




Everywhere we go in life we encounter mentors. We had them in school, we have them at work, and we often encounter them in other environments. Sometimes they're called life coaches, sometimes it's a formal arrangement and sometimes someone comes along to give you a helping hand and teaches you "the ropes".

We need mentors in the Coast Guard Auxiliary to help our new and newer members learn the ropes. So this presentation is going to give you an overview of what a mentor does for these members and is a recruiting call.

But, before I call for a raising of hands to be a volunteer mentor, let's go through this short presentation.



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## DON'T ANSWER THAT YET!

- What is a mentor in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary?
- What's expected of you as a mentor?
- How do you measure results?
- What's in it for you?
- What do we have to do to have you sign up as a mentor?

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The next batch of slides are going to answer these questions:

1. What is a mentor in the Coast Guard Auxiliary?  
How do we define that role?
2. Once you agree to be a mentor, what are you expected to do?
3. As a mentor, how do you measure your effectiveness?
4. What do you get out of being a mentor?
5. And, finally, what does the Auxiliary leadership have to do to convince you to sign up?

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## What is a mentor in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary?

- Mentors are more senior members with experience who assume the responsibility of providing training for another member.



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First we have to define a mentor. Essentially, a USCG Auxiliary mentor is a more senior member who is willing to provide one-on-one training to a newer member. The mentor will be experienced in the Auxiliary enough to know what the new member needs to know. The mentor doesn't have to know it all, but they should know where to find things – where to direct the mentee to find the answer. This could be the AUXMAN, official websites, Auxiliary blogs, etc.



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## What is a mentor in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary?

- Knowledge and skill transfer is an important part of the process, but the mentor also must communicate our organizational culture, policies, practices, wisdom and experience to the mentee.

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But, being a mentor isn't only about answering questions and directing the member to publications and websites. It also means helping the mentee integrate into the Auxiliary by explaining and demonstrating our relationship to the Coast Guard, our procedures, the requirements once a mentee is a full-fledged member, even items such as uniforms, saluting, paperwork, etc. You name it, the mentor helps the mentee with it.

Think back to your initial membership – if you had a mentor, I am sure that person made your integration into the Auxiliary easier and a better experience. If not, think about what you could offer to someone so they don't have to go through “on the job” learning.

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## What is a mentor in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary?


- A mentor is a subject matter expert, a coach and an advocate. The mentor helps the mentee learn the knowledge and skills required to be a valuable Auxiliarist.



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As a mentor, you relate your knowledge of the Coast Guard Auxiliary to your mentee. You assume many roles – you’re a coach helping them excel; you’re an advisor leading them down the “career path” that will work for them in terms of time, skill and willingness; you’re a role model and lead by example.

As we said before, you don’t need to know it all, but knowing where to find it, who to ask, how to complete it, etc. are your tasks.




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## What is a mentor in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary?

- Any member assigned to be a mentor must have impeccable integrity as they are, in a large part, responsible for the credibility of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary.


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A mentor has to embrace the Coast Guard's core values of: honor, respect and devotion to duty. This means welcoming a diverse new membership in terms of age, gender identity, ethnicity, race, religion, etc. IT also means encouraging that new member to embrace those core values too. A mentor represents the organization and that means being as close as impeccable as possible – in behavior, uniform wear, attitude and more.

  
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## What is a mentor in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary?

- A successful mentor charts a course to a mentee's completion of their quest. The mentor is a coach, an advisor, a taskmaster, a knit-picker, a subject matter expert and often a friend.



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There are lots of tools on the [cgaux.org](http://cgaux.org) website to help mentor and mentee determine what the mentee wants to do. Once they both agree on what direction the mentee will follow – Vessel Examiner, watchstander, crew, marine safety, instructor or a combination of many – the mentor does as much as possible to help the mentee achieve those goals. Sometimes that means praising, sometimes it means kicking butt, and often it means being a confidant and friend.

  
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## What's expected of you as a mentor?

- Your role is to guide the mentee via one-on-one sessions through an exchange of accurate information from an experienced Auxiliarist to a member wanting to be a productive Auxiliarist.




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What exactly does a mentor do. The mentor is essentially a guide who leads the mentee through the different steps required to achieve their goals and to make them an Auxiliarist that will help us complete our missions.

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## What's expected of you as a mentor?

- A mentor must exercise patience and understanding with your mentee as people learn at different rates and levels.



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There's a good chance a mentee isn't going to be just like the mentor. That means the mentor must have the ability to determine how to best serve the mentee. Does the mentee need deadlines to complete a competency? Does the mentee need printed material instead of the web or vice versa? Can the mentee read a task and envision how to do it or does the mentor have to demonstrate it?

Whatever techniques are required, it's going to take patience and a willingness to let the mentee find his or her way to be a great Auxiliarist along with the mentor's guidance.

  
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## What's expected of you as a mentor?

- The mentor must know about the missions and programs of the Auxiliary so that all professional opportunities can be explored by the mentee.



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Yes, a mentor must know where to look to expose the mentee to all the Auxiliary has to offer. “C” schools, flotilla or division or even district programs, online resources, formal classes, etc. The mentor doesn’t have to know how to do every program, but it sure helps to know where to look or who to ask.




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## What's expected of you as a mentor?

