their career in the National Guard, whereas in the active Army, a much larger organization, you may not see that person again for another ten or fifteen years. He clarified, "our organization being very, very small, the mentor and the mentee tend to stay together a lot longer through their career, and they cross paths a lot sooner and a lot more often" (208-211). Charles described how the size of the organization influences interactions between mentors and mentees.

Cliff described one mentoring incident that involved a disciplinary action with a junior officer. Although this officer was formally disciplined, he was given another chance and remained an active member of the National Guard. Cliff realized that because the organization was so small, he was likely to cross paths with this junior officer somewhere down the road. He explained,

I found that now it was important for me to work on the personal relationship that I

would have between myself and this officer because he was still going to be functioning

in a very small society, if you will, the Georgia National Guard. (243-246)

Cliff demonstrated how the size of the organization can affect mentors and mentees long after

the mentoring relationship dissolves. Maintaining a professional relationship within the

organization is imperative for officers as they are likely to work with each other in the future.

Relationships, whether positive, negative, long-term or short-lived, play a role in the political

dynamics of the National Guard.

Relationships, based on years of working together, form a pattern or network amongst

officers. Dan pointed to one aspect of politics that can come about as a result of that political

network. This aspect involved the selection of senior leaders based on their longevity in the

organization. Rather than looking broadly across the entire Georgia Army National Guard, or

even outside of its state boundaries, for the best qualified officers, selections are often made on

the officer's history with the specific organizational element. He explained, "you can sometimes

get people who are not all that capable because it's their turn" (722-724). The idea that leaders

are selected based on their longevity or, more plainly speaking, because "it's their turn",

demonstrates the politics that can arise from such a small organization.

Maryanne described a mentoring incident in which she pulled a junior officer aside and

gave her advice on how to be successful within the organization. Considering the political

dimensions of the organization, Maryanne described what prompted her to initiate a mentoring

session with this junior officer. She explained that she was aware of what the officer had been

doing within the organization and had seen how these actions had burned two or three bridges.

She could see how detrimental it was going to be for the mentee five or ten years down the road.

Maryanne clarified, "the people that she had burned the bridges with were not superiors in her chain of command but superior in rank. And at some point that these people would impact her career" (120-123). As such, the size and structure of the National Guard serve to exaggerate the political aspects of relationships.

Further reflecting on the context of the National Guard, Maryanne compared the differences between this organization and the active duty military. She explained that, whereas on active duty you get assigned somewhere else, to another country or to another organization, in the guard, officers just keep moving around. And as you go up in rank, the pyramid keeps getting smaller and smaller. Maryanne provided further insight into the junior officer's situation and its relationship to the National Guard pyramid. She clarified,

> she's going to need job assignments that are key so that she can continue building her expertise so she can continue moving up. And all you have to do is be pigeon-holed somewhere…and you won't go anywhere. So if you get enough people not trusting you or not believing that you can do the job at the next higher level, you won't get promoted. (146-151)

Key assignments, controlled by senior leaders within the organization, are often influenced by the politics that arise out of the size of the organization. Another structural aspect of the National Guard relates to the part-time nature of its membership. Members attend training on a limited basis, and this factor significantly affects the context within which mentoring occurs.

Time Constraints

The time available for mentoring is greatly affected by the nature of the National Guard itself. In comparison to the Active Army, where mentors and their junior officers work together on a daily basis, mentors in the National Guard are not afforded this same regularity. Typically,

mentors interact with their junior officers for only two days a month, during weekend drill, and two weeks during the year for annual training. This context, critical in viewing how mentoring is influenced by such a limited timeframe, plays a significant role in mentoring. This limitation seems to affect not only the frequency of mentoring, but also the choice of mentoring techniques.

As illustrated in one of his mentoring incidents, Doug pointed out the potential result of the time constraints within the National Guard. This situation involved a junior officer, working at a different geographical location, and the consequences arising from mentoring intermittently and from a distance. In this incident, Doug did not provide adequate mentoring because of the lack of opportunity. He described the challenges,

> one of the barriers to that sort of stuff is time. Time and space and distance. Those are some of the pitfalls of trying to mentor reserve component, National Guard, staffs and soldiers because you really don't have the same opportunities to be with your staff and your soldiers every day of the week. (571-578)

The absence of consistent interactions between mentor and mentee are part of this context.

Time constraints seem to influence the way mentoring occurs as well as its frequency. Reflecting on the time constraints, Doug described how this limitation affects his mentoring strategies. He explained,

> you've got to do it when it occurs, whether it be a good event or whether it be a bad event. Unfortunately, and not unfortunately I think it's fortunately, that most of the mentoring is done as a result of maybe something not being done properly. That is where the mentoring opportunity exists. We don't have time to do it positively. (869-873)

Limited time and opportunity shape mentoring within this context. Utilizing negative events as a source of mentoring takes on more significance in the absence of ample opportunities. Mentors

often acknowledged the need to take full advantage of mentoring opportunities as they presented themselves.

The National Guard's time-constrained environment affects mentors' ability to get to know their mentees. Being together only two days per month, combined with the training events that are scheduled within those two days, result in a high-stress and time-compressed environment for most officers. In reflecting on mentoring within the National Guard, Jim pointed out that simply being available for mentoring was the toughest part. He explained,

> people come in for the weekend and there's a lot going on. And then when they leave they got their full-time job and they got their family and on and on and on. So it's not as easy to get close to people. (19-22)

Because of this constraint, Jim stressed the importance of being available for mentees.

The limited time exposure that mentors have with their mentees is played out in a variety of ways. Mentees don't receive consistent mentoring, and it is difficult to maintain their military proficiency between training events. Reflecting on what he learned from one of his mentoring incidents with traditional guard officers, Cliff pointed to the challenges that are connected with limited exposure and time. He learned,

> just how hard it is for the young leaders coming through there and what a challenge it is in the Georgia National Guard for young leaders to show up once a month or two weeks in the summer and be able to operate on that same leadership level. (1099-1102)

Having to operate on the same level as their full-time military colleagues, while only working on a part-time basis, is a challenge for the traditional guard officer. Whereas the full-time officer is doing his or her military job every day, the traditional officer is performing their civilian profession every day.

Dual Careers

This theme addressed the dual-career nature of the traditional guard officer. The vast majority of these officers have full-time professional careers in addition to their National Guard commitment. As a result, tension often exists between maintaining the obligations of their military and civilian professions. Dual careers affect both the mentor and the mentee. For the mentor, it means that they are not likely to be the sole or primary mentor for this junior officer. Their junior officer is being influenced, or mentored, by a civilian supervisor on a daily basis, in addition to being mentored by their military supervisor. Another aspect for the mentor is that the traditional guard officer can often provide keen insight into how the civilian community conducts business and manages its people. In this manner, the mentee can serve as a source of learning for the mentor.

Reflecting upon mentoring traditional guard officers, Cliff described the situation in which he had the opportunity to mentor people who, in the civilian community, were as equally well-placed or better-placed in management as he was. He found himself in the position of counseling or instructing people who had $80,000 to $100,000 a year jobs in the civilian world. In mentoring these junior officers regarding individual and organizational expectations, he would oftentimes get something back in return. In describing this, Cliff pointed to, "their perspective on how they might accomplish this or what their thoughts were on this particular mission, which was equally as valuable to me as the mentor as what I was trying to accomplish by mentoring them" (576-578). Cliff illustrated the reciprocal nature of mentoring that often arises from this unique National Guard context.

As the nation's defense has increased its reliance on the reserve component, the demands placed on the National Guard have been steadily increasing over the years. For the mentee, this

means that the demands placed on him or her may result in a conflict of interest between responding to their professional civilian career and their professional military career. These demands necessitate even traditional guard officers to work in excess of their designated one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer. As officers progress through the system, gaining rank and responsibility, additional time and effort is also required to stay proficient and remain competitive within the organization.

Darin described one mentoring incident that involved a junior officer who had to make a difficult career decision between staying in the guard and putting more effort into his civilian career. He sat down with the junior officer and talked about his goals, his prioritizes in life, and where the military fit into his plan. They discussed the situation at length and explored options. Darin described the conversation, "he said, 'look, I want to succeed in my civilian career and I need this much time to do it' and I said 'well probably the military ain't right for you now'" (83-87). The junior officer took that advice to heart and got out of the guard, although he told Darin that he might come back once he feels comfortable in his civilian position and feels like he could handle both obligations. Inquiring as to how this person was doing now, Darin responded very enthusiastically and said that this junior officer was very successful and had accomplished all the goals that he had set out to achieve. Darin was quick to note that this person had also confided in him that he strongly believed, "he couldn't have done it if he'd stayed in the guard" (140-141). This situation in which guard officers have to make a decision to aggressively pursue their civilian career, as opposed to maintaining both obligations, was described by several mentors.

Demonstrating the often conflicting nature of the dual-career guard officer, Jason offered one example of a rising star in the organization. This officer was someone who could potentially rise to the highest state leadership position. In fact, Jason thought that this officer was

someone who had a good shot at being The Adjutant General (TAG) one day. He had completed his civilian and military education, had a good head on his shoulders, was technically and tactically proficient, and knew his military craft very well. Instead of attaining this esteemed position, it turned out, this rising star retired from the guard. Jason explained, "as a small business owner, with a real estate corporation, he said 'I don't have the time. I can't continue to be distracted'" (336-338). Military obligations can compliment civilian careers, but often they serve to compete for the mentee's efforts.

Further illustrating the impasse that some traditional guard members face when their careers compete, Dan described one of his great soldiers who had to leave the guard because he was a railroad guy. For this high ranking NCO, it finally got to the point where he couldn't put the time into the guard that it took to be promoted and to carry on with his civilian transportation career. Upon reflection, Dan shared an insight, "you can make a little bit of a case, and a sideways case maybe, that you lose your best people back to the civilian world" (815-817). Traditional guard officers often find themselves in this quandary in which they have to decide whether they can afford, both personally and professionally, to continue their military service. Oftentimes guard members can't afford to maintain both professions and are lost from the organization.

In addition to managing the dual-careers of traditional guard officers, there seemed to be a sense that serving as a part-time officer, as compared to being full-time, presented its own set of challenges. Not being privy to the inner workings of the organization on a regular basis may mean not receiving full information, missing out on important functions, and generally "not being in the loop". While coming in one weekend a month may appear to be an enviable position, several mentors commented on the difficulty that this presented to officers. Addressing

this difference, Dan believed, that although there are slight advantages to being a traditional

guard officer, "most of it though is a disadvantage in that you've got to be absorbed" (770-771).

Being absorbed back into the full-time organization requires effort and commitment on the part

of the traditional officer as well as the organization itself.

Recognizing the difficulty of being a traditional officer as compared to a full-time officer,

Cliff pointed out, "it's easier for a full-time officer to kind of get in the groove and kind of figure

out what the real standard is and how difficult it is to achieve it"(282-285). Working day-to-day

within the military context provides the full-time officer greater access to people and information

and may help them to better understand the real standard for the organization. These three

primary themes regarding the contextual aspects of the National Guard provided the lens through

which the individual portraits must be viewed.

Portraits of Mentors

The National Guard is structured in such a way that there are only a few positions with

the same title across the entire organization. Therefore, describing mentors by their current

position or, in some cases, their previous position provides nearly enough information to

determine the identity of the mentor. Additionally, as described in the previous section

addressing the National Guard context, the number of officers significantly decreases as they

progress in rank, therefore, identifying mentors by rank, combined with their general career

description, would again, provide too much information about participants.

In response to this unique situation, very little personal information or descriptors will be

provided for the participants. The Georgia Army National Guard is a small organization and in

respect to the generosity of the mentors involved in this study and in response to the ethical

situation that exists in conducting research studies, the researcher is not providing any additional

information to the readers about the fascinating careers and colorful personalities of the mentors. It is hoped that by describing their core mentoring theme and presenting one mentoring incident, the reader will come to understand each mentee and develop his or her own picture.

The portraits are presented according to a matrix that depicts their mentoring orientation. Two variables contained in the matrix are *performance orientation* and *interpersonal orientation*. A performance orientation was viewed by the researcher as being more focused on the conduct of the military profession, including military standards, officer traits, and core job specialties. In comparison, an interpersonal orientation was focused more toward personal or individual aspects, including developmental components and personal growth. Each officer's core mentoring theme placed them on the matrix in relation to his/her level of focus on performance and interpersonal orientation. The portraits are arrayed beginning with the upper left quadrant and progressing clockwise. Figure 4 illustrates the officers' mentoring orientation.

Charles

Charles is a senior-level officer with over three decades of military experience. He has held a variety of upper-level military positions within several of the major commands in the Georgia Army National Guard. Charles has as his focal point the core knowledge and skills that a mentor is required to have and demonstrate to others. He described his mentoring beliefs as understanding the big picture or "why", knowing your functional area, having a moral or ethical basis for mentoring, unknowingly mentoring, and being approachable. Charles described his behaviors, or strategies, for mentoring as informality, demonstration, style in how you do it, and adjusting his style.

Core Theme

Charles's core theme, arising from both his beliefs and behaviors, is centered on

Mentoring Orientation

Charles   Dan
Doug   Jason
Cliff
Maryanne

Interpersonal   Darin

    (Low Focus)

                                           Jim
                                           Mitchell

        (Low Focus)
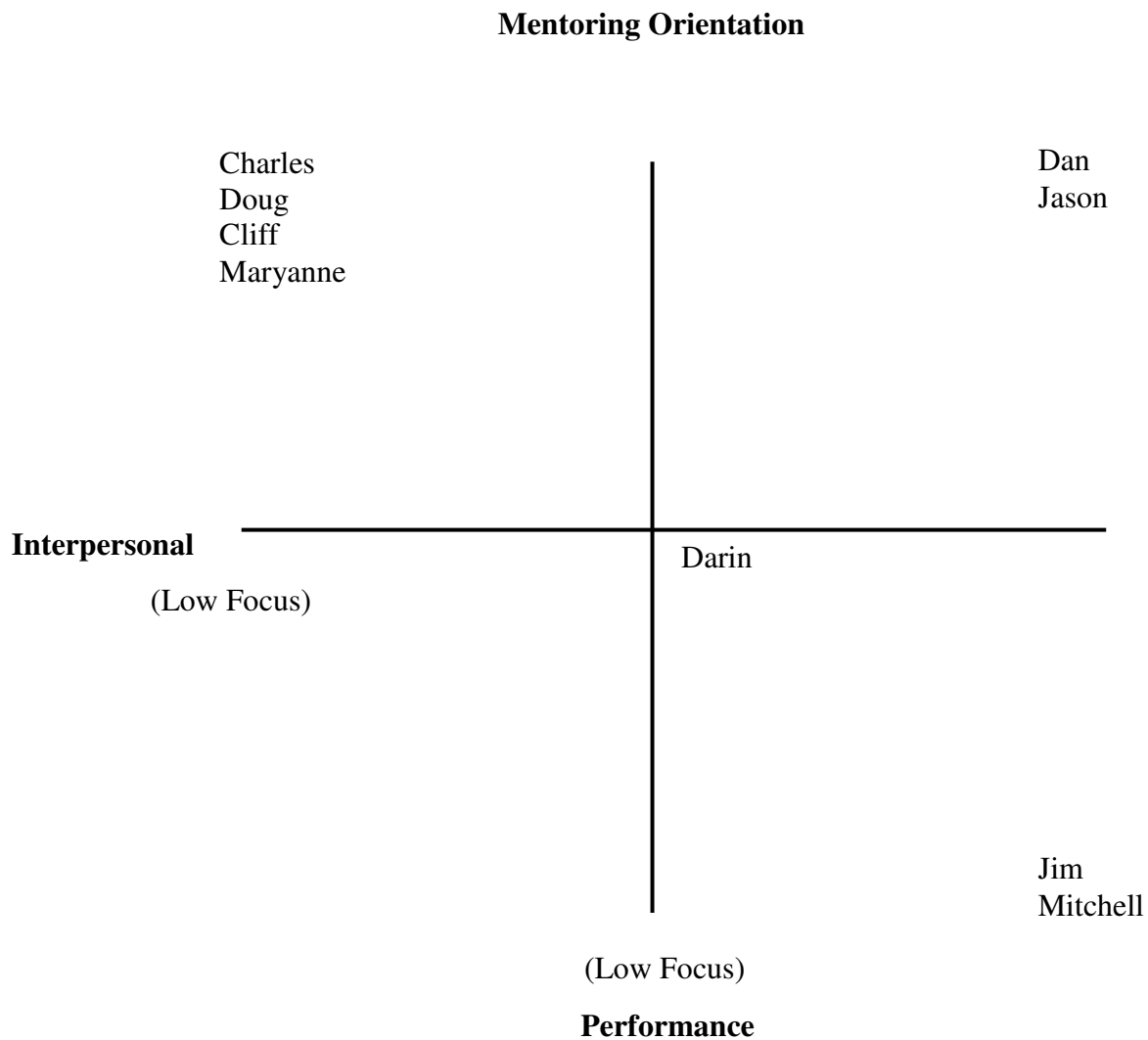
        Performance

Figure 4. Mentors' orientation in relation to their level of performance and interpersonal focus

knowledge or, more specifically, demonstrated knowledge. This knowledge is composed of both

general officer traits as well as job-related functional skills. Charles described this demonstrated

knowledge as having two pieces. The first piece referred to the fact that, as an officer, one's

general officer traits, developed over years of experience and training, are on display and

watched at all times. These traits, or characteristics, included the individual's professional and moral character.

The second piece of demonstrated knowledge referred to the skills and knowledge that relate to an officer's specific functional area skills. Charles explains, "you are counseling, or mentoring, or showing, or displaying, or suggesting how to work within that functional area" (843-845). Although a mentor might be demonstrating functional area knowledge, he/she still maintains the greater mentoring piece because he/she is on display as a leader. These overlapping components were seen throughout the interview. Charles presented five mentoring incidents that involved officers he had mentored over the years, covering a variety of ranks and positions, and focused on demonstrating knowledge and skills.

Mentoring Incident

One mentoring incident described by Charles best illustrates his core theme. This incident occurred when he worked in a state level planning office and had a newly- commissioned warrant officer that he had hired. He described a relationship that developed over time and included an on-going dialogue focused on the broader perspective of the National Guard. In providing some context for this incident, it is important to recognize the various backgrounds that National Guard members possess. The background of this warrant officer was that he had spent many years as an enlisted member of the service but had not yet worked as a commissioned officer in the organization. In this sense, Charles referred to him as "a blank slate".

A primary difference between officers and enlisted members centers on their foci. Generally speaking, an officer is focused on developing plans and strategies, while an enlisted member is focused on the detailed execution of these plans and strategies. A further distinction

lies in the fact that the military actually has three categories of members, (a) commissioned officers, (b) commissioned warrant officers, and (c) enlisted members. Although both of the types of officers are federally recognized as being commissioned, the foci are again different. A commissioned officer is focused on overall plans and must be well-versed in a myriad of military functions; however, a warrant officer's focus is directed toward one technical functional area. Often a warrant officer spends his entire career in one technical area, whereas commissioned officers move through various command and staff positions and are expected to have a broader knowledge base. Both types of officers were represented in critical mentoring incidents in this research study.

Charles pointed out how this junior warrant officer's background and experience played a role in how he viewed issues and contributed to his need to understand this new perspective. Charles explained the connection between his background and his search for knowledge,

> in that transition from enlisted to commission and never been exposed to the thought process of how the commissioned officer side manages things, thinks about things, is trained in things, or is exposed to things, and a lot of time influences things. The questions…were searching questions, they were asking why things happen that way and why it's important (312-318)

Answering these searching questions became a regular part of their mentoring relationship.

Charles described a series of mentoring incidents with this person in which he helped him see the organization in a new light and provide the bigger picture. He described a typical mentoring incident as a meeting that would take place in the morning over a cup of coffee. These mentoring sessions were focused on upcoming events as well as general discussions about how their department connected with others in the organization and how their decisions impacted the

larger picture. This particular mentee was eager to learn and actively sought out Charles for these discussions. Illustrating the outcome from this broader perspective, Charles reported,

> …once he saw that what he was doing every day or every hour was contributing significantly to influencing, on a larger scale, things he had never thought about before, he felt more involved in the job and more involved in where he wanted to go in his career. (328-332)

Charles viewed this expanded perspective as a positive element of his mentee's development and associated his motivation and dedication to this newly acquired perspective.

Maintaining his focus on the power of demonstration, Charles described his learning in this incident, "I was really shaping and molding and establishing a philosophy of how to do things and how things work and how he would approach the rest of his career" (370-372). Recognizing that in this incident, perhaps more than the others, his demonstration was a critical component of the mentoring, Charles articulated, "my style and my demonstration, how I handled things or managed things, was a direct mentoring source for him" (385-386). Charles's approachable mentoring style allowed him the opportunity to demonstrate his skills and knowledge to his mentee.

