

HR UPDATE

STATE OF ALASKA
DIVISION OF PERSONNEL
AND LABOR RELATIONS

FY 08 - ISSUE 10
MAY 15, 2008

HR.....SOLUTIONS FOR SUCCESS.

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HR UPDATE

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

Please let us know what you think of our publication. If you have any suggestions about how to improve the HR Update or topics you think should be addressed, please contact franklin.hurt@alaska.gov.

In conjunction with policies approved for the April 1, 2008 Alaska Administrative Manual, the Division of Personnel and Labor Relations has implemented the following procedures:

- 61300 PRO Flexible Staffing Procedures (AAM 130.270 policy)
- 61304 PRO Coupled Class Procedures (AAM 130.280 policy)
- 61350 PRO Multiple Class Procedures (AAM 130.275 policy)

Primary users: Departments
Effective date: May 19, 2008

A complete list of the Division of Personnel & Labor Relations procedures can be found at <http://dop.state.ak.us/ppdb/index.cfm>

If you have any questions, please contact your agency's DOPLR Service Center or Classification contact.

2008 Governors Denali Peak Performance Awards

By Frank Hurt

Congratulations to the recipients of the 2008 Governors Denali Peak Performance Awards. The winners are as follows:

- * **Co-worker Recognition** – Tina Cunning – Department of Fish and Game
- * **Leadership** – Katie TePas – Department of Public Safety
- * **Customer Service** – Nora Firmin – Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
- * **Customer Service Team** – Analytical Toxicology Group - Eileen Nickoloff, Marina Oberst and David Verbrugge – Department of Health and Social Services
- * **Exceptional Performance** – Annette GE Smith – Department of Revenue
- * **Exceptional Performance Team** – Alaska State Troopers Helo I team – Sgt. Bryan Barlow and Melvin Nading – Department of Public Safety

Also we would like to recognize all of the employees that received nominations; their hard work and excellent service is vital to the state as an organization. For a complete list of all nominees by category please visit: <http://dop.state.ak.us/website/index.cfm?fuseaction=directorsOffice.denaliWinners>

Flexibly Staffed, Multiple Class, and Coupled Class Positions

By Kim Garrett

As a follow-up to the addition of flexibly staffed, multiple class, and coupled classes to the Alaska Administrative Manual on April 1, the Classification homepage was updated recently with a link to a flexibly staffed, multiple class, and coupled class web page. This site includes links to policies, procedures, a flexible staffing plan worksheet, and an overview of these options. The page is found at: <http://dop.state.ak.us/website/index.cfm?fuseaction=classification.flexiblyStaffed>

State of Alaska - Division of Personnel and Labor Relations
PO Box 110201, Juneau, AK 99811-0201
(907) 465-3009 or employeeccallcenter@alaska.gov



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Juneau Resources Services Center Staff



Back Row, Left to Right: Jerry Pierce, Deanna Lewis, Henriatha Rotola, Debbie Pound, Joe Reeves, Stacie Bentley, Breanne Erickson, Peggy Hart, Charity Hamilton, Shannon Ely, Fran Compton and Morgan Carter. **Front Row, Left to Right:** Karlene John, Janice Stevenson, Nena Long, Amber Schneider, Chan Donner and Bobi Jo Grimes. **Not Pictured:** Rynee Wells, Clarabelle Abad, Donna Goutermont, Josh Carter, Kelly Gohl, Kira Liliberte, Tiara Hauf and Lindsey Hanna.

Spotlight on Resources HR Service Center

By Stacie Bentley

The Division of Personnel & Labor Relation, Resources HR Service Center team of 22 employees provide one-stop human resources service to directors, managers, and employees for the Department of Fish and Game, Department of Natural Resources, and Department of Environmental Conservation agencies totaling more than 3,800 employees (including emergency firefighters). They provide a full range of centralized, comprehensive human resource services in the areas of management services, personnel and employee relations, recruitment and hiring, and personnel and payroll processing.

The Resources HR Service Center processes payroll, recruits and approves hires, and assists managers with a myriad of employee relations issues concerning the interpretation and application of the terms of the collective bargaining agreements, FMLA/AFLA eligibility determinations, Americans with Disabilities Act accommodations, performance coaching and disciplinary

matters. They are committed to working strategically with the departments to provide prompt, courteous, effective and professional personnel support to their clients and departments. The payroll and recruitment staff is located in Juneau. Management services staff is located in Juneau and Anchorage.

Stacie Bentley is the human resource manager for the Resources HR Service Center. She is responsible for the overall management and supervision of the recruitment, management services, and personnel/payroll processing sections. Stacie can be reached in the Juneau office at 465-2463. **Peggy Hart** is the assistant human resource manager and is responsible for the supervision of the personnel/payroll and recruitment sections. Peggy can be reached at 465-4781.