- Your mission as a mentor is to adequately identify what the mentee has as a personal objective and to ensure that the objective is fulfilled.


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There has to be a good rapport between the mentor and mentee so that both are on the same “page” on what the mentee wants to accomplish and to make sure it’s consistent with the goals and missions of the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

  
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## What's expected of you as a mentor?

- A mentor has to properly induct the mentee into the “corporate mentality” of the Auxiliary and the U.S. Coast Guard.



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There is a specific culture in the Auxiliary – not just our adherence to the core values – but definitely centered on those. We expect members to specialize in at least one area, we need to prepare them to take on future leadership roles, we need them to commit what they can to furthering our missions.



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## What's expected of you as a mentor?

- A mentor makes sure the mentee understands the behavioral standards of the Auxiliary and motivates the mentee to adhere to them.



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It's really important that the new member understands the CG core values, the wearing of the uniform properly and that contrary to many other activities, the Auxiliary is not a democracy, but has a specific chain of leadership, communications and management. That the member is subject to this chain similar to the military where they would be subject to the chain of command.

  
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## What's expected of you as a mentor?

- A mentor has the responsibility to expose the mentee to all the opportunities that are available to them through the Auxiliary Member Training programs.



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Very often the mentor will hook up with the member training officer at the flotilla and division level to make sure the mentee is made aware of all the opportunities to learn and advance.

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## What's expected of you as a mentor?

- A mentor must impress upon the mentee the importance of their appearance when in uniform. Uniform regulations ensure professional and organizational acceptance both by fellow Auxiliarists and active-duty Coast Guard personnel.




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Uniforms are a big part of our identity and certainly enough of a cause of problems. So, the mentor needs to help the mentee not only acquire the uniform or uniforms needed to pursue the activities that the mentee wants to specialize in but needs to show by example the proper wearing of that uniform. This is so important to the credibility of the Auxiliary to the public and the Coast Guard.

  
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## What's expected of you as a mentor?

- A mentor always properly demonstrates courtesies and protocols. This includes helping the mentee learn the proper terms to ensure better communication among members.




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Again, a mentor must lead by example. So, not only wearing the uniform correctly, but also speaking the lingo correctly. That means a mentor needs to know the acronyms we use, must be able to explain them to the mentee, but must also encourage the member to use those correctly and to understand the audience.

  
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## How do you measure results?

- Having charted a course for a mentee's completion of their integration into a flotilla, a mentor makes periodic progress checks to measure their progress.



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We can only know if we're successful as a mentor when we look at what a mentee has done through different milestones that you both have agreed upon.



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## How do you measure results?

- Has the mentee made a smooth transition into the Auxiliary?
- Has the mentee identified and completed opportunities to contribute?
- Has the mentee recorded hours and earned certifications?


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Has the mentee successfully integrated into the flotilla? Do they attend meetings and relate to the other members?

Is the mentee specializing in some mission or missions? Are they a vessel examiner?

Crewmember? Instructor? Telecommunications operator? Has the mentee volunteered for a staff office or to learn under a staff officer as an assistant staff officer?

Is the mentee submitting, at a minimum, regular 7029's?



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## How do you measure results?

- Longer term:
  - Has the member remained in the Auxiliary?
  - Has the member accepted an appointed officer?
  - Has the member run for an elected office?


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Even though the mentor's responsibilities will eventually end, there are still ways to see if the results are successful.

One of the most obvious is retention. Has the member stayed in the Auxiliary? After that, has the member run for an elected office or been appointed to a staff office?

Some other measures might be advancement in boat crew to operational excellence and/or coxswain. Earning district and national awards for participation in specific mission areas. How about the century club for a vessel examiner? Regular duty at a Coast Guard station as a watchstander or Auxiliary Food Service specialist?

The list can go on, but there should be tangible results of the mentorship.



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## What's in it for you?

- Typically a mentor will have a renewed enthusiasm as they assume the role of expert;
- Mentors obtain a greater understanding of the barriers experienced by newer members in the Auxiliary;

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There has to be something in it for the mentor too. Often a mentor can enjoy the reflected pleasure of their mentee when they begin to succeed as members. Then, there is the “feel good” attitude that the mentor gets from helping someone succeed and being considered the role model.

The role of the mentor can also help the leadership better understand what it takes to fully integrate a new member into the flotilla and the Auxiliary in general. That's another feel good moment.



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## What's in it for you?

- Mentors enhance their skills in coaching, counseling, listening, and modeling;
- Mentors develop and practice leadership and demonstrate expertise and share knowledge.

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A lot of the skills a mentor employs as a mentor in the CG Auxiliary are translatable into the “real” world. A mentor becomes a better listener and takes tremendous pride in leading by example.

Mentors are recognized by their peers and the leadership for their skills and success.

  
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## What do we have to do to have you sign up as a mentor?

- What do you need to offer your services as a mentor?
  - Certificate?
  - Award?
  - Challenge coin?


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So, what do we have to do to get you to raise your hand to volunteer as a mentor? Is it something tangible like a certificate or award or a special challenge coin. Is it introduction at meeting alongside your mentee?

Or is it something we haven't thought of? Please, share with me your ideas.

Is anyone ready to raise your hand now? We're ready to take names. If not, what do we have to do to get you to raise your hand?