Mentor as Mentee

Charles offered several insights about his development as a mentor and how he had been mentored by several exceptional civil service managers and military leaders. Pointing out that this mentoring primarily came through demonstration, he stated, "they didn't know they were mentoring, but it was their leadership style or their process of how they handled things. And again, it was informal" (951-953). Charles learned by watching his mentors. Further describing how he developed as a mentor and specifically how he has learned to adjust his mentoring style

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in accordance to mentee's needs, he talked about learning by watching others handle interpersonal situations. He said,

> I like to kind of connect the dots, what makes that person successful, how do they approach a certain issue, how do they conduct themselves in a meeting, and how do they take something that is really controversial and how do they approach it and how do they handle it. (941-946)

Charles learned how to adjust his style by watching how others conducted themselves and handled difficult situations.

Although he talked in generalities about how he learned and developed as a mentor, he did offer one specific incident. He referred to this person as one of his very favorite mentors, both formally and informally, and a good friend. His mentor told Charles that he did not suffer fools lightly. He agreed with his mentor and said that it was absolutely true and that that was his style in how he reacted to people who do foolish things. Charles has a problem with people who do foolish things, especially when it comes to morals and ethics. Even today, he still does not suffer fools lightly, but he is more aware of it and adapts his mentoring style every time he has to mentor a person like that. He explained," …how I approach it is 100% different today as I did prior to that conversation" (1324-1325). Learning from his mentors, both by watching and by receiving feedback, helped Charles become a better mentor.

This portrait of Charles described his beliefs and behaviors as he served as a mentor within the National Guard context. His core theme, demonstrated knowledge, was described in the portrait. One particular mentoring incident helped illuminate his core theme and involved a newly commissioned warrant officer who was a novice related to his broadened job responsibilities. The mentee wanted to understand the big picture of the organization and it was

through Charles's demonstrated knowledge that this mentee grew, developed, and flourished within the organization.

Doug

Doug is a senior-level officer who has worked in a variety of positions and major commands throughout the Georgia Army National Guard. He has as his focal point the *on the spot* nature of mentoring and the corresponding need to take advantage of every opportunity to mentor. Doug described his mentor beliefs as mentoring as the opportunity presents itself, the lack of time available to mentor, and the most effective mentoring position. Doug described his behaviors, or strategies, related to mentoring as providing command guidance, teaching, using an After Action Review (AAR) format, mentoring face-to-face / mentoring on-the-spot, and informal mentoring.

Core Theme

Doug's core theme, arising from both his beliefs and behaviors, is centered on on the-spot mentoring. He described this theme as involving stopping in the middle of what you're doing, taking advantage of mentoring opportunities, and face-to-face mentoring. This type of mentoring is informal in nature and occurs with the person at the time of the event. Mentoring done at the time when the opportunity presents itself, he believed, is most effective. Doug presented three incidents that focused on providing timely mentoring to his junior officers. He described two incidents which illustrated his timeliness in providing mentoring as well as one incident in which he was not timely in providing mentoring. The latter incident served to reinforce his core theme that on-the-spot mentoring is most effective.

Mentoring Incident

One mentoring incident described by Doug best illustrates his core theme. This incident involved a junior officer whom he mentored within a field training environment. This junior officer was assigned the responsibility of overseeing the movement of the entire battalion, approximately 700 people, from one field location to another. Doug seized the opportunity to mentor this junior officer at the time that the event occurred. He described this mentoring incident as sobering in that he grabbed this junior officer up by the nap of his neck, pulled him off to the side, and had a very emotional discussion with him about his responsibilities in terms of moving the battalion convoy of people and vehicles. In the midst of the action, Doug pulled the officer aside and used the action as a source of teaching and mentoring.

Doug viewed this as very effective mentoring since it occurred right as the opportunity presented itself. As he sees it, mentorship is akin to opportunity. Mentors have to seize the opportunity as it presents itself. Rather than waiting for the next training event to occur, which realistically could be a month down the road, doing it as it occurred was the most effective time. Mentoring, he explained, "loses its momentum, and it loses the teaching point if it's not done at the point of origin, when you need to teach it" (302-304). Mentoring junior officers at the point of origin has proven to be Doug's most effective strategy.

Discussing events long after they occur invites inaccurate learning and a loss of impact. Doug believes strongly in intervening when things go wrong, lest he reinforce the wrong thing. If he doesn't talk with the mentee about what went well and what went wrong, the mentee may not be able to discern whether or not the event was a success and he/she runs the risk of repeating the wrong. He explained,

if you don't discuss the wrong right then, then you reinforce the wrong again and again and again and again. So every time you see something that does not go as it is intended to go, you have to stop it and discuss it. (587-590)

Providing on-the-spot mentoring serves to bring things out in the open where both mentor and mentee can talk and where greater understanding and learning can occur.

Reflecting on what he learned from this mentoring incident, Doug pointed out the potential impact that those small, one-on-one engagements can have with subordinate officers. Providing commander's guidance within those small engagements can be of great importance to mentees. Doug explained, "if you are very clear and very concise in your guidance, they learned from everything [I said]" (422-424). Offering command guidance, within informal mentoring sessions, served as a basis of learning for mentees. Informal mentoring sessions that occur at the point of origin can be very effective and have a lasting effect. He shared, "I will tell you that that officer is a better officer today because of that crossroad intersection he and I had and the discussion we had, because of the way we discussed it and its building block approach" (429-432). Informal mentoring, done on-the-spot as the opportunity presents itself, was Doug's core mentoring theme.

Mentor as Mentee

Doug spoke about one person who has had more influence on him and his military career than anyone in his life. Describing that mentoring relationship, he pointed out that he learned the most by watching his mentor's mannerisms, ranging from speaking on the radio all the way to how he conducted himself around junior and senior officers. He picked up on all of those mannerisms that this mentor demonstrated. Doug clarified, "he didn't have to personally tell me that that is what he did; I was smart enough to know to figure it out that his guy knows what he is

doing" (681-683). Describing what he learned from his mentor, Doug said that nearly everything that he did when he became a battalion commander, he had learned from his mentor. He explained,

> I took all those little nuances and habits that he had then and those things just carried through my military career right up until my battalion command. I wasn't able to use those things he did until I got to the same level that I was at that when I saw him use them. (687-700)

Associating the lessons he learned from his mentor with the time in which he was able to put them into practice, reinforced Doug's belief that key command positions are most effective for mentoring junior officers.

This portrait of Doug described his beliefs and behaviors as he served as a mentor within the National Guard context. One particular mentoring incident helped illuminate his core theme and involved an informal mentoring incident that occurred within the field environment. This incident occurred within the context of a training event and provided the teachable moment for Doug and his mentee. This rather intense incident provided the type of opportunity that Doug believes is critical for mentoring.

Cliff

Cliff is an upper-level officer who has held a variety of military positions across several of the major commands within the Georgia Army National Guard. Military standards of behavior are Cliff's focus. This focus was described as having military standards as the basis for behavior, demonstrating standards, and enforcing the standards of discipline. Cliff described his mentoring beliefs as standards, expectations, team and unit cohesion, and treating people fairly. He

described his mentoring behaviors, or strategies as building community, hustling mistakes, getting perspective to become fairer, and fairness through being open.

Core Theme

Cliff's core theme, arising from both his beliefs and behaviors, is centered on military standards. He described this theme as having firm standards, meaning that the standards don't change based on the situation but instead remain firm across the board. In looking back on one of his incidents that involved enforcing military standards, he reflected that oftentimes in the organization, "we tend to want to placate everyone as opposed to disciplining those that need it and stand up to those and explain our rationale for why we did what we did instead of just sweeping it under the rug" (271-273). Cliff believed that handling difficult situations requiring discipline are best handled in the open, rather than just sweeping them under the rug.

This core theme was built on the foundation of military standards, communicated through clear and understandable expectations and, based on the individual's action, consequences that dealt with mentees directly and fairly. All of these elements were bounded within a community, or family, of trusted and committed officers. Tempering the enforcement of standards with his focus on being open and fair seemed to be key ingredients in Cliff's mentoring approach. Cliff described four incidents that focused on mentoring junior officers. Two incidents involved mentoring these officers toward gaining a broader perspective in order to be fair in handling their particular situations. The other two situations involved working with officers regarding their understanding and adherence to military standards.

Mentoring Incident

One incident described by Cliff best illustrates his core theme. This incident involved a situation with a junior officer and his adherence to a particular military standard. In this case, the

standard involved maintaining a required body weight. The military dictates a specific weight, based on gender and height, which members need to maintain in order to meet a specified military regulation. Although they had worked together previously in other capacities, this officer was new to Cliff's unit.

Cliff considered this mentee to be a close personal friend and made his expectations very clear from the beginning. He explained to his mentee,

> although we want to have that friendship and there's a lot of value to that, we can't let that override the fact that we each have to pull our weight and that we're each officers and we each have a responsibility to the unit. (383-386))

Keeping the expectations in the open, while also acknowledging their friendship, helped set the stage for treating his mentee equitably. Cliff began to work with this junior officer on his weight problem. He spent a lot of time talking to him about the specific requirements of his job as well as his individual personal readiness requirements in regard to weight control and physical fitness.

A few months down the road, Cliff was told by a unit member that this junior officer had stopping making progress on the weight control program. Cliff contacted his mentee and told him that he needed to come to the armory and get weighed; the incident occurred during the actual weigh-in. During the weigh-in, conducted by Cliff, the junior officer attempted to alter the scales by using a magnet. His mentee had figured out how to place the magnet at a certain spot on the bar of the scales so that the magnet stabilized the bar and, in turn, registered the mentee's desired weight. For Cliff, this meant that he "had caught him in a violation of his integrity with regard to weight control" and that now he needed to deal with the weight standard as well as the integrity violation (455-456). The officer's behavior clearly demonstrated that he had crossed the line ethically.

Cliff next took the magnet from him, weighed him again, and discovered that he was about fifteen pounds overweight. In fact, he had not been making progress but rather he was as heavy as or heavier than before. Although Cliff thought that he was capable of separating professional relationships from personal friendships, this situation was particularly difficult. He explained," this person was actually a good, personal friend of mine that flagrantly lied and cheated" (483-484). Cliff chose to handle the situation by showing his mentee his extreme disappointment in him as a friend and a trusted compadre. Rather than get him fired or kicked out of the guard based on that integrity violation, Cliff decided to continue to work with this junior officer on achieving the standards. He believed that those efforts really made a difference to the junior officer. Cliff explained,

> I think that he grew from that. I think he learned a lot from it. To this day I believe he
> feels some degree of loyalty to me or some degree of affinity. Not that I treated him any
> different than I necessarily would have done anyone else, but I treated him very fairly. I
> was very strict with him. (495-499)

Treating him fairly, while enforcing the standards of military behavior and maintaining a personal friendship, ultimately forced this junior officer to lose the weight and allowed him to remain in the National Guard.

In describing his learning from this incident, Cliff said, "you have to be very careful about the people you select to be on your team. Here was a guy who had an extreme amount of technical competence but who had shortcomings in the area of integrity and personal self-discipline" (507-512). For Cliff, this experience served to reinforce his learning that he needed to build a team of officers that were both competent and trustworthy.

Mentor as Mentee

Cliff shared two mentoring incidents in which he was the mentee. The first one involved a battalion commander that he had while serving on active duty. One thing he learned from this mentor was the concept of hustling mistakes. When he came on board, he told him that he would accept all the hustling mistakes that he could make but that he wouldn't accept lazy mistakes. For his mentor, making hustling mistakes was o.k. because you're actively doing something, you are trying, and you are learning from your mistakes. Cliff described his mentoring style as a coaching style. He described his coaching style as an informal manner, being in the locker room after physical training with the guys, coming around and putting your hand on your shoulder, and overall making you feel a part of the team. Cliff described his typical mentoring style, "he'd put his arm on your shoulder and puff on that pipe and just talk, and just one-on-one, and reassure you that you had value, that you added value to the team and you were important" (876-878). Having an informal approach, focusing on learning from mistakes, and emphasizing the team, were all aspects of mentoring that Cliff took away from his mentor.

Cliff shared a significant and very personal lesson he learned from a mentoring situation. It involved a mentoring session he had with a senior officer in which he was told to resign from the active Army. He was a company commander at the time and had worked very hard in making improvements in the company and in providing a better environment for his soldiers. He made a mistake and got involved in a personal relationship with an enlisted soldier under his command. This relationship was considered to be fraternization between officers and enlisted soldiers and was in direct violation of military standards. Rumors emerged about their relationship, and Cliff was asked about it. He refused to discuss it with anybody but the Brigade Commander.

In that incident, Cliff was very up-front and told him exactly what was going on. He acknowledged that it was wrong and that, as a company commander, he had worked very hard not to show favoritism and to make sure the unit didn't suffer from his relationship. Admitting his lapse in judgment was very difficult for Cliff. His mentor reacted by being very calm and was very appreciative that Cliff had wanted to tell him directly. He and his mentor had a very, very good conversation about why this relationship was not the right thing to do and about the effects that that can have upon a unit, despite your best intentions. Cliff described the lessons that came out of this incident as probably the most important lessons that he has ever learned from the Army. He explained,

> even if you have an indiscretion and you are a quality person who has found yourself coming up short because of your indiscretion, that it's o.k.. It's o.k. to make those mistakes…as long as number one, you learn from that mistake and you haven't hurt anybody (935-938)

Learning from your indiscretions, or mistakes, is critical in gaining the lessons that are embedded within experiences. Cliff said that in this kind of a situation, if 75% of what they have to say about you is telling everybody how good you are and that the other 25% is the fact that you made a mistake and now you have to be dealt with, "then it's o.k. to start over again and you really should not have to walk around with a sense of shame or feeling that you have any reason to hide your mistakes" (941-942). If you are upfront about your mistakes and surrounded by a group of professionals, Cliff believed, "that doesn't have to be the last mistake that you made. You can come back" (954-955). Being open about mistakes and using them as a source of learning are part of Cliff's mentoring approach.

This portrait of Cliff described his beliefs and behaviors as he served as a mentor within the National Guard context. His core theme, focused on the adherence of military standards of behavior, was described. One particular mentoring incident helped illuminate his core theme and involved a junior officer who was struggling with adhering to the military standards regarding body weight. The professional way in which he handled this situation, openly and fairly, is representative of Cliff's core theme.

Maryanne

Maryanne is a senior-leader within the Georgia Army National Guard. She has held a variety of leadership positions throughout the major commands. Her core theme was focused on adding value to the organization. This involved focusing on people and their efforts that will, in turn, provide a benefit to the greater organization. This added value might involve a broader perspective, a particular skill or talent, or general leadership qualities. She described her mentoring beliefs as staying focused, adding value to the organization, priority to the organization (guard and family), and the potential of people. Maryanne described her behaviors, or strategies, related to mentoring as focusing on your circle, providing the female perspective, informing others when appropriate, looking for and recognizing talent, being reciprocal in the mentoring process, sitting down and talking, and clearing the mine fields.

Core Theme

Maryanne's core theme, arising from both her beliefs and behaviors, is centered on adding value to the organization. She described several situations that involved mentoring junior officers in making difficult personal and professional decisions. In each case, her focus was on the future contributions that these decisions would make to the organization. Maryanne described one situation involving a junior officer who considered leaving the guard in pursuit of his

civilian education. She explained, "I'll support whatever you pick. If you do leave, I hate to see you go, I really need your help here but, again, willing to make that sacrifice so that you can advance yourself, come back, and add value" (240-243). Maryanne focused her mentoring approach toward the professional advancement of the mentee as well as the added value he could return to the organization.

In addition to considering the organization in the military context of the National Guard, Maryanne viewed the organization as encompassing the personal dimension of the family unit. She strongly believes in focusing efforts toward the family unit and views that organization as equally important as the military organization. In response to maintaining her dual focus on both arenas, she makes it known, "I know what my priorities are. If you want me to continue adding value in this organization, you need to let me operate the way I operate, which is I've got to know that my family's taken care of" (333-336). Maryanne's efforts are directed toward adding value to both organizations: National Guard and family. She described six mentoring incidents that involved mentoring junior officers toward adding value to their personal or professional organization.

Mentoring Incident

One mentoring incident described by Maryanne best illustrates her core theme. This incident involved a junior officer who she felt was operating outside her boundaries. Maryanne viewed her mentee as a very bright and dedicated worker who had a lot of potential within the organization. This officer had gotten involved in a situation at work that really wasn't any of her concern and, as a result of her involvement, had begun to be viewed negatively by organizational members. Because the organization is a small, tight family she didn't want her mentee to get a

reputation as a vengeful person. Maryanne called her mentee into her office and talked with her about her actions and how she was being perceived by others.

In the mentoring incident, Maryanne talked with her about the concept of *the circle of influence* and that she needed to focus her efforts only on those things and people that were within her circle. The situation with which she had gotten involved was outside of her circle. The mentee was a little taken back by Maryanne's frankness. In conveying her intentions, Maryanne explained,

> I think so much of you to take time out to broach this topic with you which is not easy for me either. It's hard for me to sit here and tell you that you need to change the way you do business or you're not going to make it. But you've got so much talent and you could add such value. I want to keep you in this organization so please listen to me and what I'm telling you. Think about it at least. (76-81)

Providing feedback to this mentee was viewed in light of how much this officer could add to the organization. She explained to the mentee that she needed only to focus on those things within her circle and, because this situation involved a person who was not within that circle, that the situation really wasn't any of her business.

Reflecting on her learning, Maryanne said that she was surprised that people actually wanted to try to save the world. In essence, her mentee's efforts were directed toward trying to save the world, one person at a time. Maryanne admitted that she used to be like that but that she's matured over the years and realized that a person just can't save the world. Instead, she explained, "you save your circle. You decide where you're going to focus your energies and what really needs your energies" (60-62). Re-directing her mentee's focus toward her circle of influence and maintaining focus on her priorities best served the organization.

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Mentor as Mentee

Maryanne shared two incidents in which she received mentoring. One mentoring incident occurred early in her career and involved a situation in which she was receiving her annual officer evaluation report. Upon receiving her evaluation, Maryanne asked her mentor if there was anything she could have done better within that evaluation period. After a slight pause, he told Maryanne that she was working too hard; that she didn't have to work as hard as she did to get the same results. Maryanne was trying to set the world on fire by working long hours and tirelessly trying to do everything. After considerable introspection, she realized that her mentor was telling her to that she needed to get her priorities straight. As a result of trying to be perfect in all aspects of her career, she had begun to neglect her family. It was a slap in the face for Maryanne but was something that she needed to hear. That lesson has served her well over the years and has contributed to her development as a mentor.

The second mentor that Maryanne talked about is someone who is still active in the organization. He has served as her mentor nearly the entire time that she has been in the organization because she has worked for him in one capacity or another. Although she didn't describe a specific mentoring incident, she did describe how his continued support for her over the years has affected them both. Being willing to step forward and support a female's advancement, within this traditionally male-dominated organization, required risk and sacrifice on her mentor's part. She described the risk as one of perception. The perception was that he was bestowing special treatment or favors on her as a result of an accompanying personal relationship. That perception meant that he was under particular scrutiny from the organization. This did not bother him, as his focus was on what was good for the organization and that good leaders, including Maryanne, should be allowed to move up the chain, "unimpeded by small

minds and dinosaurs" (750-751). In order to facilitate movement up the chain for individuals, he was willing to clear the mine field that was present for a select few in the organization who happen to be different. She characterized his efforts as brave and requiring personal and moral fortitude. In supporting her advancement, he said,

> I know what's right and I am NOT going to look the other way and allow this person's career to be torpedoed for no reason. When as the leader I know what's right and what's right is allowing her to do her job unimpeded. And so if she's got the right stuff she's going to move up and if she doesn't – she stays where she is or she'll get demoted. (755-759)

Her mentor took the risk to clear the mine field that was set in front of Maryanne. Since attaining the senior-officer level, their mentoring relationship has now evolved into another form.

Maryanne described their current mentoring relationship as more of a sounding board. She knows that he's always there for her, and occasionally she'll go to him with questions about actions she is taking, soliciting his feedback on whether something will work, or whether he thinks she is on the right path. For his part, he actively encourages her to attend functions that will facilitate greater exposure to high-level people and expand her perspective. She explained, "he tries to make sure that I'm given the exposure when I need it to whatever" (816-817). Assisting Maryanne in gaining greater exposure to people and functions, which will help her career, is a part of his mentoring role.

Other than her current mentor, she hasn't had any other mentors in the organization over the entire course of her military career. For several reasons, Maryanne believed, men don't often want to get close to women. One reason involved the element of perception, that is, how others will perceive the mentoring relationship from the outside. Another reason that men may not

reach out and mentor women is that they don't understand them and they're uncomfortable talking to women. Men may think that they're going to offend women in some way. Maryanne viewed these reasons as contributing to the fear of mentoring women.