The Resources HR Service Center payroll staff provides assistance and advice to the operational and administrative staff of the departments regarding personnel/payroll processing. **Deanna Lewis** is the payroll supervisor and can be reached at 465-6173. **Janice Stevenson** is the lead over the human resource technicians responsible for

performing personnel/payroll processing for the employees at the Department of Environmental Conservation and Department of Natural Resources. Janice can be reached at 465-4142. **Nena Long** is the lead over the human resource technicians responsible for performing personnel/payroll processing for the employees at the Department of Fish and Game. Nena can be reached at 465-4121. A complete list of contact information for each department human resource technician performing personnel/payroll processing can be found at <http://dop.state.ak.us/website/index.cfm?fuseaction=scResources.main>

Anchorage Resources Services Center Staff



Left to Right: Pam Keane and Alberta Lippitt

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PO Box 110201, Juneau, AK 99811-0201
(907) 465-3009 or employeecallcenter@alaska.gov

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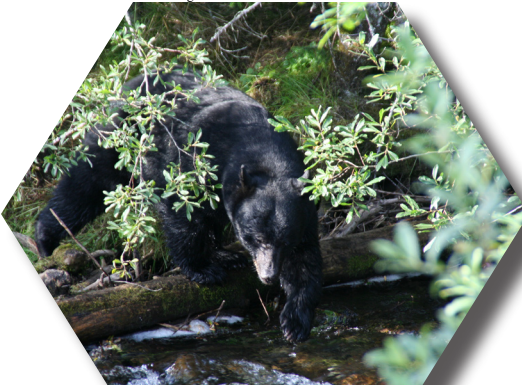
Management Consultants are available to assist managers with a range of performance management issues.

Pam Keane is the Anchorage area management service consultant for all three departments. She can be reached at 269-8667. **Shannon Ely** is the management services consultant for outside the Anchorage area for the Department of Natural Resources and Department of Environmental Conservation. Shannon can be reached at 465-3282. **Jerry Pierce** is the management service consultant for outside the Anchorage area for the Department of Fish and Game. Jerry can be reached at 465-5536.

The recruitment staff provides assistance and advice to departmental hiring managers regarding effective recruitment and selection processes. For hire approvals, job postings, and recruitment questions, please email the Resources HR Service Center recruitment email account at: resources.recruitment@alaska.gov

The Resources HR Service Center is dedicated and here to serve you. A complete contact listing and other information for this service center can be found at <http://dop.state.ak.us/website/index.cfm?fuseaction=scResources.main>

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Becoming a Mentor

By Carol McLeod

In several articles on knowledge transfer and succession planning in state agencies, mentoring has been mentioned as one tool to use to engage new employees in their new jobs and prepare current employees for future openings. Becoming a mentor can be a rewarding experience for the experienced employee and having a mentor can provide valuable knowledge and information to the less experienced employee. But what exactly does being a mentor mean? What skills are most useful for those persons who want to become mentors?

Mentoring is when a role model, or mentor, offers support to another person. A mentor has knowledge and experience in an area and shares it with the person being mentored. (Source: The Language of Learning: A Guide to Education Terms, by J. L. McBrien & R. S. Brandt, p. 64, 1997, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.)

So what exactly is it that a mentor does? A mentor is a responsible member of the agency who will serve as a positive role model, provide learning opportunities, support, and career assistance and counseling to a newly hired or newly promoted employee. The mentor is a resource person and recommends ways for the mentee to work through employment issues as they arise. The best mentors help develop the insight and self-awareness that integrate the new employee into the culture of the workplace. Mentors set high expectations, offer challenging ideas, explain how the agency works, offer encouragement, and assist with their mentees' career development.

The mentor's job is to promote intentional learning. This may not sound very demanding, but the individuals who are engaged as mentors must have the

capacity for helping learning take place. Unfortunately, being an expert in the field does not necessarily mean that a person will make a good mentor. Certain individuals are more effective than others as mentors.

Mentoring is a competency with a number of skills associated with it. **Along with up-to-date expertise in the field**, a good mentor will also have the following skill sets and skills:

- Strong interpersonal skills
 - ◊ Confident of own abilities
 - ◊ Tells their own stories, personal experiences, and case studies to provide valuable insight, including successes and failures
 - ◊ Establishes rapport with the mentee
 - ◊ Initiates contact, sets and keeps appointments
 - ◊ Has good listening skills
 - ◊ Has positive experiences to share, even when the experience resulted in a failure or a mistake (these are learning opportunities, too!)
- Strong supervisory skills
 - ◊ Demonstrates strong leadership skills
 - ◊ Gives and receives feedback appropriately
 - ◊ Helps mentee set appropriate goals
 - ◊ Demonstrates skill in coaching, facilitating, counseling, and performance evaluation
- Knowledge of the department, division or agency
 - ◊ Demonstrates understanding of the culture of the agency
 - ◊ Knows rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and philosophy of the agency
 - ◊ Knows and shares where other growth and training opportunities exist
- Real interest in the growth of the mentee

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Mentoring is a joint venture. It requires commitment from both the mentor and the mentee. A mentoring relationship can be as formal or as informal as the two individuals involved would like for it to be; however, in order for the mentoring process to have true development potential for the mentee, it is recommended that the mentor and mentee have an agreement or a contract about certain issues such as:

