



## **Mentor Guidelines**

Good Mentors want good things for their Mentees. However, Mentors need to be careful that in their eagerness to be helpful, they don't engage in three unproductive behaviors. They are criticizing, giving advice and rescuing your mentee from self-inflicted pain.

### **Criticism**

No matter how you try to put a positive spin on it, criticism is evaluative and judgmental. In fact, for some people, criticizing leads to nagging which only prolongs the problem. That doesn't mean that you don't provide feedback about negative behaviors or performance problems. You do, but you also work with your Mentee to identify creative and productive ways of addressing negative behaviors and enhancing performance.

### **Giving Advice**

Most people respond to advice with "yes, but." Mentees for the most part, don't want advice; they want you to talk about your experiences, knowledge and special insights. It is up to the Mentee to determine how best to take advantage of a Mentor's background and experience.

### **Rescuing Mentee from Self-Inflicted Pain**

A Mentor should point out patterns of ineffective behaviors that are being repeated, but the Mentor should not rescue the Mentee. If the Mentor steps in and rescues the Mentee, the Mentee doesn't have the opportunity to break a pattern that isn't working for the Mentee.

*[Adapted from Mentoring by Gordon Shea]*