This portrait of Maryanne described her beliefs and behaviors as she served as a mentor within the National Guard context. One particular mentoring incident helped illustrate her core theme and involved a junior officer, whom Maryanne viewed as someone who could add value to the organization but, who was operating outside of her boundaries and detracting from her contributions to the organization.

Dan

Dan is a General Officer, now retired, who spent the majority of his National Guard career in one of the major commands in the Georgia Army National Guard. His core theme is focused on doing the right thing. Doing the right thing means making the right decisions, taking the correct actions, and being responsible for the outcomes of all of his actions. He described his mentoring beliefs as being right, personal friendships, and improving self through experience. He described his mentoring behaviors as being the example, doing the hard right thing, giving advice, bad mentoring, discussing privately, and being a listener.

Core Theme

Dan's core theme, arising from both his beliefs and behaviors, is centered on doing the right thing and doing it right. Although both of these concepts are concerned with the "right", the difference lies within their focus. Doing the right thing is focused on the what: what action is taken or what decision is made, while doing it right is focused on the how: how action is taken or how the decision is made. Dan provided several examples of times that mentors may have given appropriate advice but they gave it in a negative way, such as mentoring in front of others.

Alternatively, Dan described incidents that involved doing it right, perhaps mentoring behind closed doors or one-on-one, but saying something that wasn't helpful, such as only focusing on the good mentoring and leaving out the constructive criticism. Dan's theme included both the 'what' and the 'how' involved in the construct of rightness. In describing the leader's role in providing visual leadership to people, he focused on the consistency needed in one's convictions. He stressed the importance of doing the right thing regardless of whether anyone is looking and whether it would be a lot easier to do the easy thing. Dan described three mentoring incidents that involved making difficult decisions regarding junior officers, some of whom were high-ranking officers but who were junior to him. Each mentoring incident involved making the right decision as well as doing it in the right manner.

Mentoring Incident

One mentoring incident described by Dan best illustrates his core theme. This incident involved a mentoring session in which he had to tell a junior officer that he chose not to promote him. Dan had to choose to promote one of two equally qualified officers. His mentee was well-qualified for promotion but was much younger than the other officer. Since they were equally qualified, it was the right thing to do to promote the other officer since it was likely to be his last chance for promotion, and the promotion would allow him to continue his career in the guard.

Dan said that it was relatively tough telling his mentee that he didn't choose him for promotion. He called his mentee into his office and presented a somber demeanor. Because they knew each other real well, his mentee could tell what decision had been made. Dan told the officer that it wasn't bad news, but rather just a delay in good news. Dan walked him through the entire situation and told him all the reasons behind his decision. His mentee responded, "well, you know you have never told me wrong. You've never lied to me. You've never tried to

influence me in any kind of wrong way. I'll accept that" (248-250). Even though his mentee did not like the news, he accepted it because it was based on doing the right thing in that particular situation and because he trusted his mentor to do the right thing for him further down the road. Empathizing with his mentee's disappointment, Dan said, "if I could leave, I'd give you my job. I just wish I could promote both of you but this is just kind of the way it is." (251-252) After getting the news, his mentee just got up, walked over, and shook Dan's hand. He said that they were great friends before then and have been ever since.

In reflecting on what he learned from that mentoring incident, Dan said that he was thankful for several things. He was thankful that his mentee was an adult, that he didn't hate Dan for the decision, and that most importantly his mentee continued to give a hundred and ten percent effort ever since that time. On a more serious note, Dan said that he learned how lonely it is at the top. In describing how difficult it is to make these sorts of decisions, Dan said, "my God, it's just rough. It's rough to bring in great talent and marvelous people and disappoint them" (297-298). Although it was the right decision for Dan, bringing his mentee onto his team and then disappointing him with a delay in promotion was not an easy thing to do.

Mentor as Mentee

Dan reported that, over the years, he had received professional mentoring by some great officers, many of whom have gone on to become very significant and high-ranking officers in the military. In addition to those great people, Dan shared a few specific examples in which he received mentoring. Although he didn't characterize any of the officers involved in these mentoring incidents as true mentors, they were his senior officers at the time and he did learn from his experiences. Two mentoring incidents stood out for Dan in which neither officer was someone he wanted to emulate. He explained, "I learned more from bad commanders than I have

from good commanders. I learned what not to do" (314-315). Learning by watching how *not* to do things was apparent in both incidents.

The first incident occurred early in his career, while he was a second lieutenant serving in Vietnam. While he spent his time in the field, he had an executive officer who was well-kept, with nice clothes, living in much better conditions. Dan had been in the jungle for about four months and had not seen this executive officer at all. Dan described their duty uniforms as being worn white from wear and tear and most of the pants as having either holes or missing knees. He and his platoon looked rough. When Dan did return from the field, the first thing his executive officer did was to assemble Dan and his platoon together. In front of the troops, this senior officer chastised Dan for not maintaining some sort of uniform standard within his platoon. Dan learned a lot from that experience. He explained, "if you're going to get on anybody's butt, you get them and their butt and take them somewhere and speak to them. Don't do it in front of the troops. Don't do it" (461-464). Regardless of whether or not mentoring is on the right things, it has to be done in the right way.

The second incident involved a mentoring session that he had with the Brigade Commander and The Assistant Adjutant General (ATAG); both of whom held the rank of General Officer. Dan was a battalion commander and was attending War College at the time. While there, Dan conducted research on the state's demographics in relationship to the location of potential National Guard members. The incident occurred when he came back from his school and proceeded to prove that his unit's geographical location was not conducive to maintaining such high personnel strength numbers. Dan used the meeting with the two senior officers as an opportunity to explain some of the problems associated with getting people to join his unit. As he progressed with his discussion, the ATAG grew red in the face and then turned to Dan and began

talking down to him and trying to belittle him. The ATAG continued for about twenty minutes "railing" on him about how Dan wasn't a very good commander and that he wasn't supporting him. This senior officer finally just walked out of the office and slammed the door behind him.

Clarifying his intent, Dan said that he wasn't trying to be a smart-aleck in that meeting, but rather he was trying to explain his problems. It was clear that this General Officer was not in the listening mode. Reflecting on his learning, Dan shared,

 if somebody goes to the trouble to tell you something then you probably ought to listen first. You ought not to have your mind made up. You ought not to be in the transmitting mode when you ought to be receiving. (540-544)

Remaining open to what others have to say was a lesson he learned from this experience. Something else he learned was, "don't try to belittle people around anybody else. If you want to chew me out, get me in a room by myself and have at it, go ahead, but don't do it in front of somebody else" (544-547). Doing mentoring right means taking the mentee aside.

This portrait of Dan described his beliefs and behaviors as he served as a mentor within the National Guard context. One particular mentoring incident helped illustrate his core theme and involved a junior officer whom Dan had not chosen to promote. He met with this officer behind closed doors and explained his reasons. Dan reinforced the point that the decision was the right one to make, however disappointing to the mentee. Being honest and upfront, talking in private, and having a one-on-one conversation are indicative of his mentoring approach.

Jason

Jason is a mid-level officer who has held a variety of military positions within the Georgia Army National Guard. He has held civilian professional positions as well. Jason's focal

point is centered on the long-term goals, or vision, for both the individual and the organization. His mentoring approach focused on the big picture, looking toward the long-range plans for the mentee as well as for the National Guard. He described his mentoring beliefs as providing opportunities, focused on goals, upward mobility, what's good for the organization, mentoring limitations, and loyalty to both the individual and the organization. Jason described his behaviors, or strategies, related to mentoring as counseling mentees, providing motivation, communicating, spending lots of little bits of time, and knowing someone, caring about them, and developing trust.

Core Theme

Jason's core theme, arising from both his beliefs and behaviors, is centered on long-term goals. These goals, or vision, contain a dual focus on both the individual and the organization. Each of his incidents involved mentoring individuals for the long-term by providing guidance toward their long-term career goals. Jason's mentoring strategies were bounded by the organization; he was quick to keep the National Guard context in mind when he mentored and often gave specific mentoring advice on how to navigate the waters within this military organization.

A related dimension of his mentoring incidents involved the reciprocal obligation of the organization and the individual to care for each other. Two incidents in particular focused on the organizational vision for the individual and how the individual needed to be supported in this effort. Jason presented six mentoring incidents that involved providing direction and guidance on a personal and professional basis. His mentoring style seemed to follow along the lines of an action plan consisting of assessing the individual, developing realistic long-term goals, and creating a specific pathway toward goal attainment.

Mentoring Incident

The incident that best describes Jason's core theme occurred when he worked in the training arena and had a high potential junior officer working for him who needed to attend his military schooling. Attending his schools would necessitate being away from the organization for approximately two years. Jason talked with the leadership about their long-term goal for his mentee and learned that they wanted him to move up within the organization. Although the leadership espoused their organizational support for the career progression of this officer, their actions involved continually asking this person to perform additional assignments and keeping him involved in the operation of the organization. The result was that the organization benefited from his continual involvement and that the mentee enjoyed the excitement. However, in the long-term, it meant that this junior officer was not able to attend his military schools and, thus, not be eligible for further promotion and higher levels of responsibility.

Working in conjunction with both the organization and the individual officer, Jason made an assessment of the situation and provided mentoring to the officer. Jason's mentoring included a specific action plan necessary to reach the mentee's long-range goals. His advice meant that he would lose this officer from his department and that someone would need to pick up his assigned workload. Instead of focusing on the short-term consequences, Jason viewed this situation in the larger context of the organization's long-term focus. He explained, "we're looking for the long-term solution and not a band-aid fix, so there's some pain involved sometimes in doing the right thing" (328-330). Jason added, "he's going to wind up being the right guy in the right place at the right time" (330-331). Rather than focus on the immediate situation, Jason maintained his focus on the long-term benefit for the organization.

Jason sat down with the junior officer and explained the situation to him. Counseling him regarding the reciprocal obligation involved, he told him that he needed to allow the organization to do something for him. The organization expected his mentee to be loyal and they, in turn, needed to be loyal to the mentee by not distracting him while he completed his military education. In describing his discussion with the junior officer, Jason related that the junior officer was hesitant to follow this path because he might be by-passed for assignments if he wasn't present at the unit during training events. Jason described how he reassured him over the course of the two years, staying in touch on a regular basis via email and telephone, and encouraging him not to stop. In addition to communicating with him and providing motivation, Jason described strategies for working with this person. He explained, "I've also given him other opportunities…that allowed him to feel like he was still an integral part of the organization but yet it didn't distract him from his military education requirements" (313-317).

Jason described his learning from this mentoring incident as it related to the greater context of the organization. He described the on-going challenge to attract and retain high quality officers in the National Guard. Jason explained, "our failure, collectively as an organization, to take care of soldiers and to mentor them is leading to an exodus of those company grade and field grade officers" (411-413). Providing counsel to junior officers is critical for both the individual officer and for the long-term health of the organization.

Mentor as Mentee

Jason shared some incidents, both positive and negative, of when his own mentors helped him develop and how those experiences have influenced him as a mentor. He spoke of one civilian employer who stressed the importance of paying attention to the critical aspects of a job and being open to feedback. His mentor talked with him about the "one" thing that he needed to

do in order to succeed at his job. Although he eventually told Jason what that one thing was, the learning for him was that regardless of what it is – it is the "one" thing to which you need to pay attention. He explained,

> there are certain things that have to be done to go to the next level and it could be something insignificant or it could be something very significant. But you've got to pay attention sometimes to somebody when they tell you what that one thing is. Because you don't see it a lot of times because you are just too close to it. (574-579)

Being open to feedback from others was a lesson he learned from his mentor.

Sharing a negative mentoring incident, Jason described a situation in which he was chosen, over two more senior lieutenants, to be in charge of a company. Because the company commander did not trust the two lieutenants, his decision to place Jason in charge, put them all in a bad situation. From that situation, he learned,

> even if you don't like or trust the other two people, you've got to give them the opportunity to show that they're either going to do it right or they're not going to do it right. And if they don't do it right then you need to take appropriate action and let them experience the consequences of their actions. (618-622)

Allowing junior officers the opportunities to gain valuable experiences and to learn from their mistakes can be seen in Jason's beliefs and behaviors.

This portrait of Jason described his beliefs and behaviors as he served as a mentor within the National Guard context. One particular mentoring incident helped illuminate his core theme and involved a junior officer who needed to attend his military schools. Jason's focus on long-term goals was seen in this incident as he worked with both the organization and the individual in developing a realistic plan that would ultimately serve both constituencies.

Darin

Darin is an upper-level officer who has spent the majority of his military career in one of the major commands in the Georgia Army National Guard. His core theme was focused on modeling. This involved presenting himself as the model for others, setting the example for others, and meeting or exceeding military standards. He described his mentoring beliefs as being the example, meeting and/or exceeding standards, the power of perception, and being each other's role model. He described his mentoring behaviors as sharing learning's, providing examples or personal instances, sitting down and talking, going to the troops, listening to people, focusing on priorities, giving advice, and driving on!

Core Theme

Darin's core theme, arising from both his beliefs and behaviors, was centered on modeling. Although he described this as personally being the model, he conceptualized modeling in the larger context in that models help us grow and develop as individuals. In working with his mentees, he tells them to pick out a person in their line of work whom they would most likely want to be like and then to use that person as a model. Once they've chosen someone, Darin tells them that they really have to emulate that person. He explains, "don't be ashamed of that. The wheel doesn't have to be reinvented on everybody. If you are going to be Patton-like, be Patton-like. And that's what you project and that's you now" (431-433). Projecting oneself as the person one wants to be correlates with Darin's belief regarding the power of perception. When mentees select and emulate a role model they begin to be perceived by others as that person, and that very perception makes them become more and more like their model. In that manner, emulating their model helps mold mentees into becoming who they want to be.

Being a personal role model for his mentees was a theme that Darin talked about throughout his interview. He sees that he should hold himself up in front of mentees as someone whom they could emulate. Modeling requires that he meet military standards, project himself as a caring and competent person, and be willing to share his personal and professional learnings. Realizing the influential role that he has as a model, Darin understands that he is being watched by his junior officers at all times. He explained, "everytime I'm in front of somebody or with somebody, I've got to watch what I say and watch what I do because you never know what people take from you" (461-463). Darin sees himself as a model for others and that vision, in turn, shapes his behaviors. Further illustrating the influence that modeling holds within the context of mentoring, Darin talked about the influence that negative models can have on individuals. Darin looked back on people he's known when he stated, "I can think of a ton I wouldn't want to be like and that molds you too" (505-506). Learning from modeling, whether from good or bad models, helps illustrate this theme. Darin described four mentoring incidents involving junior officers and senior NCOs that portrayed his mentoring beliefs and behaviors. In each incident Darin tried to really understand his mentee and his issues and relate his knowledge and experience so that he might help the mentee make a more informed decision about their issue.

Mentoring Incident

One mentoring incident described by Darin best illustrates his core theme. This incident involved a junior officer who was at a crossroads with his military career. He was trying to decide whether to continue his National Guard career or whether to leave the guard and place all his efforts into his civilian career. Although his decision could have meant that this junior officer would leave Darin's unit, he felt comfortable in approaching his mentor to receive objective and

personalized advice. Sitting and talking with him about his life goals and what it would take to reach his goals, Darin demonstrated his commitment to him as an individual and his concern for his issues. He acknowledged to his mentee that, many times, our goals may not be related to the military and that he should really think it through and make the right decision for himself.

He described his mentee as looking for answers. In responding to his questions, Darin talked with him about the two separate lives of the National Guard and the civilian career and how it is necessary to make time for each are. Ignoring one while focusing on the other doesn't work very well because they both require effort and energy. In helping his mentee view this situation in an objective light, Darin tried to give his mentee personal examples and provide a model for making good decisions. He told him that he was speaking from his own perspective and that he should take it for what it's worth. He explains,

> I always try to give instances, without telling war stories, about things that made me successful in certain aspects. Also what I failed at and I'm not afraid to say that I failed at some stuff. I make that known to people I talk to, if they want to listen. (95-98)

Darin's mentoring strategy included giving personal examples of how he has seen people balance these two separate lives as well as talking honestly with his mentee about his priorities. Furthermore, he focused on the mentee's priorities and how his priorities might not involve the military right now.

Reflecting on what he learned from this mentoring incident, Darin said that a good mentor really has to listen to people because it is always difficult to understand what anybody's going through. How they paint the picture of an issue actually can be very different from where they're really standing on the issue. In working with his mentees, Darin's goal is to, "really bring

out the true story. Hey, be honest. That's always been a good technique for me" (116-117).

Being honest with oneself and with others sets the example for others to emulate.

Mentor as Mentee

Darin said that he really hasn't had a mentor in his life. He believed that, since he's an introvert and stays to himself, senior officers don't perceive that he needs any advice or mentoring. He did however mention two people who have been personally influential in his life. One person is someone in the National Guard who, rather than playing an active mentoring role, plays a passive role in mentoring Darin. In describing this person's role, he said, "it's not so much that he mentors me, it's more of the example that he sets that I like" (404-405). Darin described one incident that stands out in his mind. It occurred at the National Training Center and involved his mentor presenting a military briefing. In a large auditorium full of soldiers and officers alike, his mentor told the battalion how the training had gone, how well they had done, and what they could do better. At the end of that briefing, he put up a poem depicting his personal inspiration on the overhead screen. It meant a lot to Darin that his mentor would hold up a poem portraying his beliefs and what drove him to succeed. Darin explained its significance,

> sometimes it just comes down to what you really believe in that makes you. It's not so
> much maybe your training or how you were brought up but it's what drives you and you
> got to hold on to that no matter what" (421-424).

Getting to see that glimpse into what drove his mentor, allowed Darin to use that very same thing to drive himself. Since then, almost ten years ago, Darin has kept that poem in his daytimer.

The second person Darin identified as a major influence was his Dad. He described his Dad as the consummate mentor. His mentoring strategy involved constantly talking to his son. He explained, "you'd be trying to go to sleep and in the middle of the night he would be talking

to you. Saying what you should do and the way you should carry yourself and the way you should look" (444-446). His dad would just talk to him. Growing up, Darin may have gotten tired of hearing his Dad's advice repeatedly, but the mentoring actually came back to him when he needed it. A sign of a good mentor, Darin said, is that, although the message that the person is trying to get across might not be getting across at that particular moment, the message comes back to the mentee years later. He explained, "those messages have stuck with you. You pull them out right when you need them. And the person who mentored you might not be able to even see that, but they accomplished the mission" (454-456). For Darin, if the message comes back in times of need, even if it's ten years later, that is a sign of a good mentor.

This portrait of Darin described his mentoring beliefs and mentoring strategies as he served as a mentor within the National Guard context. One particular mentoring incident helped illustrate his core theme and involved a junior officer who was trying to decide whether to concentrate all his efforts in pursuing his civilian goals or to keep juggling both his military and his civilian obligations. Darin concentrated on really listening to his mentee, providing him insight into the situation and serving as a professional and caring role model.

Jim

Jim is an upper-level officer who has held a variety of positions throughout the Georgia Army National Guard. He has as his focal point the more human side of mentoring, focused on the individual mentees and winning their hearts and souls. Winning their hearts and souls requires caring enough to make time for mentees and to assist them with their issues. Jim described his mentoring beliefs as being available, caring about others, and making people feel comfortable. Jim described his mentoring behaviors, or strategies, as sitting them down and telling them, working 'it, taking people aside, and stopping what you are doing.

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Core Theme

Jim's core theme, arising from both his beliefs and behaviors, was centered on winning mentees' hearts and souls. This theme involved being available and caring enough about people that he was willing to sit them down and tell them what's going on. In describing what he thinks it takes to be a mentor, Jim said that he didn't think a mentor needed to be senior or even considered a leader. He pointed to caring as the one key to mentoring. Demonstrations of caring and availability are core elements of Jim's mentoring approach.

Regarding his general mentoring style, Jim said that he always asks his mentees whether he answered their questions and if they got the information they needed. His intent is to provide them with answers to their question and to make them more comfortable. In order to make his mentees feel more comfortable, he believed, "you've got to win their hearts and souls, if you will, and when they're comfortable then they have a tendency to make their people comfortable" (69-71). Jim recognized that making people feel comfortable with their situation enables them, in turn, to help their subordinates. Jim presented four mentoring incidents that involved working closely with people in either solving their problems, providing feedback, or delivering necessary information. His mentoring approach seemed to follow along the lines of an action plan consisting of stopping what he's doing, sitting down and talking, and working through the issue. Foundational to Jim's action plan was a genuine concern for the mentee.