- Length of the mentoring relationship
- Frequency and types of meetings
- How feedback will be given
- What they view their roles to be
- Confidentiality

Since the mentoring relationship takes place on agency time, it is equally important that the agency in general and the mentee's supervisor in particular also support the mentor-mentee relationship. It may be useful to provide written confirmation about dates, times, and durations of meetings to supervisors so that work can be planned around them, as necessary. (Please see separate article for agencies that wish to promote mentoring relationships)

Why would anyone want to become a mentor? The answer to that question is as individual as the mentor—some people become mentors to ensure that knowledge isn't lost when they retire; some become mentors because they are genuinely interested in the generation following them; others just want to help out. Regardless of the reason, most mentors find the experience rich and rewarding, and often find that they have learned as much as they have taught.

Promoting Mentoring in Your Agency

By Carol McLeod

In several articles on knowledge transfer and succession planning in state agencies, mentoring has been mentioned as one tool to use to prepare current employees for future openings. Mentoring is also an excellent way to assimilate new employees into the agency's culture; it promotes faster learning and mentees show a greater level of institutional knowledge and engagement in the agency sooner than new employees who are not mentored. Having a cadre of experienced employees serve as mentors in your agency can promote retention, provide excellent career development opportunities, and help ensure that valuable knowledge is not lost when others leave. A mentoring program can serve a variety of needs and agencies that are able to devote time to establishing one will find the effort well worth the time it takes to get it going.

Mentoring programs should be viewed as a piece of the overall workforce planning and development effort. Mentoring complements other activities and strategies for employee development, but it does not replace them. Mentoring is not to be confused with coaching, performance evaluation, or training. However, most agencies will find that their supervisors and managers who exhibit those skills will also usually make excellent mentors. Characteristics of good mentors often include:

- Good reputation for developing others
- Time and energy to develop the relationship
- Up-to-date knowledge
- Learning and teaching attitude
- Desire to help
- Effective managerial skills

- Has been mentored in the past

The most successful mentor-mentee relationship is removed from the direct supervisor-direct report relationship. Direct supervisors will have a *coaching* relationship with employees, which is not the same thing as a mentoring relationship. Mentors should *not* be paired with mentees who directly report to them. As your agency embarks upon a mentoring program, there are other issues that should be ironed out first:

- How will mentors be selected? While often a subject matter expert seems like a logical choice for a mentor, a mentor needs to be someone with the capacity to help learning happen. A successful mentor not only has business skills, but also has coaching, facilitating, and evaluative skills. Some agencies may find it works for all senior level managers to be required to take an active role in mentoring. Others may find it more feasible to have experienced employees volunteer to serve as mentors.
- How will mentees be selected? Will the process be voluntary or mandatory for new employees above a certain range? Will your agency automatically assign a mentor to each new employee in a certain job class or above a certain range? Will your agency keep a roster of interested new and current employees and assign them to a volunteer mentor? Will your agency allow the mentees to select their own mentors or mentors to select their mentees from a list of some sort?
- How will mentoring meeting times be handled? If the process is voluntary, will meetings be allowed during and as work time? What time constraints must be met?
- What kind of training will your agency provide for new mentors?

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Will your agency begin the process by mentoring mentors first? Has your agency researched training opportunities for new mentors?

For any mentoring program to be successful, it must become a part of the agency culture. Rewarding and recognizing mentors and mentees who complete a formal mentoring relationship is one way to reinforce that mentoring works for your agency. Monthly or quarterly meetings of mentors to discuss what's working and what needs help may help new mentors become better and encourage more experienced mentors to continue.

As your agency mentors become more accustomed to mentoring new and current employees, they will naturally become more successful at it. Success in mentoring breeds a desire to become even more proficient at the competency of mentoring. Likewise, success in being mentored will encourage former mentees to become mentors themselves in the program.

Key Thoughts on the Mentoring Process

- Think of mentoring as a three party effort, rather than a one on one "arranged marriage".
- Think of a mentor as a learning leader who facilitates a learning process, rather than as a guru who passes down "the word" to a favored individual.
- Think of growth as the acquisition of attitudes and capabilities as well as the acquisition of skills and behaviors.
- View development as being enhanced by open dialogue and free form thinking, rather than limited by discussion guided by a set agenda.
- Think of development assignments, rather than future promotions, as a way of synthesizing thoughts about next steps in the organization.
- Cultivate career self reliance in employees who use the mentoring process as one of a set of tools in achieve high performance.

Quick Facts

By Gallup, Inc (copyright 2007)

In a recent poll asking workers about wasting time on the job (non-productive and performing no work activity) per day, employees were asked about themselves and about their perceptions of others.

- 26% admitted to wasting less than 1 hour per day
- 25% admitted to wasting an hour per day
- 29% admitted to wasting 2 hours per day
- 18% felt that others waste less than 1 hour a day
- 15% felt that others waste an hour per day
- 25% felt that others waste 2 hours per day
- 20% felt that others waste 3 hours per day

(Source: <http://www.sonic.net/~mfreeman/mentor/key.htm>)



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