Mentoring Incident

One mentoring incident described by Jim best illustrates his core theme. This incident involved a senior enlisted person who had been offered a key leadership position. Jim approached this person and talked with him about his capacity for the position. Jim had worked with this person for a number of years, developed a good working relationship, and felt like he

could make an informed judgment of his capability for increased responsibility. In setting the stage for this incident, Jim described what he saw as a necessary element in mentoring. He said, "you also have to have the strength to be able to look people in the eye and tell them that they're just not capable of doing certain things" (243-245). Pulling people aside and being straight about personal issues was characteristic of Jim's mentoring style. Jim's concern for this person was that he was going to get into a situation that would be over his head and, consequently, would leave the National Guard on a sour note rather than retire on a positive note in recognition of his vast accomplishments.

Jim met with this person and talked with him about accepting the leadership position. Very plainly, Jim told him that he didn't think he could do the job and that he really ought to think about getting out of the National Guard. Jim emphasized that he had already had a successful career and that he ought to retire with pride for the good work he had already accomplished. His mentoring was met with disappointment, and the person moved on to accept the position. Eventually, it turned out that the person was not suitable for the position; he was overwhelmed with the level of responsibility it entailed and ultimately resigned from the National Guard.

Prior to turning in his resignation, he returned to Jim and acknowledged that he had been right with his advice. In describing their second incident, Jim told him that his advice didn't have anything to do with wanting him to get out. He explained, "I wasn't trying to hurt your feelings, wasn't trying to do anything, just wanting to try to, like I said, go out on a positive note" (355-357). Overall, this mentoring incident was based on Jim's caring approach and his belief that we owe it to others to pull them aside and tell them what they need to hear. In reflecting on his learning, Jim focused on the larger picture to which this mentoring incident referred, "I like to

tell people to just look in the mirror. That people are where they're at because we have failed to lead them and failed to mentor them as they came along" (281-283). Sharing his insight about our failure to mentor people along the way, provided additional insight into his beliefs regarding caring about people, making time to be available, and pulling people aside.

Mentor as Mentee

Jim related that, as he came up through the organization, there wasn't much mentoring, at least not in the way mentoring is described today. During those times, no one really sat down and talked with officer's about careers. Jim shared a few incidents, both positive and negative, of times when others had advised him over the years. Illustrating the lack of mentoring Jim had received, he shared one example. "He didn't even sit me down. He just said 'I don't want to hear anything, I want you to go find a new home'" (428-429). That was the sort of mentoring that this senior officer really did. Learning from this incident was a case of learning how not to mentor.

Rather than focus on specific mentoring incidents, he pointed to the value of the "visual mentoring" he has received over the years. Jim explained,

> the most areas I've picked up on have been visual. I remember we had a commander and it was just the way he was. Just the way he would sit at the tailgate at a company get-together and drink a shot of whiskey with you and sit over there and talk and was very personable and was very caring. (449-454)

Rather than formal, sit-down mentoring sessions, Jim pointed to the valuable insight he has garnered from mentors who offer themselves as a personal example.

This portrait of Jim described his beliefs and behaviors as he served as a mentor within the National Guard context. One particular mentoring incident helped illuminate his core theme and

involved a senior Non Commissioned Officer who had been offered a key leadership position in the organization. Jim pulled this senior NCO aside, looked him in the eye, and told him what he thought about his ability to fulfill that position. This incident was demonstrative of Jim's belief that mentors should care, and of his mentoring strategies of sitting people down and telling them what they need to hear.

Mitchell

Mitchell is a mid-level officer who has worked within several commands in the Georgia Army National Guard. Mitchell's focus is on honor. He described honor as the core of his being and, as evidenced through his mentoring incidents, as the core of how he treats others. He described his mentoring beliefs as honor of the individual, developing/building/growing others, potential of everyone, understanding others, and having respect and regard for others. He described his mentoring behaviors, or strategies, as working together, observing and understanding others, sitting and talking, and discussing privately and quietly.

Core Theme

Mitchell's core theme, arising from both his beliefs and behaviors, was centered on the honor that he has for the individual mentee. His focus on the person, and the regard and respect he holds for them, was seen throughout the interview. Mitchell stressed the importance of valuing the contributions of all people and making sure they understand that what they do is of value. He viewed this as honoring the people that are doing the work, rather than focusing solely on the leadership responsible for ensuring the work gets done.

Asked to describe honor, and after a considerable pause, Mitchell compared it to describing the taste of salt. He further explained,

it is the beginning, it is the end, it is all. You must have it. It can't be taken from you,

although some may try, it is an internal thing; some are able to see it. But it can be

rendered, it can be given, but it can't be taken. (323-326)

The concept of honor, for Mitchell, is as basic as the salt, ubiquitous and foundational.

Rendering honor to others, by extolling their virtues and rendering service to them, are key

concepts in his core. Mitchell described four mentoring incidents involving his mentoring efforts

with junior officers. The incidents involved interactions with junior officers in which he utilized

honorable strategies.

Mentoring Incident

One mentoring incident described by him best illustrates his core theme. This incident

involved a junior officer who was reassigned to him after being removed from another company.

Tactically, the mentee knew his trade; he was very sharp in his military profession. The problem

was that he did not hold his people with any regard. As a result, he had disaffected the people in

his previous company. Mitchell clarified what had happened, "He did not give them honor and in

so doing, he lost their respect. They didn't return honor either" (369-371). The reciprocal nature

of honor, inherent in both giving and receiving, is the key to understanding this theme.

Mitchell described the mentoring session that he had with this junior officer upon being

assigned to his company. He met with the junior officer and his platoon sergeant and gave him

specific guidance, which was that he was to observe the platoon sergeant very closely and learn

how to treat soldiers. Mitchell reinforced the message that this was the junior officer's last stop;

this position was his last chance in the National Guard. Mitchell described the opportunities that

he provided to this junior officer. He had given him the best platoon sergeant that he had ever

had, and he had asked a personal favor of his platoon to support this officer and to help him

develop. Additionally, Mitchell gave him numerous assignments from which he could develop and grow. In essence, Mitchell had taken him through all the steps. He clarified his efforts, "I let him try to grow. I gave him opportunities in life" (399-400). Providing opportunities were part of Mitchell's role as a mentor.

In the end, the mentee did not change the way he treated others and instead continued to hold people with no regard or respect. Mitchell described the situation, "he was a seed that was caste upon the rock and the sun beat down on it and it didn't survive the opportunity" (404-406). Mitchell had made numerous attempts to foster the growth of this seed, his mentee, but was not successful. Reflecting on his personal learning from that mentoring incident, he said that you can do everything you possibly can to help someone but, "it doesn't necessarily mean it's going to work, because people have their own minds and they are going to do what they want to do" (410-411). Doing what the junior officer wanted to do meant that he did not change the way he treated people but instead continued to treat them how he wanted - with no respect or honor.

Mentor as Mentee

Mitchell shared one incident where his mentor helped him develop personally and how that experience helped him develop as a mentor. He called this the best mentoring he has ever received. The incident occurred early in his career and although he really couldn't remember what specific action precipitated the event, he reasoned that he was probably falling behind on a deadline of some sort. This full bird colonel, whom he described as being very particular, had "chewed his butt thoroughly" but when he left his office, Mitchell felt like he was two feet taller than when he had come in.

"He told me that he wasn't happy with what it was," Mitchell explained, " and then he really reinforced me personally, about what my potential was and what I meant to him in his

organization, what he expected from me and that he knew that I could give it to him" (436-440).

It was obvious to Mitchell that he was an important person to that mentor and that he expected a

lot from him. Reinforcing his value and treating Mitchell with respect and honor were aspects of

this mentoring session that he carried with him long afterwards. Reflecting on its significance,

Mitchell shared, "I've been trying harder to capture that essence over my entire military career.

What he did was he chewed me out and he told me how good I was and what I was worth to him,

and what potential I had" (417-420). He added," I've tried ever since then to become that kind of

man." (420). Being the kind of man who deals with people and issues in an honorable way

describes Mitchell's mentoring strategy.

This portrait of Mitchell described his beliefs and behaviors as he served as a mentor

within the National Guard context. One particular mentoring incident helped illuminate his core

theme and involved a junior officer who had been assigned to Mitchell as his last chance to

prove himself as a leader. This officer did not treat his subordinates with any regard and was not

successful in leading them within the military environment. Mitchell's focus on treating others in

honorable ways was seen throughout this incident.

Summary

This chapter presented a comprehensive portrait of individual officers representing

exemplary mentors within the National Guard context. In order to better situate the officers

within that particular context, the chapter began with a focus on the contextual nature of the

National Guard. After providing this contextual backdrop, a portrait was presented for each

mentor. The portraits were presented according to the mentor's level of focus associated with

his/her performance-orientation and interpersonal-orientation. This comprehensive view allowed

the reader to become familiar with the workings of each mentor and to get to know them as

individual officers within this National Guard context. Chapter V presents the emergent themes

derived from thematic analysis and open coding procedures.

CHAPTER V

PRESENTATION OF THEMES

Introduction

This chapter presents the themes that emerged from the study. These themes are framed by two research questions focused on mentors in the National Guard. The first research question addressed the officers' beliefs about their role as mentors, while the second research question focused on the behaviors, or strategies, used by the officers. The officers in the study presented a variety of critical incidents in which they were engaged in the process of mentoring their junior officers. These narratives, combined with an analysis of the individual officer, served as a rich source of information to better understand mentoring within the National Guard. In-depth analyses of their mentoring strategies, as well as their underlying set of beliefs, are illustrated in this chapter. The emergent themes, based on the mentors' beliefs and behaviors, will be its focal point.

Three themes emerged that corresponded with various levels: (a) military professional identity, (b) the organization, and (c) people. Each level represents a more complex and collective system of mentor beliefs and behaviors. In addition to the three levels, a fourth theme emerged for both beliefs and behaviors. Figure 5 illustrates the themes that emerged and their bounded nature within the National Guard. As detailed within the previous chapter, the context is pervasive and affects both the beliefs of the mentors and the strategies that they use. Table 2 describes each theme, the sub-themes, and the corresponding categories, which will be described in the following sections.
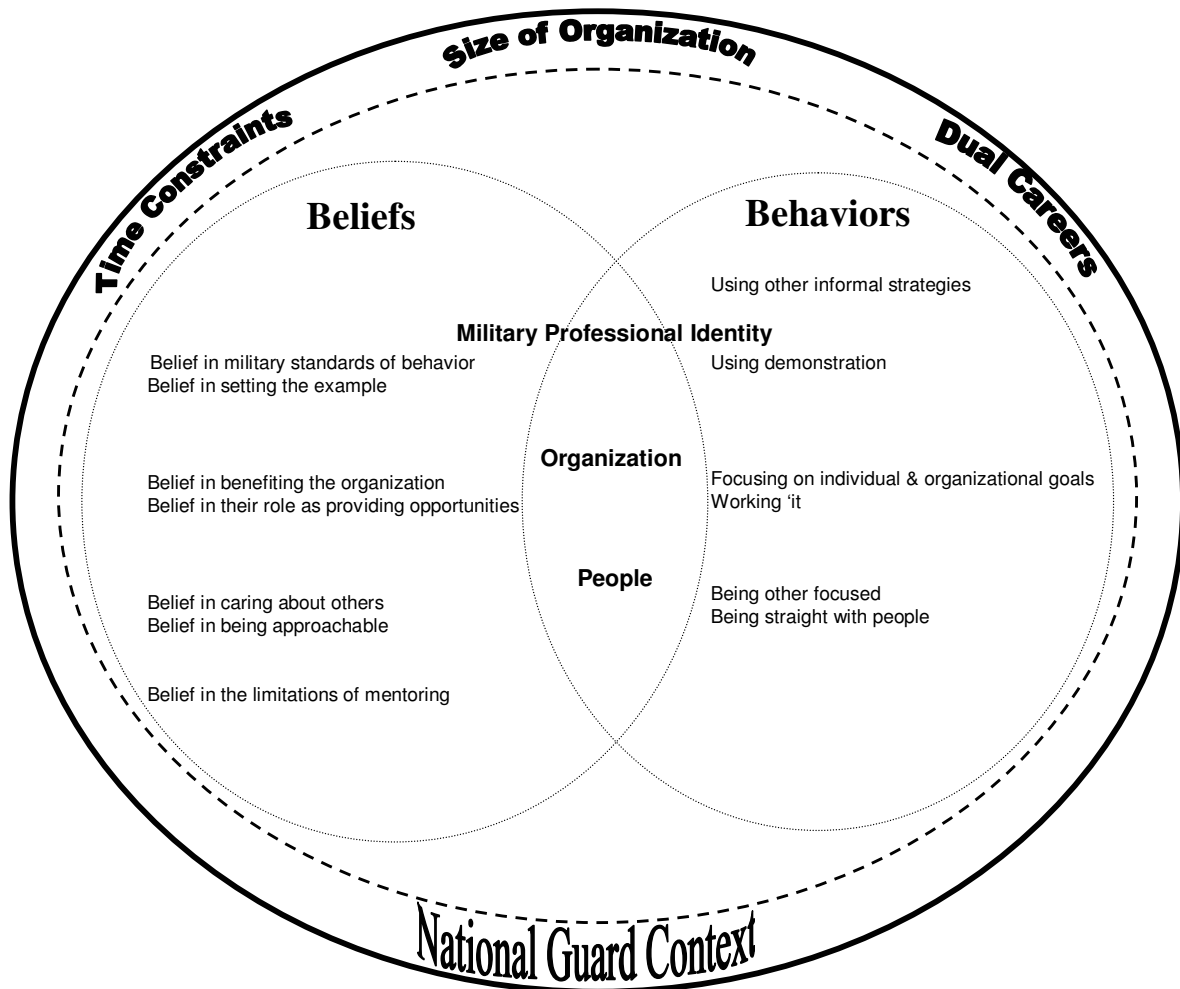
Figure 5. Conceptualization of mentors' beliefs and behaviors within the National Guard context

Beliefs

As shown in Table 3, a total of five hundred thirteen (513) data strips relating to beliefs were identified within the data set. The data strips were then clustered into 41 categories and eventually grouped into the four themes that addressed the research question focused on the beliefs' of mentors within the National Guard context. Three themes emerged that addressed the conceptual levels of beliefs. The first level addressed the broader, more comprehensive beliefs related to the military profession, the second level focused on the organization. The final level

Table 2. Mentors' beliefs and behaviors

Military professional identity	Organization	People	Additional theme
(a) Mentors believe in maintaining military standards of behavior. - Having moral / ethical basis - Expressing expectations - Treating people fairly	**(a)Mentors believe mentoring benefits the organization.** - Loyalty to individual and the organization - Long-term relevance - Adding value to the organization	**(a) Mentors believe in caring about people** - Honoring the individual - Understanding others	**(a) Mentors believe in the limitations of mentoring.** - You can't mentor everyone - Can't help some people - Organizational structure constrains mentoring
(b) Mentors believe in setting the example. - Being right - Meeting and/or exceeding standards - The power of unknowingly mentor	**(b) Mentors believe their role is to provide opportunities.** - Having opportunities to grow - Opportunities for upward mobility - Improving self through experiences	**(b) Mentors believe in being approachable.** - Being available - Make people feel comfortable	
(a) Mentors use demonstration as a strategy for mentoring. - Providing examples or personal instances - Showing their style - Doing the hard right thing	**(a) Mentors use strategies focused on individual and organizational goals.** - Setting goals - Focusing on your "circle" - Driving on!	**(a) Mentors use strategies that are "other" focused.** - Understanding others - Listening to people - Adjusting your mentoring style - Looking for and recognizing talent	**(a) Mentors use other informal methods and environments.** - On-the-spot mentoring - Providing commander's intent - Sharing personal learning - Using hustling mistakes
	(b) Mentors use strategies that involve "working 'it. - Doing for others - Stopping what you're doing - Clearing the mine field	**(b) Mentors use strategies that involve being straight with people.** - Talking to the troops - Providing bad mentoring - Taking them aside - Being fair through being open	

described the mentors' beliefs associated with the people within the organization. not correspond

with a specific level and addressed the limitations of mentoring

Table 3. Mentoring beliefs: themes and frequencies

Beliefs: themes, and frequencies

Mentoring themes	no.	%
Military Professional Identity	169	32.94
Organization	208	40.55
People	85	16.57
Limitations of Mentoring	51	9.94

Military Professional Identity

The military is unique in that it prescribes specific standards of behavior for its members.

These are written, formal, standards of behavior that outline specific expectations for all

members. Although there are certainly informal, or implied, standards of behavior as well, the

standards that the participants talked about primarily pertained to the formal or prescribed

standards of behavior. There are numerous sources of these standards. For example, specific

standards can be found in military regulations, whereas general leadership characteristics are

outlined in military leadership manuals.

One hundred sixty-nine (169) of five hundred thirteen (513) beliefs noted by mentors

involved beliefs relating to standards of behavior. Associated with this theme, mentors talked

about treating people fairly and consistently, having a moral or ethical basis for mentoring,

communicating expectations of behavior, maintaining / exceeding standards of behavior as a mentor, and setting the example. This theme was comprised of two sub-themes: (a) maintaining military standards of behavior and (b) setting the example. Mentors described the first sub-theme as including (a) the belief in having a moral or ethical basis for mentoring, (b) the belief in expressing expectations, and (c) the belief in treating people fair. Mentors believe that mentoring should be based on a moral or ethical foundation, meaning that mentoring should be consistent with military regulations and guidelines and be consistent with leadership traits and characteristics. The idea that mentoring should be based on a foundation of military behaviors, both personal and professional, was pervasive within this sub-theme.

The strategy of communicating these expectations was noted by mentors. It seemed very important that these expectations of behavior were conveyed to the mentee and that the resultant consequences for the mentee proceeded from their knowledge. For the most part, expectations were conveyed orally to mentees, although it was mentioned that written expectations were given at times. The final theme went beyond treating mentees fairly in regard to standards, and extended toward treating people equitably and with kindness. Mentors described this belief as being inclusive with junior officers and having genuine concern for others.

Mentors find themselves in leadership positions that require them to enforce standards of behavior. Believing in the standard itself was critical to enforcing the standards. For the most part, this belief provided the legitimization to maintain and enforce them. Cliff described an incident that involved a situation that warranted enforcement of military standards. Rather than allowing his subordinate to do things his own way, as opposed to the way proscribed by the military, Cliff enforced the standard with his mentee. He viewed his enforcement as,

somebody having the guts to finally stand up to the guy and make him realize that you

are not invincible and you are either going to meet the standards or there's going to be

people along the way that hold you to account for it. (164-167)

Relating this incident, Cliff stressed what he saw as the detrimental consequences of not

enforcing the standards and what the long-term impact of that lack of enforcement would have

yielded.

Darin described one incident that illustrated the long-term impact that mentor's examples

can have on subordinates. This incident occurred early in his career and took place at a Waffle

House restaurant when he was a junior officer. Several enlisted soldiers entered the restaurant in

the improper uniform. Darin didn't know them but he approached them and reminded them that

they were soldiers and that they needed to be in proper uniform when they came into an

establishment. About ten years later, one of those soldiers had been promoted to a senior non-

commissioned officer, and came back to Darin and related this story to him. Darin explained, "he

said, 'one time you got me in the Waffle House. You said so and so and so and so and made us

put our blouses on….That has always stuck with me'" (466-479). Darin couldn't even remember

that instance but it made him proud that that soldier had remembered. Belief in expressing

expectations and enforcing the standards were demonstrated in Darin's incident.

Treating people fairly was described by Maryanne as her belief in the reciprocity of

mentoring. Having been on the receiving end of mentoring over the years, she believes in doing

the same for others. She explained,

if I see people are struggling or if they're having personal set-backs that could also affect

their career, then I'll try to be there for them. Always encouraging, there's light at the end

of the tunnel – kind of thing to try to at least get them through the crisis and let them to

think logically instead of emotionally about whatever it is that they're going through to make a good, sound decision after they've gone through whatever they've gone through. (869-875)

Maryanne's belief in the reciprocal nature of mentoring is an example of maintaining a standard of behavior and a belief that allows her to do for others as others have done for her throughout her military career.

Maintaining standards of behavior for individuals and organizations seemed to extend toward mentors' belief in setting the example themselves. In order to maintain, and often enforce, standards of behavior within this military context, mentors have to set the example for their mentees. The second sub-theme involved the mentors' beliefs surrounding setting the example. That means that mentors present themselves to soldiers and junior officers as an example of how to look, how to lead, and how to relate to other people. They offer themselves as a model exemplifying military standards of behavior.

Mentors describe this sub-theme as (a) the belief in mentors being right, (b) the belief in mentors meeting / exceeding standards, and (c) the belief in the power of unknowingly mentoring. Being right was viewed as doing the right thing as well as doing it right. This was associated with making difficult decisions that involved the 'hard right' thing to do as well as developing a habit of making the right decisions over the course of a military career. Mentors talked often about their belief in meeting and/or exceeding the standards. Setting the example, for many participants, related directly to their belief in meeting the standards. Unknowingly mentoring was a phrase coined by one participant that describes mentoring that takes place within the context of informality and occurs outside the specified, or obvious, nature of mentoring. In describing his belief around being right as a mentor, Dan passionately explained,

you've got to do what's right, you've got to do what's right when nobody's looking. You've got to do what's right whether it's raining or not, you got to do what's right. And once you're convinced that it's the thing to do then you got to do it. You can't be backing down, you can't be changing your mind, that's awful, that's awful. You can't do that." (309-314)

Setting the example by doing what's right, especially when there is an easier alternative, described this theme.

Darin combined the belief in meeting the standards with actually verbalizing those standards to soldiers and officers within the National Guard context. He offers himself up as the example and makes an effort to use himself as a source of learning. Darin explained,

I take the time to stop training and have people ask me questions and actually tell people what to look for as far as their career is concerned and their life. A lot of times we don't take that time to do that and I always make sure that I do that. (19-22)

Again, the belief that mentors set the example for junior officers are evident in Darin's words and actions.

Darin provided an additional insight to this theme. Setting the example related to his belief in the power of perception. Put simply, he said "it's all perception" (240). He described this as how a person sees things, shaping attitude through perception, and *being what is projected to others*. Darin explained,

in my mentoring I tell soldiers, I say the way you look and the way you carry yourself helps that perception. If you are a grumpy person and you come in with your uniform all tore up, then you're perceived as a bad soldier. You may be… the best soldier that ever lived but if you look bad, you are perceived as a bad soldier.(247-252)

Being perceived by others and setting the example are related in this theme.

In describing the impact that unknowingly mentoring has on future leaders, Charles pointed out that, while mentors may think that they are training their replacement, the obvious heir apparent, they really don't know who the person is that's several levels down and many years out. For that reason, he explains, "it's the informal and unknowing that being on the stage for those people is probably more important because you won't be around to work directly with them later on" (1293-1295). The belief that mentors have the power to influence future leaders by way of setting the example in seen throughout this theme.

The theme of military professional identity, with its focus on maintaining standards and setting the example, served as an important foundation for mentors. This broader professional foundation served to allow the mentors to gravitate toward beliefs that addressed the more focused view of the Georgia Army National Guard. The next theme that described officers' beliefs involved the second-level theme of the organization.

Organization

This theme is compromised of two sub-themes: (a) the belief that mentoring benefits the organization and (b) the belief that the mentor's role is to provide opportunities. Two hundred eight (208) of five hundred thirteen (513) beliefs noted by mentors involved beliefs that were associated with this theme. Mentors described this theme as the belief in being loyal to the organization, building a team that benefits the organization, understanding the big picture of the organization, providing opportunities to grow, and the belief in mentoring for upward mobility.

The first sub-theme was pervasive throughout each of the interviews. Mentors described this as (a) the belief that mentoring involved loyalty to the individual and the organization, (b) the belief in the long-term relevance of mentoring, and (c) the belief that mentoring efforts

provided an added value to the organization. Although the belief that mentoring should benefit the organization appeared to be exclusive, mentors did describe loyalty as extending to both the individual and the organization. However, it is important to note that the loyalty extended to the individual was generally viewed within the context of the organization. In other words, although mentors believed in being loyal to the individual, their loyalty was generally bounded by the organizational benefits that individuals could provide. Officers believed that mentoring provided a long-term, or goal-oriented, benefit and added value to the organization.

Jason illustrated this belief within a mentoring incident that involved a junior officer focused on what appeared to be conflicting loyalties. He described sitting this person down and telling him,

> in order to get where you want to go and where the command group wants you to go, you can't be distracted by all of these other things that you've done for the organization in the past. You've got to allow the organization to do something for you. And loyalty is a two-way street, the organization expects you to be loyal…but the organization has also got to be loyal to you too. (292-297)

In describing this mentoring incident, Jason provided insight into the belief that mentoring should benefit both the individual and the organization. He also illustrated that at times these loyalties do appear to conflict.

Charles pointed out the organizational benefits of mentoring. In describing a mentoring incident involving a junior officer and his quest to learn, he made a direct connection between the mentoring, the individual's performance, and the beneficial outcome to the organization. He refered to mentoring as something that,

…enhanced his performance as to how and why he was doing things because all he really

wanted to know was why it was important and if he took the next step to take it a little bit

further, either the study we were doing or the documents we were doing and how it was

going to be used by others, then he felt like that he was contributing. (321-325)

Charles viewed the outcome of mentoring as making a contribution to the organization.

Focusing on the belief that mentoring should add value to the organization, Maryanne

offered several incidents. One incident involved a junior officer who solicited her feedback about

ways he could improve his performance within the organization. Directing her mentoring efforts

toward adding value to the organization, Maryanne pointed out that he was involved in "way too

much stuff". She explained,

if it doesn't affect your immediate job and what you're trying to do for the guard - get out

of it. It's a detractor. I know you love it…but the problem is people see you going to

these meetings all the time and it's like 'why is he going to those. What value is he

adding to the guard by doing that? (1015-1020)

Maryanne's underlying belief that her mentoring efforts should ultimately add value to the guard

was illustrated in this incident.

The belief that mentoring should benefit the organization provided the impetus for the

belief that mentors view their role as providing opportunities. Opportunities to grow and develop

within the National Guard context are critical for mentees and, in turn, for the long-term benefits

of the organization. Therefore, mentors believed their role was to provide these direct

opportunities or, as seen in a few cases, to facilitate opportunities for their mentees.

Mentors described this second sub-theme as (a) the belief in mentees having

opportunities to grow, (b) the belief in the opportunities for upward mobility, and (c) the belief in

improving self through experiences. The first category within this sub-theme was described as providing those opportunities, providing advice and counsel on how to gain those opportunities, and providing networking opportunities for the mentee. Regardless of whether the mentors offered these opportunities directly or indirectly, they provided a critical aspect in the development of their mentee.

As described earlier, the size and political dimension of the organization play a significant role in the National Guard context. These dimensions, therefore, make this mentorship, or sponsorship, very important to the successful career of the junior officer. The belief that opportunities provide the necessary component for upward mobility is seen as the mentors provide specific advice on how to successfully navigate the organization. Selecting the right opportunities, including choosing officer career branches and various military positions, have a bearing on one's upward mobility. The final category relates to the underlying belief that experiences provide the basis for improving oneself and that, again, the mentors role is to steer the mentee in the right direction to attain those experiences.

Jason indicated the need to provide opportunities for mentees to grow. Rather than provide opportunities, he believed we often tell junior officers how they should do something or even tell them what approach worked for the mentor him/herself. Jason advocates for junior officers being allowed to fail and to develop their own set of experiences. Rather than focusing on the consequences, the key to this is the experience itself and the learning that comes as a result of the opportunity. He acknowledged that this advice is tough in today's environment with a shortage of personnel, budgetary constraints, and time constraints. He explained,

we've got to allow our subordinates the opportunity to get that experience and we've got

to mentor them. If we make them understand that because of the constraints that you're

only going to get one or two opportunities to do this – see what you can do and try –

we'll be in better shape. (671-682)

The belief in providing opportunities, however limited, for mentees to grow and develop is a key aspect in the mentor's role.

Doug related several incidents focused on mentees' opportunities to gain knowledge and skills. One incident occurred within a group setting and involved his senior leadership. They were developing a training plan for their upcoming annual training period. Doug used this as an opportunity to teach and for his people to learn. He explained his role,

that was that opportunity to teach them or should I say mold them or guide them in terms

of how to take a staff action and staff it properly. And make sure they have all the proper

regulations and all the proper guidelines in the things the Army says we are required to

do when we perform a task. It was the first time that I was actually able to start the

teaching process. (170-176)

Providing the opportunity to gain experience and develop skills was part of Doug's role as mentor.

An important element in one of Jason's mentoring incidents was his belief that a mentor's role is to provide or facilitate opportunities for upward mobility. This incident involved a junior officer with whom he was discussing long-term career options and providing very pointed advice. Stressing the importance of mentoring within the context of the National Guard, Jason explained,

as a female she wasn't ever going to get an opportunity to get into any of the combat

arms branches. So she needed to get into a branch that had upward mobility and career

progression, but yet in the Georgia Guard there are very few areas that you can do that. (37-41)

Jason's belief that mentoring should be focused on opportunities for upward mobility was illustrated in this incident and was indicative of this sub-theme.

Using experiences to improve oneself was seen in several mentoring narratives. One incident, described by Charles, focused on the belief that mentees use their experiences to grow and that mentors play a critical role in facilitating that growth. He explained, "I took advantage of that opportunity to lay more on the table for him because he was the kind of person that I recognized could handle more and wanted to handle more" (373-375). This junior officer was quite proud of the work he did and wanted to take on more, so Charles just kept expanding his horizons and those mentoring conversations to broaden his mentee's perspective. All of these opportunities were related to Charles's belief that mentees need to be afforded the opportunities to improve themselves through experience.

Quite often, mentors are in a position of authority that allows them to offer direct opportunities for their mentees to grow and develop. Mitchell described one such incident in which he attempted to provide opportunities for one of his junior officers. In describing this process, he said,

> I gave him opportunities to succeed. I took him through the steps. I gave him the platoon sergeant that knew more than anybody I had, the best platoon sergeant I ever had. I let him try to grow. I let him go out and be the person talking to the other maneuver forces that he's going to support and let him come back and work out the details with the platoon sergeant. I gave him all these opportunities…and he didn't grow. (397-404)

Providing opportunities to grow and actually having mentees grow do not always go hand-in-hand. Although Mitchell's efforts in providing direct opportunities for his mentee did not meet with success, they are illustrative of this belief.

An additional group of categories emerged from the data related to this theme. Although they were not significant enough to regard them as a distinct sub-theme, they do cluster within this theme and warrant description. The categories described the mentors' belief in the potential of people. This related to the mentor's role in providing opportunities because believing in the potential of people underlies the belief in providing opportunities for their growth and development. Mentors described these beliefs as (a) the belief in the potential of everyone, and (b) the belief in the potential to grow and build people.

Believing that everyone has the potential to learn and grow, Mitchell pointed to the unfortunate situation that occurs when organizational members are written off because of their past actions. He responded to that situation by saying,

> you can not hold with that. You have to look at the person and see what their capabilities are and you have to be able to work with that and then you have to see if you can help them grow (218-220)

Mitchell provided insight into the mentors' belief that everyone has the potential to grow and a mentor's role in providing opportunities. In addition to the mentors' beliefs regarding the organizational benefits of mentoring, they described beliefs that were focused on the personal dimensions involved in mentoring. The third-level theme is focused on the individual person within the organization.

People

Mentors described beliefs that appear to be closely related to their personal and interpersonal characteristics as a mentor. Mentors described this belief theme as understanding others, honoring the individual, having respect for the person, being available, and making people feel comfortable. Eighty-five (85) of the five hundred thirteen (513) beliefs noted by mentors involved beliefs related to (a) caring about people and (b) being approachable. Mentors described the first sub-theme as (a) the belief in honoring the individual and, (b) the belief in understanding others. For the mentors, honoring the individual referred to respecting the person, acknowledging their worth, and holding them in regard for who they are as a person. Caring about people involved the aspect of understanding the individual, focusing on the person, and the belief that mentors need to understand the perspective of the mentee and his/her individual beliefs.

Jim believed that caring is a critical element in creating an effective atmosphere and something that, in turn, flows down throughout the organization. He explained this belief,

> those guys will do it to their people, their people will do it to their people, and it just sort of goes down. They understand that 'hey someone took care of me, someone's looking out over me', then when issues come up with people subordinate to them, that they see it as their opportunity to turn around and say, 'hey lets take a few minutes and talk about this', just try to create a sort of a downhill - sister side. (198-203)

Creating an atmosphere that is built on genuinely caring about people, Jim believed, would permeate throughout the organization.

Mitchell illustrated this belief when he reflected on his learning from one of his mentoring incidents. This incident involved a very stressful situation in which he asked his

officers to perform in a difficult and high-pressure field environment situation. In describing his learning, Mitchell reflected,

> it reinforced my belief of how you treat people and what you can get out of them when you ask of them, if you have rendered honor to them and you've observed their goodness over time. It really does come down to that for me, you have to honor your people. (309-312)

Caring about people and honoring them as individuals is illustrative of this theme.

An additional aspect of caring about others can be seen in mentors' beliefs regarding their development of mentees. Maryanne viewed her belief of caring as associated with her belief in developing people. She explained this dual focus as,

> recognize it, groom it, and then build a little bit of a relationship. You need that because you have to care about the person because you've got to find the time. And so to find the time you've got to be able to clear your mind of everything else that's going on and say this is important to this person. (969-973)

The belief in caring about people and their development is undeniably linked for Maryanne.

Caring about people goes along with the mentors' belief in being approachable. All the care in the world won't do the mentee much good if he/she doesn't perceive the mentor as someone whom they can seek out. Mentors described this as (a) the belief in being available and, (b) the belief in making people feel comfortable. Being available was seen as making time for mentees, actually being accessible, and in the presence of others. Making people feel comfortable referred to the mentors' belief in developing friendships and having camaraderie amongst military members.

Jim's beliefs in caring for others and being available for mentees are associated with how he described the basic mentor characteristics. He explained,

> I think you just have to care. I think that's a key. You show them that you care and the availability to me is that regardless of when and where, people ask 'hey, have you got a minute?' Always. It's like you ask me, 'I know you are busy' and nah, not too busy, never too busy to help. Just because you are a mechanized killing unit doesn't mean that there can't be some caring involved. (37-42)

Jim's reference to being a killing unit, an apt description for a military infantry unit, is presented within the broader context of caring and availability. This linkage is indicative of his belief that caring is a key to mentoring, regardless of the specific military context.

Cliff's belief in developing friendships and having camaraderie was demonstrated when he described how he built a community amongst his officer corps. He explained to his officers that he wanted,

> …team players that were honest. That came to work to work and that recognized the fact that we spend a lot of time away from our families so this family at work should be like our family, and should be able to be trusted and treated well and that there should be this environment of positive inclusion for everybody. (660-664)

Making people feel comfortable in the organization and developing camaraderie amongst military members can be seen in Cliff's community building.

In reflecting on his experiences as a mentee, Charles pointed out that the one common thing he has seen in his mentors is their approachability. He clarified,

> they would talk to privates as well as civilians; they would have the door open to the chaplains and the IG's of their staff. They would be open to the professional discussion of

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an opposing view, whatever it was, and ultimately the decision maker has to have

information to make a decision and to make a good decision you need to see the pros and

cons. In the mentoring role you need to be approachable. (1202-1208)

Being approachable, being physically and cognitively available to mentees, is a key

factor for many mentors. Although mentors believed in the potential of people, they found

themselves in situations in which mentoring proved ineffective. Similar to Mitchell's failed

attempt described earlier, each of the participants shared mentoring incidents in which their

efforts were not successful. The final theme that emerged from the data was the belief that there

are limitations to mentoring.

Limitations of Mentoring

Each participant, in one way or another, addressed the belief that mentoring isn't

effective for all people in all situations. Fifty-one (51) of five hundred thirteen (513) beliefs

noted by mentors involved beliefs in the limitations of mentoring. Mentors described this theme

as (a) the belief that you can't mentor everybody, (b) the belief that you can't help some people,

and (c) the belief that organizational structure constrains mentoring.

Reflecting back on his experience as a mentee, Jason related a lesson that he learned

about the limitations of mentoring. His mentor advised him that, although everybody has a

button that can be pushed to motivate them, not everybody is capable of pushing that button. He

explained,

> everybody can be motivated either through positive or negative reinforcement or some
>
> other type of shaping behavior. But I can't motivate all of those people even if I know
>
> what that method is because not everybody's going to respond to me. (261-264)

Jason's lesson illustrated the belief that mentors themselves have limitations.

The belief that the mentees themselves have limitations in the mentoring process was illustrated in several mentoring incidents. Darin described a mentoring incident in which the person just would not respond to his efforts. Voicing his resignation to these limits, he stated, "some people you can't help. Some people are blind to the fact that they could be better. All they have to do is a couple of simple things – but they won't do it. Sometimes you got to write people off" (367-369). In spite of their best efforts, mentors described situations that involved mentee limitations.

A third limitation that was described by several mentors involved organizational limitations. Doug viewed the limitations imposed by the organizational context as affecting the mentoring process. Pointing to the limited access to his mentees and the lack of time available in the National Guard, Doug said,

> I never have been able to schedule a mentor session where I said, "o.k. lets sit down and for thirty minutes we are going to talk about this," because in the guard, in the army guard or the reserves, you don't have the time. Time is not there to spend doing it in that fashion. (32-36)

Mentoring limitations, whether associated with the mentor themselves, the mentee, or the organization, was a belief held by all participants.

The previous sections of this chapter focused on the four themes that emerged from the research question focused on the beliefs held by the mentors within the National Guard context. These beliefs served as the foundation for the mentors and for the most part relate directly to the behaviors, or strategies, used by them. The following section will focus on the second research question, addressing the behaviors used by mentors.

Behaviors

Mentors described a myriad of behaviors, or strategies, that they used in providing

mentoring to their junior officers. These behaviors represented strategies, or actions, that the

mentors took when they engaged in mentoring within the National Guard context. As previously

described in relation to beliefs, the behavior themes corresponded with three levels: (a) military

professional identity, (b) organization, and (c) people. "Other informal strategies" was the fourth

theme and represented a set of behaviors that described additional informal learning strategies. In

other words, the behaviors described in the three themes represented specific informal learning

strategies, while this fourth theme described more general strategies. These four themes are

presented in the Table 4 and represent the primary themes surrounding the second research

question. A total of six hundred seventy-three (673) data strips related to behaviors were

identified within the data set. The data strips were then clustered into 54 categories and

eventually into the four themes.

Table 4. Mentoring behaviors: themes and frequencies

Behaviors: themes, and frequencies

Mentoring themes	no.	%
Other Informal Strategies	226	32.94
Military Professional Identity	111	16.49
Organization	95	14.91
People	241	37.83

Other Informal Strategies

Informal strategies were shared by each mentor. They described these mentoring strategies as taking place in informal settings, involving informal presentations, and using words, illustrations, and behaviors that could be characterized as informal learning opportunities. On several occasions, mentors described their view of formal mentoring in contrast to informal mentoring. They described formal mentoring as taking place in a typical across-the-desk office setting, following a highly-structured format, taking place at one extended session versus a series of conversations, and predominantly using one-way communication.

Two hundred-twenty six (226) of six hundred seventy-three (673) strategies noted by mentors represented strategies that were informal in nature. Mentors described four primary strategies within informal mentoring as (a) providing on the spot mentoring, (b) providing commander's intent, (c) sharing personal learning, and (d) using hustling mistakes. The first strategy was described by some officers, in the literal sense, as mentoring that took place on the spot as the action occurred. For others, it was described as mentoring that took place within a relatively short period of time or in the general proximity of the precipitating event.

Commander's intent is a term used to describe what the higher level, or command, sees as the overall goal, or intent, of a mission. The commander's intent provides an overarching framework or sense of purpose and it provides guidance for subordinates, which is particularly important in the absence of specific orders. Sharing personal learning was mentioned as a way of allowing mentees to benefit from mentor's past experience and knowledge. Hustling mistakes, coined by one mentor, referred to mistakes that came about as a result of trying, or hustling to make things happen. These mistakes were an inherent element in the process of experiential, or informal, learning.

Jason described the strategy that he employed in working with his mentees. He advocated for an informal approach; rather than a formal sit-down meeting that lasts a long time, he stressed the importance of smaller, more frequent mentoring sessions. Jason clarified,

> if you're walking somewhere together you can give them a quick 2 minute, 3 minute mentoring….Take advantage of a bunch of those little 2 and 3 minute time-bytes and they'll remember that. If you spend a lot of little bits of time with them, they'll remember that as opposed to the one time that you spent an hour with them. You've got more face time with them over the long haul then the one time. (644-652)

Smaller, more frequent informal mentoring sessions, as described by Jason, are indicative of an informal mentoring strategy.

Doug shared several mentoring incidents that involved on-the-spot mentoring. Informal mentoring that takes place in the moment seems to hold the greatest impact for him. Unless he viewed the activity as time sensitive, or as an event that was too important to interrupt, Doug described almost stopping "in the middle of the stream". He explained his strategy,

> I'll stop right there and we'll stop and say, 'hey time out, lets stop right here and lets discuss what's going on'. And what I think may be right and what I think might be wrong and what I think could be better and what I think you're doing good - all those things. (46-50)

On-the-spot mentoring, providing feedback and discussion at a very close proximity to the precipitating event, was noted by several mentors as the optimal time to provide mentoring.

Doug described a mentoring incident in which he utilized another informal strategy, commander's intent. He was the commander, in this case, and provided his commander's intent,

to a junior officer. He described ongoing discussions between himself and his mentee, taking place after training events, in which he presented his guidance and intent. Doug explained,

> …we discuss things and we discuss the next action. I gave him the guidance, I gave him clear guidance as to what I wanted him to do, and I let him take that guidance and run with it and then I kept finding fewer, and fewer, and fewer things that he had not covered bases on. (409-413)

Providing commander's guidance was a form of informal mentoring in that it allowed his junior officer to work within a prescribed framework while also allowing him the latitude to make his own decisions and to have opportunities to learn.

Pointing to a mentoring strategy that is rooted in the military, Doug referred to using the After Action Review (AAR) as a template for mentoring. Since AARs play a significant part in the military's culture, they warrant some explanation. AARs are processes that allow leaders and subordinates the opportunity to review a recent military event and gain understanding from the event. They are a common occurrence in the military and involve a series of inquires, focused on a recent activity, and are designed to increase members' clarity of the negative and positive aspects of the activity. The intention is greater understanding of the event and the generation of lessons learned for future application. Doug viewed the AAR process as very similar to the mentoring process. He explained,

> Exchanging ideas, exchanging the AAR, the after action review process that tells you what did I do right, what did I do wrong, what do you think we could do better, all of those things. Did you understand the mission, what was the mission, re-state it, and on and on and so forth. Just take the AAR card and go right through it and trust me, that's a

mentoring session in itself. Because learning comes from that, learning is mentoring.

(631-637)

Making the connection between the mentoring process and the AAR process, Doug emphasized the timely and direct manner in which actions are examined and lessons learned.

Informal mentoring strategies often lent themselves to utilizing informal environments. The National Guard context provides many such opportunities to mentor within a variety of informal environments, such as outdoor settings, informal instruction periods, and informal gatherings. Cliff illustrated the variety of informal settings in which mentoring occur. Describing one mentoring incident, he said, "we just took a walk. We walked out away from the armory and sat down underneath the shade tree out there and we had our list of issues to talk about" (740-742). Within this informal and non-threatening setting, Cliff was able to broach awkward subjects and used this opportunity to help his subordinate understand and develop a clear picture of the different perspectives involved in the situation that they were discussing.

Giving advice to mentees is an informal strategy that Dan described on several occasions. Part of this strategy included outlining the pros and cons of specific situations and telling his mentees what he honestly thought. In reflecting on one incident in which he provided advice to his mentee, he related that his advice wasn't always met with a similar perspective. He clarified,

sometimes people don't shoot for the same goals that you do. Sometimes their aim is lower or higher and all you can do is to present what you think what their activities ought to be and actions ought to be. They can accept them or not. (117-120)

Providing advice to his mentees, regardless of whether they accepted it, was a mentoring strategy for Dan.

Reflecting upon what he learned from his mentor, Cliff explained the informal learning strategy of hustling mistakes. This referred to the mistakes that are made in the process of learning and in trying out new approaches and activities. Cliff explained,

> he said "we'll tolerate all the hustling mistakes you can make. Never will we tolerate lazy mistakes". And so for him it was always hustling mistakes and you are o.k. by learning from your mistakes because you are learning by doing and you're trying. (872-876)

For Cliff, hustling mistakes were acceptable because learning results from your mistakes and efforts. Mentors often used informal mentoring strategies that employed this very tactic, learning from your mistakes.

Although mentors described a significant amount of informal strategies, one prevailing theme expressed by each officer was that mentors provide personal demonstration as a foundational strategy for mentoring. Regardless of the types or numbers of strategies employed by mentors, the basic building block of mentoring seemed their demonstration as a military officer.

Military Professional Identity

Mentors provide a military role model for their mentees. Demonstration of attitude, skills, and abilities were discussed by the participants. They described their strategies in demonstrating to others as providing an example to others, showing their style as to how they do things, and providing the female perspective. One hundred eleven (111) of six hundred seventy-three (673) strategies noted by mentors represented strategies involving their personal demonstration as a military professional. Mentors described the three primary strategies as (a) providing examples or personal instances, (b) showing their style, and (c) doing the hard right thing. Providing the example for their mentees meant that officers either directly demonstrated examples of how to

conduct themselves or indirectly demonstrated by sharing personal instances. Showing their style was how many mentors described demonstration as a strategy. Their style was seen in how they handled themselves in particular situations, conducted meetings, and dealt with people. Making difficult decisions and choosing the hard right thing to do was described by mentors as a form of demonstration. The mentee saw how these difficult decisions were reached and watched their mentors handle challenging issues.

Darin pointed to demonstration as the very basic ingredient in mentoring. He explained, "it's just setting a good example, being in the right place at the right time and maybe not even saying nothing but just being perceived as having your stuff together" (596-598). As basic as it may appear, providing the personal example for mentees was considered as a strategy for mentoring.

Dan also stressed the importance of setting the example in front of others. He described it as providing visual leadership for others. He clarified,

> …without you knowing it, you impress people. What you do and say and think and walk like and act like, somebody's watching and somebody's listening. I mean this in a good way and you are either going to impress them positively or negatively, every thing you do in a military uniform. Probably civilian life too but in a military uniform it's more critical….Somebody wants to be like you. Somebody wants to do the things you do and that's the kind of person you don't want to disappoint. More than anybody that's the one you want to be right with. (574-584)

Setting the example and providing a positive role model for others are strategies used by mentors in the military.

A mentor's style can influence his/her mentees in a number of ways. Style provides a set of behaviors and beliefs that are packaged up and then offered to the mentee as a model. In looking back over the individuals he has mentored, Charles reiterated the impact that style had on influencing others. He explained,

> by setting the example in front of them you gave them something in their tool box that they could use with their own style, with their own background, experience, and education to then move up in their own organization, or to achieve whatever they're trying to accomplish. (1260-1264)

Charles illustrated one way that style can influence mentees by providing them some additional tools.

Mentees learned how to become leaders by watching their mentors. Charles talked about the human nature of watching people and copying each other's style. Mentors' strategies that included demonstration provide a powerful influence in developing junior officers. He described one mentoring incident with a junior officer and provided an illustration of how influence can be manifested. Charles explained the impact on his mentee as,

> …his style of how he would talk and how he would approach an answer to a question - was a lot from the style that I displayed while he was sitting in our meetings with us. He kind of adopted that style. (694-696)

Mentors recognized the influence that their style had on their mentees and viewed demonstration as an informal strategy in mentoring.

Demonstrating how to handle very difficult situations was seen in the strategy of doing the hard right thing. A common saying within the military community is that leaders are often called upon to do the 'hard right' thing instead of the 'easy left' thing. Dan shared one mentoring

incident that involved a very difficult military decision that significantly impacted both family and friends. Demonstrating his leadership in doing the hard right thing, Dan served as a role model for junior officers within his organization.

He explained,

> if you make a decision and you're convinced it's right - then you do it. If you lose friends, and if you lose anything because of it, then that's the way it goes. I found out that sometimes just in doing your job you'll lose what amounts to life long friends. (316-320)

Mentors were often called upon to make difficult decisions and the way in which they made these decisions can be viewed as an informal mentoring strategy. Making the shift from strategies focused on the mentor's military professional identity to the organization, mentors utilized strategies that were goal-focused and involved working 'it for their mentees.

Organization

Mentors described strategies that related to the organization level. This involved focusing their mentoring efforts toward specific goal attainment and working the associated issues with the mentee. Mentors described strategies as setting goals, focusing on priorities, stopping what you are doing, and working together. Ninety-five (95) of six hundred seventy-three (673) strategies noted by mentors represented strategies that were (a) focused on individual and organizational goals and (b) involved "working 'it".

Mentors described the first sub-theme as (a) setting goals, (b) focusing on our circle, and (c) "driving on"! Setting goals with their junior officers involved the actual process of identifying goals as well as developing plans for goal attainment. Focusing on our circle was a phrase coined by one mentor that referred to the strategy of focusing only on those goals, or priorities, which fell within a mentee's circle. The circle contained those areas most important to

the individual mentee, including people, job responsibilities, and organizational imperatives. The final strategy referred to maintaining the focus on priorities and keeping a positive attitude throughout the process. This strategy illustrated both the forward momentum needed to focus on goals and the positive energy required to maintain the momentum.

Jason described a series of mentoring incidents that seemed to follow a similar format as he worked with officer candidates. He would bring them into the office, sit them down, and go over their performance for the drill weekend. In addition to talking about their most recent performance, he would also discuss goals with them. He explained,

> we would talk with them about what their goals were and then we would try to help them identify what was a realistic goal and what was unrealistic and determine if their perspectives and their goals were even achievable, and try to get them re-directed. (27-30)

Identifying goals and working with mentees in accomplishing those goals were strategies often described by mentors.

Darin's strategy for maintaining focus on priorities and keeping a good attitude was described as driving on! In his role as mentor, he has seen that a lot of people want to abandon their goals and begin to feel sorry for themselves. Providing encouragement and focus for his mentees, Darin explained, "the last thing I'll say before we walk away from each other is 'drive on'! And that's all it takes sometime. You can try, try to maintain a positive attitude and drive on" (315-317). Focusing on goals and having a positive attitude were strategies described by mentors.

Maryanne described the strategy of focusing on one's circle of influence. That circle contains the people, ideas, and things that relate directly to the mentee's goals. She shared one

mentoring incident in which she used this strategy to get her mentee to understand that she

needed to focus her efforts only toward those people and things within her circle of influence.

She explained to her mentee that anything that lay outside that circle of influence, although it

might be within her larger circle of concern, did not warrant her attention nor was it really any of

her business. Focusing on things outside of her circle and trying to make a difference was

basically futile and detracted from the mentee's ultimate goal attainment. She defined its futility

as, "trying to make a difference when it doesn't matter because it doesn't affect your immediate

core of who you're about, what you care about, who you care about" (48-51). Focusing on goals

related to the mentee's circle of influence was a strategy used by Maryanne to ensure mentees

retained focus on their priorities.

Mentors used strategies focused on their mentees' individual goals as well as

organizational goals. Using these goals as a framework, mentors then used strategies designed to

address the issues or concerns presented. The second sub-theme was a phrase used by several

mentors that related to an action-oriented posture with their mentees. Working 'it was described

as resolving their issues, helping the mentees figure out how to work their issues out, and taking

steps within the organization to work issues on the mentees behalf. Mentors described three

primary strategies as (a) doing for others, (b) stopping what you're doing, and (c) clearing the

mine field.

Doing for others meant that mentors used strategies that helped their junior officers in a

more personal or developmental manner. The second strategy referred to strategies that shifted

attention and focus to the mentee by literally stopping what the mentor is doing and working 'it

out with the mentee. Clearing the mine field is a phrase that described mentors' efforts to remove

obstacles, or mine fields, that have the potential to interfere with the mentee's development and progression.

Mitchell used the strategy of doing for others. This strategy was underscored by his view of mentoring as an opportunity to bring out the best in someone else and to try and help them be more than they are. Describing this mentoring strategy , Mitchell clarified, "we need to see how much more we can help people and see how much more they can become so they can give more to others" (555-559). Darin viewed his role in doing for others as helping junior officers so that they could, in turn, help others. Doing for others is a way that mentors described the theme of working 'it.

Jim described making himself open and available as key ingredients in the strategy of stopping what you are doing. Regardless of what he may be involved in at the time, he responds to requests for help by stopping and helping. When others ask for his assistance, the answer always has to be yes. Jim explained,

> the door is always open. I always stop what I'm doing and I sit and I listen and then I try
> to react to the issue. That way they understand that they can always come back to you,
> they feel comfortable, and that you are available. (13-16)

Stopping what you are doing and making yourself available to assist was a part of this theme.

Maryanne described the mentoring strategy of clearing the minefield. Focused on talented people who will add value to the organization, she helpd remove obstacles or provides information that allowed them to clear the minefield themselves. She explained, "you just help clear those mine fields for them a little bit. You educate them. You make sure that they have little pieces of knowledge that normally you would assume people have, that they don't always have" (948-951). Removing the obstacles that block mentee's progress and providing knowledge

are strategies used to describe this sub-theme. Moving from strategies focused on organizational outcomes and solving issues to the individual officer required mentors to shift their focus. Rather than focusing on the organization, mentors' strategies were focused directly on his/her mentees' in the next thematic level. The third and final level of mentors' behaviors involved strategies focused on the people within the organization.

People

Mentors described behaviors that involved shifting the focus to the mentee and their personal and professional development. Mentors described their strategies in mentoring as observing others, listening to people, taking them aside, and giving them the information that they really needed to hear. Two hundred forty-one (241) of six hundred seventy-three (673) strategies noted by mentors represented strategies that involved a focus on people.

This theme is comprised of two sub-themes (a) using strategies that are "other" focused and (b) being straight with people. Mentors shared strategies that helped them maintain focus on the other person and allowed them to better understand their mentees. Mentors described four primary strategies associated with the first sub-theme as (a) understanding others, (b) listening to people, (c) adjusting your mentoring style, and (d) looking for and recognizing talent. Focusing on the other meant that mentors sought to understand their mentees and their perspective. Listening for mentees' thoughts, opinions, and feelings were described by mentors as a way of ensuring that they focused on their mentee. With focus placed on the mentee, mentors were able to adjust their style in order to better reach out to the junior officer and meet his/her individual needs.

Mitchell described his mentoring strategy as one designed to focus on the mentee. He viewed the concept of building people as critical to the mentoring process. He explained his

approach, "you look and you find the things that are good to say and you extol their virtues and you render their honor when you can. And the things that don't go quite so right, you discuss quietly" (139-142). For Mitchell, focusing on his mentee led to his strategy of building up his mentees by extolling their virtues. Those mentee characteristics that were not as virtuous, he dealt with respectfully and quietly.

Gaining the perspective of the other person was described by Cliff as a strategy used to understand his mentee. He described one mentoring incident in which he actively sought to first figure out his mentee's frame of reference. Describing the frame of reference and its relevance in the mentoring process, Cliff explained,

> ...what is it that they see you as, what is it that they see the organization as and once you understand where they're coming from then you can better put yourself back into them as far as interfacing with them and having constructive dialogue. (804-807)

Understanding mentees, including their frame of reference, was a key strategy that assisted mentors in working with their junior officers.

The strategy of listening was noted by several mentors. In describing his mentoring efforts, Darin pointed out that by really listening to his mentees, he could better understand their issues. In turn, this understanding allowed him to realize that although an issue might be small to him, it might be very large to his mentee. Listening for true understanding, not merely agreement meant that, to some extent, Darin needed to view his mentees problems as his own. He articulated,

> I really need to analyze it and really listen and try to feel what he's feeling at that time and say "hey, this is really important to him and he's really grappling with it" because

sometimes we get caught up in our lives and what's a problem to you really doesn't

matter to me, But it should if I want to be that mentor or that good leader. (229-234)

Darin's description of empathetic listening, with its focus on genuine understanding, was

illustrative of this sub-theme.

Jim summarized his view of mentoring and pointed to the significance of being focused

on what the mentee needs – when he or she needs it. Being availabe to help at the time that they

ask is important. He explained,

if you don't do it right then, first of all I don't think you show the caring, you don't share

really the thoughtfulness that you need to. Because whatever problem is going on right

then or issue that's strong right then, that's the number one priority for that person right

then. Although it's not for you. So it's important that they understand that you are willing

to do that. You have to understand that I'm willing to help you anyway I can. And

regardless of the time. It shows that you give a damn if you stop and do it and talk. (504-

512)

Being focused on the mentee and listening to their concerns was part of this theme.

Using the strategy of adjusting your mentoring style in order to meet the mentee's needs

was mentioned by several officers and is indicative of the other focused strategies. Mentors

described assessing their mentee's knowledge, skills, and experiences and providing mentoring

that corresponded with his/her needs. Charles described a mentee who, working outside his

functional area, needed much more guidance than other, more experienced officers. In working

with a less experienced officer, Charles explained this approach, "the person with more

experience can very quickly narrow a function down to its necessary things. The person who is

least experienced initially had trouble grasping it because he was working outside of his

functional area" (814-817). As the person with more experience, Charles described the process of narrowing a function down to its essential elements, and then pushing the junior officer to focus only on those particular things. This behavior can be seen as adjusting his mentoring style in response to his mentee's needs and is a strategy that is focused on the other person.

Being focused on others allowed for mentors to look for and recognize talent within the organization. Maryanne focuses her efforts on identifying people who could contribute to the organization. Describing her mentoring strategy, she explained,

> you recognize the talent, you recognize people that you think are going to add value to the organization in whatever capacity. And I tend to lean more toward looking really hard for that talent in minorities and females because we need more and you have to grow it. You just can't parachute somebody in to the upper ranks and say "perform." They've got to build that credibility up and they need that knowledge base. (938-944)

Looking for talented people within the organization and channeling their developmental experiences, especially within the minority ranks, is Maryanne's mentoring strategy.

Mentors used strategies that allowed them to focus on the other person and understand their issues. This understanding went hand-in-hand with mentors' responses to these issues in a straight, or upfront, manner. The second sub-theme contained strategies that involved being straight with people. Mentors described four primary strategies as (a) talking to the troops / going to the troops, (b) providing "bad" mentoring, (c) taking them aside, and (d) being fair through being open. The first strategy spoke to a set of behaviors that mentors employed to ensure that information was communicated to the lowest level and that mentors placed themselves in the physical presence of troops. In other words, going to the troops ensured accessibility to the mentor and his/her information.

Providing bad mentoring was a phrase used by several mentors and referred to providing criticism or specific behavioral feedback that was negative in nature. Taking them aside was described as pulling people aside, away from other people, and talking to them about issues. Being fair with people by being open referred to strategies that are upfront and honest and done in a manner that is fair and transparent. Keeping issues in the open ensured fair treatment because both the issues and the way in which they were handled were visible to organizational members.

Darin described his strategy of going to the troops as a way to make sure his soldiers and junior officers had access to him. His accessibility ensured that they received the straight information about organizational issues. Darin makes sure that he is where the troops are and makes a point to interact with soldiers. He said, "when the troops are training, I'm out on the ground with them, talking with them on a one-on-one basis" (15-16). Going to the troops was noted by several officers as a strategy used by mentors as a means of demonstrating accessibility and a way to be upfront, or straight, with their unit members.

Dan stressed the importance of leaders providing junior officers with feedback that helped correct existing problems, pointed out potential problems, or offered suggestions on how to improve their overall performance. While focusing on the good or positive aspects of the mentees is a relatively easy thing to do, mentors have an obligation to their junior officers to be straight about their negative aspects as well. Dan believes a military leader is obligated to go down the line of junior officers and senior NCOs and give them necessary feedback. He explained, "you are obligated to go down and tell them what you do think it's going to take for them to come to standard" (608-610). Being straight with people involved pointing out their

deficiencies as well as providing feedback focused on correcting deficiencies and reaching military standards.

Mentoring is often uncomfortable for both the mentor as well as the mentee. Dan sees it as human nature that people don't want to be uncomfortable and thus shy away from providing this type of feedback to junior officers. He clarified, "it's not fun but Lord it pays big dividends if it works. If you're accepting the fact that people can change then mentoring is a wonderful thing. If you don't accept that, then it's not" (613-615). Mentors' strategies focused on being straight and providing negative, or bad, mentoring correlated with their belief that people can make changes.

Assessing junior officers and NCOs often required mentors to take them aside and be straight about their capabilities. Jim described one mentoring incident that involved pulling someone aside and saying something that he/she did not want to hear. Being straight with others about their capabilities requires moral fiber. Mentors need moral fiber, Jim explained, "to sit down with them years prior to this, as they're growing up, and telling them that if you don't change your direction, you're really about as far as you need to be" (275-277) . As a mentor, Jim sees his overarching role as taking care of people and being straight with them.

In making decisions and solving problems it was important for mentors to appear fair. Being open about decisions and actions was a strategy used to ensure fairness. Cliff illustrated the strategy of being open when he described the process of assessing officers into his unit. He personally interviewed all officers as they came to the unit. Sitting down and talking with each officer before he/she was accepted into the unit, Cliff said, "I explained to them what the conditions were to be a member of the unit and in turn what they would get back from it" (657-

658). From the very beginning, being open and being straight with junior officers was critical in Cliff's role as mentor.

Summary

This chapter presented the thematic findings of the study. The results were guided by two research questions addressing the beliefs and behaviors of mentors. Thematic analysis of the data was used to derive five hundred thirteen (513) data strips describing beliefs and six hundred seventy three (673) data strips describing behaviors. Open coding of these data strips resulted in four belief themes and four behavior themes. Three conceptual levels were identified that presented the framework for the themes, including (a) military professional identity, (b) organization, and (c) people. Two additional themes emerged: (a) the belief in the limitations of mentoring and (d) the use of "other informal strategies". These emergent themes, and the categories within each theme, were described and illustrative quotations provided in this chapter.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter begins with a summary of the study, reviewing procedures, methods, and analysis. A discussion of the findings and conclusions, related to relevant literature, is then presented. Next, implications for theory and for practice will be described. Limitations of the study will be addressed and then finally, recommendations for future research will be presented.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine mid-to-senior-level officers when they served as mentors within the National Guard context. Two research questions guided the study:

1.   What are the officers' beliefs about their role as mentors?

2.   What are the officers' behaviors, or strategies, that contribute to their role as mentors?

Beliefs were defined as a set of closely held personal and professional assumptions and worldviews. The framework category of mentor beliefs was considered as the underlying foundation for understanding how officers perceived their role as mentor, their views of the mentee, and the way in which they viewed the mentoring process. Behaviors, or strategies, were defined as a set of actions that were performed by the officer when they perceived that they were mentoring junior officers. The framework of mentor behaviors was viewed as the strategies that mentors used in the actual process of mentoring.

In-depth interviews were the primary data collection method for this qualitative inquiry. Nine officers from the Georgia Army National Guard, nominated as exemplar mentors, comprised the sample group. Personal interviews were conducted with each officer and averaged one and one-half hours in length. The primary data collection method involved the critical incident interview technique. The advantages of the CIT were that it served as a way to gather real-world examples of mentoring and allowed the researcher to examine the practice of mentoring across the numerous incidents and formulate critical requirements in the practice of mentoring (Flanagan, 1954).

All the interviews were tape-recorded, and the researcher transcribed each interview herself. A total of thirty-nine (39) critical mentoring incidents, effective and ineffective, were collected from the mentors. In-vivo coding and open coding procedures were used to sort the data, and thematic analysis of the data was used to derive the emergent themes related to the two classification systems of beliefs and behaviors. A comprehensive portrait was developed for each mentor that included his/her mentoring beliefs, mentoring behaviors, core mentoring theme, mentoring incident, and experiences as a mentee. Individual portraits were presented in Chapter IV. Analysis of the data set resulted in four themes related to mentoring beliefs, four themes related to mentoring behaviors, and three additional themes related to the unique socio-cultural context of the National Guard.

Discussion of the Findings

This section presents a discussion focused on the research study findings. They are presented according to the three conclusions, thematic findings, and relevant literature. The three conclusions are: (a) officers provide mentoring in very similar ways to managers and leaders within the civilian environment, (b) the context of the National Guard influences the pace and the

nature of mentoring, and (c) the lack of diverse role models impacts the opportunities for and dimensions of mentoring minority officers.

Conclusion One: Similarities Between Mentoring Constructs

The first conclusion centers on the similarities between mentoring that occurs within the military and the civilian context. For the most part, officers' beliefs and behaviors resulted in providing informal learning opportunities to their junior officers in a similar manner as leaders within the civilian environment. A notable exception includes the military foundation as an overarching framework for the mentors' beliefs and behaviors. While civilian mentors and menteees may experience loyalty to their organization and to their profession, the military has a belief system that provides a common set of standards and expectations for its members. This belief system encompasses core values, leadership traits, and military actions. In this study, officers used this overarching framework to guide their mentoring of junior officers. This first conclusion can be viewed according to the four belief and four behavior themes.

Military professional identity is the most complex thematic level and includes those beliefs and behaviors associated with a military officer's profession. Maintaining a standard of behavior describes a set of core beliefs focused on the value of military standards and the officer's responsibility in enforcing those standards. The military standards included both technical and generalized knowledge as well as a set of behaviors or actions. Figure 4 presented a matrix that illustrated officers' level of mentoring focus regarding performance and interpersonal-orientation. These findings add to the discussion associated with the military framework that officers use in their mentoring.

Nearly one-half of the mentors in this study were found in the first upper-level quadrant. Additionally, two officers were situated in the second upper-level quadrant and shared their high

level of performance-orientation. Similarities among the sample group were notable. Several

conclusions could be made regarding this finding. Study results could conclude that mentors

within this context have similar performance-oriented mentoring approaches. In this case,

performance-orientation was viewed as being more focused on the conduct of the military

profession, including military standards, officer traits, and core job specialties. The presence of

mentors with a high focus on interpersonal-orientation suggests that effective mentors can have a

variety of approaches; however, the concentration of mentors with a performance-orientation

may indicate a trend. Adding to this finding, the four most-senior level officers shared this

orientation. One explanation may be addressed by the extensive military training that officers

receive over their careers. Another explanation might be the degree of military discipline they've

acquired over their careers. These overall findings regarding performance-oriented mentoring

add further support to the conclusion that the military framework of beliefs and behavior serve as

a notable exception between civilian and military mentoring constructs.

Identifying fundamental executive skills and ways of thinking, McCall, Lombardo, and

Morrison (1988) identified five thematic groupings. Two skills, listed under the theme of *setting*

and implementing agendas are supported by this belief. They are *technical / professional skills*

and *all about the business one is in*. Mentors described beliefs in strong professional and

functional skills and viewed the military as their frame of reference.

Additionally, this supports Ellinger's (1997) examination of mid-and-high-level

managers. In facilitating the learning of their employees, one specific manager behavior

identified was *setting and communicating expectations*. Mentor beliefs included standards of

behavior and communicating expectations. Although this theme related directly to the context of

the military and its values and standards, it does support managerial functions related to technical skills and expectations.

Behaviors associated with military professional identity relate to their use of demonstration as a mentoring strategy. Mentors described this theme as providing the role model for their junior officers. The strategy of demonstrating how to be a leader, how to deal with issues, and how to work with people was communicated through their own personal modeling. The use of role modeling is well grounded in the mentoring literature. Kram (1985) identified this strategy as inclusive of the psychosocial function. Role modeling, in her sense, was an aspect that enhanced the protégé's sense of competence and effectiveness in his/her professional role. This aspect resulted from the interpersonal relationship formed between mentor and protégé. This study supports the prevalence of role modeling and enhances the finding that role modeling reaches beyond the psychosocial function into the career function. Mentors in this study described demonstration as an effective method of communicating career-related functions such as how to perform your job and how to function at higher levels of authority.

This supports Ellinger's (1997) finding about managers' beliefs regarding their personal capabilities. One theme related to manager's ability to apply their own personal and professional experiences to the learning episodes. Mentors described using their own experiences as a foundation for mentoring, and they described providing examples and personal instances as strategies in their mentoring efforts.

Learning what executives are like was a lesson identified by McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison (1998) in examining critical developmental experiences. Understanding how executives think, operate, and function can occur in many forms. This research supports that lesson with the strategy of demonstration. Mentors in this study provided the model of what

higher ranking officers were like. Officers reported that mentees gained valuable experiences about upper-level positions by watching others operate, and the officers themselves reported learning from observing their own mentors operate within the higher-rank structure.

The theme associated with the organization level provided additional parallels between the military and the civilian context. This set of beliefs focused on the performance-oriented dimension of mentoring. Mentors believed that developmental opportunities and relationships provided a benefit to the organization. Mentors in this study saw a direct link between their efforts and organizational benefits. Providing opportunities, both directly and indirectly, for their mentees facilitated their development and contributed to the organization. These efforts focused on ensuring that mentees understood the workings of the organization, their job, and the interrelatedness of these two components. Mentors talked about making sure that mentees understood the *why* behind what they were doing. This theme focused on both the big picture understanding and the belief in their role in providing opportunities. This theme supports several key findings.

These beliefs are similar to those found within Kram's (1985) career functions. She considered career functions as those aspects of mentoring that prepare a protégé for career advancement and are made possible because of the mentor's position, experience, and organizational influence. One aspect of the career function was providing opportunities and this was clearly found in the interviews with the mentors as they talked about providing challenges and assignments to their mentee.

Allen, Poteet, and Burroughs (1997) examined twenty-seven (27) mentors regarding their experiences a mentor. Two overall higher-order factors identified the reasons they mentor others: other-focused and self-focused. Other-focused dimensions that were supported by this belief

include the desire to build a competent workforce and to benefit the organization. One theme that emerged from the data regarding the positive benefits pertained to job-related dimensions. Mentor beliefs support two dimensions related to reasons to mentor: (a) mentoring ensures the passage of knowledge to others and (b) mentoring builds a competent workforce. Officers talked extensively about ensuring that information was passed down to the troops and that the organization was gaining added value from mentoring efforts. Mentors viewed these outcomes as positive benefits to mentoring.

These beliefs support several findings by Ellinger (1997) regarding managers' triggers to learning and managers' beliefs about learners. Her framework category of triggers was defined as "the circumstances, occurrences and events which serve as a catalyst for learning" (p. 202). Her study identified developmental opportunities as being a significant trigger. Additionally, she identified "high consequences" as a trigger to learning in the workplace. Managers were compelled to engage in a learning experience when they felt that the consequences would involve visible, critical, and high stakes for the learner or the organization. The existence of high consequences as a trigger to learning was supported in this study as mentors described mentoring opportunities as taking place in the middle a field operation, in front of a group of people, and in situations with high-risk or long-term consequences.

Additionally, this theme also supports two manager beliefs (Ellinger, 1997). Ellinger (1997) found that managers believed that learners needed "a solid foundation of information, both in formal education, and on-the-job knowledge, and need to understand the *why's* of their work" (p. 214). Also, she identified managers' beliefs about the learners as "extremely capable of learning, making decisions, and exceeding expectorations" (p. 213). This is supported by the mentors' belief in junior officers' need to understand their job, the organization, and the big

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picture of the Georgia Army National Guard. Additionally, mentors described their belief in the potential of their mentees and believed that their mentees had the capacity to learn and grow and develop.

McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison (1988) found a similar focus with their executives within the theme of setting and implementing agendas. Two particular skills identified as fundamental for their executives were the skills of *strategic thinking* and *recognizing and seizing opportunities*. Executives needed to be able to visualize the big picture of the organization and to think ahead. They also found that managers needed the requisite personal awareness in order to recognize and seize opportunities. Both skills are supported within this theme as mentors described looking for and seizing mentoring opportunities to develop their junior officers.

Mentors' behaviors related to the organization included those strategies focused on goals and strategies that directed their mentoring efforts toward resolving issues associated with the goals. Actions that assisted the mentee in achieving his or her goals were indicative of this theme. This theme supports Kram's (1985) career function of mentoring. Coaching, in particular, was an important strategy within the career function. She described coaching as a mentoring function that "enhances the junior person's knowledge and understanding of how to navigate effectively in the corporate world (p. 28). This occurred by way of the senior person suggesting specific strategies for accomplishing work objectives, gaining recognition, and for achieving career aspirations. The actions of the mentors support this career function. Kram (1985) identified two mentor characteristics that assisted mentees in achieving success: helpfulness and organizational influence. The officers had the desire to help and a means to help by way of being situated within the organization. Helping others was an aspect mentioned often by the officers. Mitchell explained,

mentoring to me is the opportunity to bring out the best in someone else and try to help them be more than they are….Because the whole process is not to see how much we can individually do, the whole process is to see how much we can help others. (553-559)

Mitchell's focus on helping others to be successful was repeated often.

This organization theme supports Allen, Poteet, and Burrough's (1997) finding regarding individual reasons for mentoring. They found that mentors had (a) a general desire to help others and (b) a desire to help others succeed. Mentors also desired to help minorities / women move through the ranks. This theme supported Allen, Poteet, and Burrough's findings in that mentor's talked about providing information that would allow women and minorities to successfully navigate through the ranks and using strategies focused on helping clear the mine field for their mentee.

Additionally, this supports Ellinger's (1997) findings regarding managers' empowering behavior. She found that managers behave as a resource to their employees and remove obstacles that might be in their way. Managers did this by providing resources and information for employees, but stopped shy of solving the problems for them. This empowering behavior was also seen in the mentors as they described strategies that provided information or advice; however, in the study mentors described taking specific steps to solve their mentee's problem. Taking these steps was seen as a last resort and generally due to influences outside of their mentee's control.

Mentors' behaviors were often triggered by a specific issue that the junior officer requested help in resolving. Focusing on goals and recognizing issues that needed to be addressed served as a trigger for the mentors. This focus on a precipitating issue or situation supports Cseh's (1998) finding that owners-managers learning was triggered by the context. She

found that all of the owner-managers' triggers "arose from specific contextual situations perceived as unsolvable at that time by the managers" (p. 157).

The third theme, people, provides additional support for the first conclusion. Caring about people and being approachable describe a set of beliefs centered on the mentors' personal characteristics. Mentors need to have and demonstrate a genuine sense of concern, focus, and care for the mentee. Furthermore, officers believed that mentors needed to be approachable and receptive to others. Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs (1997) examined mentors and their reasons for entering into mentoring relationships. Four areas of inquiry included: individual reasons for mentoring others, organizational factors that influence mentoring, mentor-protégé attraction, and outcomes associated with mentoring for the mentor. This mentoring belief supports several key findings from their study. First, this belief supports *the team approach to work* as an organizational factor that facilitates mentoring. Mentors talked about camaraderie, being buddies, and building community. Secondly, regarding the positive benefits associated with mentoring, this belief supports the factor of *self-satisfaction*. Two dimensions related to this factor were the *satisfaction in seeing others grow and succeed* and the *general satisfaction in helping* others. Mentors talked about their desire to help mentees and the satisfaction they received when they mentored.

As a result of their study, Allen, Poteet, and Burroughs (1997) proposed that individuals demonstrating high levels of other-oriented empathy would be more likely to mentor others. Other-oriented empathy was defined as the tendency to feel empathy and responsibility for the welfare of others (as cited in Allen, et al., 1997). Other-oriented empathy was supported by this mentoring belief theme. Mentors described seeing junior officers struggle and that that triggered memories of their own earlier struggles. Jim explained,

those guys will do it for their people, their people will do it for their people, and it just

sort of goes down. They understand that 'hey someone took care of me, someone's

looking out over me", then when issues come up with people subordinate to them, that

they see it as their opportunity to turn around and say "hey, let's take a few minutes and

talk about this". (pp. 198-203)

This belief supports their finding associated with the mentoring benefit of self-satisfaction.

Additionally, this belief supports findings regarding managerial functions associated with

interpersonal dimensions. Examining the multiple ways in which managers facilitate the learning

and development of their employees, Ellinger (1997) studied twelve successful mid and senior

level managers. She focused on their beliefs, triggers to learning, behaviors, and consequences

when they served as facilitators of learning. Several aspects of this study support her findings.

Regarding managers' beliefs about their personal capabilities as facilitators of learning, Ellinger

(1997) found that managers' beliefs involved the notion of caring and a willingness to want to

help their employees The managers believed that a sincere, honest, and caring approach was

"critical to facilitate learning" (212). Officers in this study saw caring as a fundamental element

in mentoring.

McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison (1988) identified several fundamental skills for

executives that relate to this belief. Their theme titled *handling relationships* contained those

skills that relate to the lessons of relationships. Sensitivity to the human side of management was

described as having a more human approach to managing people and having sensitivity to others.

This study described mentors' beliefs as caring about people and having regard for them as

individuals.

The mentoring literature focused on the more interpersonal or psychosocial aspects of mentoring are also evident in this theme (Kram, 1985). These functions are a result of the interpersonal relationship formed between the mentor and the protégé. One particular aspect of this function that relates to this belief was friendship. Personal relationships, buddies, compadres, and friends were terms used to describe mentor's relationship with his or her mentee. These results support Kram's findings that mentoring functions include the more interpersonal, psychosocial element.

The behaviors that emerged associated with the people theme included using strategies that are other focused and involve being straight with people. In essence, mentors described behaviors that focused on their mentee and dealing with him/her in an upfront and honest manner. This theme supports findings in the literature regarding managerial functions. Ellinger's (1997) findings of managers' beliefs about their general capabilities included managers' knowing their employees very well. Managers' believed that they needed to know their people very well, both personally and professionally, in order to more effectively facilitate their learning. Mentors emphasized the need to listen, observe, and understand their mentees in order to help them develop. They stressed the importance of getting to know them, their strengths and weaknesses, and being able to relate to them personally.

Additionally, this theme supports two manager behaviors identified by Ellinger (1997): providing feedback to employees and broadening employee's perspective. Regarding behaviors used by managers to facilitate learning, the most prevalent theme was providing feedback. Managers described this facilitating behavior as giving feedback following observations of actions that could be detrimental and also as providing performance reviews about strengths and areas for future development. This mentor belief theme supports this finding as mentors

described pulling people aside, telling them what they needed to hear, and doing the bad mentoring. In this study, mentors took their leadership position very seriously and considered the behavior of giving people feedback as a key responsibility of their position. The second behavior that managers used related to broadening their employees' perspectives. Ellinger (1997) described this as helping the learners to see things differently. This finding was supported as mentors described the "other focused" theme as trying to put themselves in the place of their mentees, truly understanding where they are coming from, and helping their mentees see a situation in a different light. Cliff explained,

> it was important for me to make sure that he knew the background of the parties that were involved and that he understood the difference in the way he had come up seeing things and the way that these other guys had come up seeing things and why sometimes something that he perceived as being so very wrong was maybe not quite as wrong in these guy's eyes as what he might have thought it was or as serious. (762-767)

Gaining the perspective of the mentee and helping the mentee gain perspective support Ellinger's (1997) findings.

One learning outcome identified by Ellinger (1997) is supported by this theme. An outcome related to managers' learning involved *learning what works*. Managers described learning outcomes in which they learned what kind of strategies worked with certain employees in certain situations. This is supported by mentors' descriptions of how they used strategies focused on the other person. Adjusting mentoring styles was one category in this theme and referred to mentors' learning about their mentee, assessing his/her skills and abilities, and then adjusting their style in order to meet the mentee's needs.

This people theme supports four executive skills found in McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison's (1988) study. The theme of *handling relationships* included understanding other people's perspective, developing other people, and confronting subordinate performance problems. A relevant skill related to the theme of *executive development* was being tough when necessary. Mentors described these beliefs as developing and growing people, looking people in the eye, and doing the hard right thing.

An additional theme related to mentors' strategies involved the use of other informal strategies. Mentors described informal methods such as coffee cup meetings, side-bar conversations, and lots of small bytes of time with their mentees. Doug stated this overtly, "most mentoring, or 99.9% of it, is informal. It's not formalized" (61-62). McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison's (1988) study of the development of one hundred ninety-one (191) managers revealed, "only a minute part of a manager's time is spent in a classroom, suggesting that it's the other 99.9 percent of the time that the bulk of development takes place. In other words, people develop on the job" (p. 1). Their qualitative inquiry into the sorts of key events that led to executive development, yielded 616 events and resulted in 1,547 corresponding lessons. McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison (1988) described those lessons as representing the "fundamental executive skills and ways of thinking" (p. 6). The lessons are associated with particular experiences and draw their meaning from that particular context. All the lessons are from experience and, as such, are dependent on informal learning. This research study supports this work as all the officers related informal mentoring methods and environments. Additionally, in recalling their experiences as a mentee, mentors described informal mentoring as the sole source of their learning.

Ellinger (1997) identified managers' behaviors as they facilitated the learning of their employees. Thirteen themes related to managers' behavior emerged from her data. Each theme described a dimension of the role of learning facilitator and each theme involved informal learning. Two of her largest informal themes related to managers' behavior were providing feedback and working it out together. This study supports her findings in that all the behaviors described by mentors involved providing informal mentoring as they facilitated the development of their junior officers.

Cseh (1998) studied the critical learning experiences of owner-managers that enabled them to lead successfully in the transition to a free market economy. Her study examined triggers of learning, how managers learned, and what they learned. This study supports her findings regarding learning strategies. Learning strategies were defined as methods used by the owners-managers "to go about learning to deal with their critical incident" (p. 159). As a whole, all but one manager learned soley through informal methods. The top two learning strategies were learning from others and learning from experience. Learning from experience was described as "day-to-day experiences, mistakes, observations, and trial and error" (p. 163). This study supports her findings, as mentors described learning from hustling mistakes and trial and error. In summary, findings of this study support the findings of the informal and incidental learning literature that learning occurs informally or naturally on the job (Cseh, 1998; Ellinger, 1997; Marsick & Watkins, 1990; McCall, Lomardo, & Morrison, 1988).

A final theme related to the first conclusion emerged from the mentors' beliefs regarding the inherent limitations of mentoring. This theme described mentoring efforts that were unsuccessful. The reasons were categorized as limitations of the mentor, limitations of the mentee, and organizational constraints. A similar finding was present in Ellinger's (1997) study

of managers. One belief found was that the managers weren't sure if they could help the employee. In those particular cases, the manager had inherited a problem employee. This study supports the finding that mentors sometimes have difficult junior officers and can't always facilitate their development. The mentoring literature addresses dysfunctional mentoring relationships and acknowledges that mentoring is not effective in all situations for all people (Kram, 1980, 1985; Scandura, 1998). The existence of power as a role in the emergence of dysfunction has been identified as an area worthy of further consideration (Ragins & Scandura, 1997; Scandura, 1998). Although each of the mentoring incidents involved a power differentiation between the mentor and the mentee, the researcher did not discover power as an overt element in the ineffective mentoring incidents described.

Conclusion Two: Influence of Context on the Pace and Nature of Mentoring

The second conclusion centers on the context of the National Guard. Specifically, this conclusion addressed how the context influenced the pace and intensity of mentorship. Mentoring was provided in condensed segments of time and was influenced by the addition of civilian experiences and other external influences. In other words, mentoring experiences have the potential to be diluted between training events, and it appeared that mentors use intense experiences to imprint lessons onto their mentees. These sorts of experiences may not be necessary if working on a daily basis with an employee.

The contextual theme associated with the size of the organization addressed the political dimensions associated with such a small organization and the structural components of the organization. Mentors described organizational characteristics, indicative of this theme, as working with the same people for years and years, being moved around the organization, and being representative of the pyramid shape of the organization. This finding related to Allen,

Poteet, and Burrough's (1997) study on the reasons mentors decide to take on their roles. Their study revealed organizational factors that either facilitated or inhibited effective mentoring relationships. Contextual findings of this study provide tentative support for two factors that inhibit mentoring: a competitive and political environment and organizational structure. The researcher found limited evidence that mentoring relationships were affected by the politics in the organization. Mentors did talk about the limited opportunities for being mentored and the politics that arose from such a small organization. Relationships, not necessarily labeled as mentoring relationships, were identified as part of that political dimension.

The limited opportunity for mentoring was a theme in this study. Based on the organizational structure and the fact that traditional officers in the National Guard are present only on a limited basis, time constraints significantly affected mentoring. This supports Allen, Poteet, and Burough's (1998) finding that *time and work demands* was one of the most often reported organizational factors that inhibited the practice of mentoring.

Cseh's (1998) study of owners-mangers within the transition to a free-market economy found that context permeated every part of the learning process. Although the external environment significantly influenced her study, some similarities do exist. One dimension she examined was the trigger to learning for the managers. Triggers were defined as the stimulus that initiated the manager to learn. She discovered that, "most of the triggers were embedded in the external context of the manager's companies" (p. 159). Although this present study did not experience the same level of contextual influence, the internal context of time constraints related to the initiation of mentoring. In other words, both the pace and style of mentoring are influenced by the context. Officers described the need to mentor on-the-spot, to take advantage of every opportunity, and to use negative events more frequently in the absence of other opportunities.

This study supports Cseh's (1998) finding that context influences informal learning practice of mentoring.

A final sub-theme addresses the existence of dual careers for the mentees. The mentors described this as working with mentees who have to choose between military and civilian jobs, who have a disadvantage because they are not privy to social and political networks, and who are equally well placed in the civilian world. This particular contextual feature was not addressed in any bodies of literature known by the researcher. Although managing part-time employees has been addressed, the specific practice of mentoring has not been addressed. Evidence from this study does support the findings of Feldman and Doerpinghaus (1992a) who offered strategies for managing retention-quality part-time employees. They suggested providing them training alongside their full-time counterparts and improving informal communication. Mentors described beliefs and behaviors that support their recommendations.

Conclusion Three: Lack of Diverse Role Models Impacts Mentoring of Minority Officers

The final conclusion centers on the lack of diverse mid-to-senior level role models within the National Guard. The mentors were consistent in their belief in demonstration and role modeling as key strategies in mentoring junior officers. They described many incidents in which mentees learned from watching them; however, such reliance is predicated on the availability of diverse role models from which to learn.

A finding related to the theme of military professional identity, in particular demonstration and role modeling, can be found in examining the factors related to mentor-protégé attraction. Allen, Poteet, and Burroughs (1997) found that protégés who were a reflection of the mentors themselves were most attractive. They stated, "similarity may be the one overriding factor that determines mentor-protégé attraction"(p. 86). Mentors indicated that they

were attracted to protégés who reminded them of themselves earlier in their career and that this factor drew them to the protégé they perceived as being similar to them. The authors proposed that mentors will perceive that there are greater rewards to providing mentoring to protégés who are perceived to be similar to themselves than protégés they perceive to be dissimilar to themselves. This mentoring study provided limited support for this finding in that the two minority officers in the study reported less experience as a mentee than the other participants and indicated that there weren't many people available or willing to mentor them. However, findings are too limited for the researcher to draw conclusions regarding minority members being restricted access to mentoring relationships.

Mentoring literature indicates that sharing a similar worldview between mentor and mentee contributes to more effective mentoring (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2002; Ragins & Scandura, 1997). Mentoring that occurs across the cultural boundaries of gender or race presents a challenge for the mentor and the mentee. Although members may share a common organizational context, the different experiences and reactions within their work environment is often a source of unease and uncommon ground that may "weaken the bonds of trust and set up an impasse of cyclical anger and guilt" (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2002, p. 19). Working through this impasse and developing trust between mentor and mentee is critical for the successful development of career and psychosocial elements of mentoring. One advantage that the National Guard has toward addressing these issues can be found in its common framework of military beliefs. These beliefs, as described in the first conclusion, contribute to a common worldview between both members of the mentoring dyad and play a significant role in bridging the chasm that often exists within cross-cultural mentoring relationships.

An additional dimension to the mentoring relationship lies in its hierarchical nature. Inherent in the dynamics of a mentoring relationship are the higher-power position of mentor and the lower-power position of mentee. The element of mentoring across cultures adds one more layer to its already hierarchical nature. Johnson and Bailey (2004) explained, "this power relationship is further magnified in cross-cultural mentoring, where the people are in differing locations in societal hierarchies of race and gender" (p. 16). Candid discussions regarding race and power can serve as ways to develop trust. Studies have shown that mentors in cross-race relationships carry out career development and psychosocial functions when both members share similar understandings and strategies for dealing with racial differences in their relationship (as cited in Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2002). Instead of candid discussions, members often engage in "protective hesitation" (Thomas, 2001) and choose instead to refrain from raising touchy issues. This is particularly acute when the issue is race. Considering the overlapping systems of power hierarchy associated with mentoring, cross-cultural dynamics, and the military, the challenges and difficulties associated with mentoring junior officers within this context become quite evident.

Regardless of the Georgia Army National Guard's commitment to increasing diversity within its organization, this study indicates that diversity is not prevalent within its upper rank structure. The paucity of diverse role models may affect the mentoring process in three significant ways. First, it may suggest that minority junior officers are not afforded the same mentoring opportunities and benefits due to the lack of role models. This is not to say that minorities do not benefit from cross-cultural role models, but rather that the lack of diverse role models diminishes the opportunity for *culturally congruent* role modeling. Secondly, it may indicate that minority officers don't receive the same degree of mentoring from officers. Officers

may hesitate to reach out to minorities because of uneasiness or concern related to dissimilarity. As mentioned earlier, similarity plays a role in mentor-protégé attraction (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997). This is further supported by the theory of homogeneity which posits that people prefer to mentor those from their own ethnic group. Finally, it points to the significance of effective cross-cultural mentoring as the primary method for minority junior officers.

<div align="center">Implications</div>

Theoretical Implications

This study contributed to the knowledge about mentoring and informal learning. Focusing on officers' beliefs and behaviors while they serve as mentors provided additional knowledge of both mentors and the mentoring process. Additional insight about the recipients of mentoring, the mentees, was also gained by this study. Contributing to the knowledge about informal learning, officers described informal methods and environments in which they provided developmental mentoring to their junior officers. Finally, the focus on the unique socio-cultural context of the National Guard added to the body of knowledge concerning context and its significance to making meaning.

Implications for Practice

This study holds many implications for practitioners. The prevalence of part-time professionals in the workplace points to the need for human resource practitioners to develop strategies for this unique workforce segment. The need for social support for these employees provides insight into developing employee resources and for creating appropriate communication networks. Human resource professionals may consider developing mentoring programs for their employees, and this study provided some practical information toward that end. Considering the significant role that demonstration and role modeling played in this study, careful selection of

mentors is warranted to ensure that mentees learn from appropriate role models. Clarifying the roles and expectations of the mentee and the mentor will help both parties understand their responsibilities and provide clarity between traditional leadership and mentorship concepts. In general, practitioners need to consider the contextual factors associated with part-time employees as they look across a wide range of human resource practices.

Practical implications abound for the National Guard. Although mentoring is recognized as a leadership behavior, the organization needs to acknowledge that not all leaders are effective mentors. Therefore, professional development opportunities, focused on the findings associated with this study may be warranted for the organization's senior leadership. Organizational support of developmental opportunities for junior officers is fundamental for the National Guard's success. Time and opportunity, precious commodities in this context, may need to be allocated for senior officers to interact with their junior officers. Informal opportunities for networking and interactions among diverse groups of leadership levels could facilitate learning for organizational members. Training focused on adult learning concepts would assist leaders at all levels understand the potential impact that informal learning experiences hold for organizational members.

Considering the impact on developmental experiences for future leaders, the National Guard might take a more comprehensive and thoughtful look across its organizational structure in order to identify positions that might allow for more developmental learning. One implication could be developing a career progression program that recognized, planned, and integrated developmental opportunities for officers. Developing programs that facilitate better integration of traditional officers into the system, such as side-by-side training opportunities and developing

effective communication networks, may serve as an additional practical implication for National Guard leaders.

Finally, the National Guard might need to take a closer look at the diversity within the organization and make strategic decisions on how best to ensure diverse role models and mentoring opportunities are available for all junior leaders. Until then, cross-cultural mentoring will be a way of life for minority junior officers, therefore, the organization may consider various programs to facilitate the mentoring process, such as educating its mid-to-senior level officers regarding cross-cultural mentoring dynamics or developing a mentoring consortium for minority officers.

<div align="center">Limitations and Recommendations</div>

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study are threefold: the topic, the participants, and the researcher. Each was limited in some capacity to provide a clear picture of the complex subject of mentoring. There were at least two reasons why the topic was a complicated one for military leaders. One reason involves the role of mentor as embedded within the larger role of the military leader. The military views mentoring as one dimension of leadership; therefore, separating these embedded constructs and focusing only on the mentoring portion of a leader's role contributed to topic's complexity. Secondly, because mentoring, as perceived as occurring outside of this embedded leadership construct, could be viewed as preferential treatment or as part of a *good 'ole boy* system. Therefore, congruency of definitions and the presence of these embedded concepts presented a challenge for this research study.

Although the participants were nominated as exemplary mentors, they still provided only a limited perspective of mentoring and each officer was influenced by his/her own set of biases

and assumptions. The individual experiences of the mentors played a key role in their development and because this aspect was not considered in the study the participants may not have been representative of mentors within this context. The researcher herself, the instrument of the research, was limited in a number of ways. Although she attempted to be cognizant of her conceptual framework and subjectivity, it was possible that she influenced the findings by not paying sufficient attention to participant statements, or may have placed her own definition on a mentoring construct. While providing her with the advantage of accessing this group and understanding their perspective, being an insider may have limited her ability to conduct this research. Based on those limitations, the following recommendations are made.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. *Increasing the number of participants*. Providing a wider variety of participants would allow for multiple perspectives. One avenue to address this recommendation is to develop a survey instrument to solicit information regarding mentoring practices across the organization.

2. *Interviewing both members of the mentoring relationship.* Understanding mentoring from both points of view would paint a more complete picture of mentoring.

3. *Examining the background and experiences of mentors within the National Guard.* Identifying the critical developmental experiences could help the organization better understand how mentors develop and could be used in developing potential mentors. Replicating the interview guideline introduced in *Lessons of Experience* (McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1988) could serve as a mechanism.

4. *Interviewing mentoring peers.* This would allow for the separation of leadership and mentorship as embedded constructs within the National Guard context.

5.   *Developing a diverse team of researchers to examine organizational aspects of the National Guard.* The team could help ensure no singular perspective was being overly represented.

Considering the extent to which mentoring can be an effective tool for developing an organizations' most valuable resource, people, additional research focused on various aspects of mentoring seems critical in expanding our understanding of informal learning. In conclusion, the findings of the study expand on the findings in the mentoring and informal learning literature by adding the unique perspective of officers while they provided mentoring within the National Guard context.

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NOMINATION FORM FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS

DATE: **August 23, 2004**

TO: **Georgia Army National Guard Officers**

FROM: **MAJ Catherine M. Tait**

SUBJECT: **Research Study of GaARNG Mentors**

I am interested in the way mentoring of junior officers' works in the military and would like your assistance to locate individuals that you believe are regarded as strong mentors.

Introduction to the Study:

In conjunction with my dissertation research at UGA and in an effort to enhance the GaARNG Officer Corps, I will be investigating the mentoring practices within the National Guard. Specifically, I am exploring how officers provide effective mentoring to those officers who serve in the traditional guard capacity (M-Day). I will focus on the specific effective and ineffective techniques, processes, beliefs, and behaviors that field grade officers engage in to help facilitate the personal and professional development of their subordinates. The outcome of this study is to provide a picture of what mentors actually do in the National Guard to help facilitate the development of their subordinates. It may also point out barriers to the mentoring process and this too is helpful information. In order to best understand the mentoring process, I need to make sure I interview those officers from whom I can learn the most.

I need your input. I would like you to think back over your career within the Georgia Army National Guard and think about any field grade officer, currently serving or perhaps retired, who you believe has a strong reputation as a mentor, especially in regard to mentoring traditional (M-Day) officers. If, on the other hand, you are not able to identify an individual who you believe epitomizes an effective mentor, please disregard this survey.

In order to learn the most about effective mentoring practices within the GaARNG, I would strongly recommend that you speak with:

_____   _____
*Name   Current unit (if known)
* Names submitted, as well as identification of individuals submitting names, will be confidential

SAMPLE COVER LETTER TO NOMINATED PARTICIPANTS

December 4, 2002

Dear MAJ/LTC/,COL

       I am a doctoral student at the University of Georgia in the Department of Adult Education, and am currently engaged in the data collection phase of my dissertation under the guidance of Dr. Karen E. Watkins. My interests in human resource development and organizational learning have led me to pursue a research study that investigates how officers serve as mentors within the National Guard.

       You have been recommended as an officer who would be especially insightful for me to speak with regarding the topic of my study. Accordingly, I would like to extend an invitation to you to become a member of my study sample. If you are willing to participate in the study, this is what that would look like for us. You will contact me, either telephonically or electronically, and indicate your willingness to participate. We will then have a short conversation during which I will confirm your willingness to participate and set up an interview

       I will then send you an information packet that contains a description of the study, a consent form, and a set of questions that will stimulate your thinking about how you may serve in a mentoring capacity for your subordinates. We will then meet and, with your permission, conduct a tape-recorded interview that explores this topic in greater detail. The interview should take about one to one and one-half hours and I would not anticipate needing more than two interviews.

       Your participation in this study is extremely important because your insights will help me to develop an in-depth understanding of the ways in which officers provide developmental mentoring. All data collected during the interview with you will be strictly confidential.

       If you do not choose to participate in the study, simply call me or drop me a short email and indicate your decision. Although I hope you will accept this invitation, I respect your opinion and appreciate the time and energy that you have put into this matter.

Your consideration is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Catherine M. Tait
UGA Doctoral Student
P.O. Box 5
Linville Falls, NC 28647
828.765.8576
E-mail: hooahtait@yahoo.com

CONSENT FORM

I, _____,agree to participate in the research study entitled *Officers as Mentors: A Qualitative Case Study within a Military Context,* which is being conducted by Catherine M. Tait, P.O. Box 2082, Milledgeville, GA 31059; Telephone (828) 765-8576, under the direction of Dr. Karen E. Watkins, Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair, The University of Georgia, Department of Adult Education, 850 College Station Road, 129 Rivers Crossing, Athens, Georgia 30602; Telephone (706) 542-2214. I understand that this participation is entirely voluntary; I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have the results of the participation, to the extent that it can be identified as mine, returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The following points have been explained to me:

1.   The reason for the research is to gain a better understanding of mentoring practices within the military context. The benefit that I may expect is to receive an optional copy of the executive summary of the dissertation findings when the entire research study is complete.
2.   The procedures are as follows:

   a.   Participation in the study will require at least one personal interview with the researcher that will be tape recorded for transcription purposes.
   b.   I will be asked to review an information packet, which contains a description of the critical incident technique and questions that will be asked during the interview, prior to the interview.
   c.   I will be asked to review my transcript for accuracy. The amended transcript must then be returned to the researcher.
3.   No discomforts or stresses are foreseen.
4.   No risks are foreseen. Participation will be confidential and I will only be identified through the use of a pseudonym. Any reference to name or organization will be removed from the transcripts and replaced with the pseudonym assigned to each mentor. The cassette tapes will be destroyed on December 1, 2004.
5.   The results of this participation will be confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without my prior consent, unless otherwise required by law.

6.   The researcher will answer any further questions about the research now or during the course of the project. She can be reached at (828) 765-8576 (daytime) or e-mail at hooahtait@yahoo.com

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in the study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____   _____
Signature of Researcher   Date   Signature of Participant   Date

Research at the University of Georgia that involves human participants is overseen by the Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding your rights as a participant should be addressed to Dr. Christina Joseph, Institutional Review Board, Office of the Vice President for Research, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-6514; E-mail Address: IRB@ uga.edu.

OVERVIEW OF STUDY AND INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in my research. My dissertation, leading to an Ed.D. in Adult Education, features an investigation into the mentoring practices within the National Guard. Specifically, I am exploring how mentors provide effective mentoring to those officers who serve in the traditional guard capacity (M-Day).

Introduction to the Study:

Recently, numerous scholars and practitioners alike have suggested that managers will assume roles as educators, coaches, and mentors, as organizations strive to integrate learning as a key business strategy. Serving in these roles within the military context is not a new concept. Although mentoring junior officers has been a key role for leaders within military organizations, little has been written about how exactly it takes place. This study focuses on the specific effective and ineffective techniques, processes, and behaviors that you, as an field grade officer may engage in to help facilitate the personal and professional development of your subordinates.

The outcome of this study is to provide a picture of what mentors actually do in the National Guard to help facilitate the development of their subordinates. It may also point out barriers to the mentoring process in situations that do not go as well as you may have anticipated. This too is helpful information.

Interview Guidelines:

In getting ready for our interview, I have prepared this guideline which describes what a "critical incident" is, and lists some of the questions that I will be asking you during our meeting. Prior to our meeting, I would like you to recall about three or four situations, or "critical incidents" that you believe stand out in your mind about times when you think you facilitated your subordinates development and it well really well, or perhaps those times when you feel that it did not go so well. When you think about the dimensions of mentoring, certain situations and events probably stand out in your mind. These situations and events may have involved mentoring M-Day officers. Those are the ones that I'd like you to think about.

In order to assist you, I have provided some information below that may help clarify what I am calling a "critical incident". Please feel free to make some notes that will help you to describe these situations during the interview. You may find that the descriptions of critical incidents stimulate your thinking and that you can come up with more than three or four incidents. If that is the case, I will ask you to pick out the ones that you deem most critical for our interview. In the interview I will ask you to describe each incident to me in as much detail as you can. I have included the questions that I will ask you for each of the incidents you share with me.

A "critical incident" may be thought of as having one of the following features:

- An incident that you feel your intervention really **made a difference** in the outcome for your subordinate, either directly or indirectly.

- An incident that **did not go so well**, that led to frustration or failure.

Now that you have an understanding of what a critical incident is, I am going to ask you to think about three or four incidents that you feel are most critical. During our conversation I am going to ask you to imagine yourself back in that situation. I am particularly interested in aspects of:

- The **mentoring relationship** (describing who the junior officer was, the nature of the relationship, etc.).

- The **context of the mentoring incident** (what were the surrounding circumstances, who was involved, where and when this took place, etc.)

- **What exactly happened** during the mentoring situation (what did you do, what was said, etc.)

- **How you knew** if your intervention was effective or ineffective (what evidence you had that something actually took place)

- **What made this incident "critical" for you?**

This information is designed to give you an idea of the overall approach to our interview. Please do not be concerned at this point about trying to recall all of this information prior to our interview. I will help you during the interview with a series of questions to stimulate your recollection of the incident.

Thanks again for your willingness to participate in my study. I look forward to our meeting.

RESEARCHER'S INTERVIEW GUIDELINE

1.   Please think of one critical incident that stands out for you. In as much detail as
      possible, describe the context of the situation and what happened.

      Possible follow-up questions:
          What led up to the situation?

          How did you handle the situation?

          What was the outcome?

          What prevented you from handling the situation the way you would have liked to?

          When you reflect back on this incident, what would you have done differently?

          What made this a "critical" incident for you?

2.   You've described mentoring that has gone particularly well (or poorly), can you think
      of a time when the mentoring went a different way? Tell me about it.

3.   What did you learn from this critical incident (or mentoring relationship)?

4.   Can you think of a time when you were involved in a critical mentoring incident as
      the person being mentored and tell me about it?

      Possible follow-up questions:
          How would you describe the mentoring relationship?

          What did you learn from this critical incident (or mentoring relationship)?

5.   You've given a lot of really good examples and descriptions of mentoring. How
      would you summarize your description or definition of mentoring?