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ISBN 0-315-55340-5

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A STUDY OF COACHING AND MENTORING IN A PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT

BY

RON KUBAN ©

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF EDUCATION
IN
ADULT AND HIGHER EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
FALL, 1989

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

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TITLE OF THESIS: A Study of Coaching and Mentoring in a Public Service Department

DEGREE: Master of Education

YEAR THIS DEGREE IS GRANTED: 1989

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Date: August 28, 1989

Writing a book is an adventure.

To begin with, it is a toy, then an amusement.
Then it becomes a mistress, and then it becomes a monster, then it becomes a tyrant.

And, the last phase is that just as you are about to become reconciled to your servitude, you kill the monster and reel him about to the public.

Sir Winston Churchill

"I Can Hear It Now," Columbia Masterworks, KL 5066, n.d.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled A Study of Coaching and Mentoring in a Public Service Department submitted by Ron Kuban in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

R.G. McIntosh
....
R.G. McIntosh

....
D.A. MacKay

....
D.J. Collett

Date: May 26, 1989

This document is dedicated
to my precious daughters -
NAOMI, BETH and ELAYNE,
who taught me about love, laughter, and life.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the extent to which employees of the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health were involved in coaching and mentoring relationships, within their work environment. The relationship of employees with their supervisor was explored to identify the type of activities (if any) which were taking place, and the employee's satisfaction level with each of these activities as well as with the supervisor's function as coach or mentor.

Respondents included both males and females, and members of the three work categories -- support staff, professional, and management. In view of this diversity, the study also attempted to identify the perception differences among these groups.

A questionnaire was developed specifically for this study, and was the single source of data collection used. There was an overall return rate of 59%, with 201 questionnaires usable for statistical analysis.

Several major findings of the study have been listed below:

1. There were no significant trend differences between the perceptions of males and females, or among the three work categories.

2. To one degree or another, respondents reported the occurrence of all coaching/mentoring type of activities.

3. Respondents indicated a general satisfaction with

their supervisor, but desired greater involvement by their supervisor in "communication" -- goal setting and feedback, as well as career development opportunities.

4. Career development was identified as the topic area requiring the greatest enhancement. It was the only topic area with a mean response score at the "dissatisfied" level.

5. Job-orientation was identified as lacking by nearly 27% of respondents! They indicated a desire for a detailed orientation program.

The relationship between the findings of this study and the literature was examined. A number of recommendations were made regarding the role of supervisors as coaches and mentors of their employees. Also addressed were implications for future practice by the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health, and, for further research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my parents -- RACHEL KUBAN and BEN KUBAN -- for instilling in me a life-long desire to learn, and for encouraging me through the process.

I also wish to thank Dr. R. GORDON McINTOSH, whose support, advice, encouragement, and above all patience, made the difference between the dream and the finished reality of this study. I am also grateful to Mrs. CHRISTINE PROKOP who provided me with timely and much needed advice on the computer analysis of this study's data.

My thanks to the members of my thesis committee, and especially to Dr. D. AL MacKAY who provided me with inspiration and a role model.

I am grateful to the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health, and its Executive Director of Human Resources -- TERRY CHUGG, whose backing provided me with a practical setting and a population for this study.

A special thank you to a very dear friend -- WENDY MITCHELL, who stood by me during my most difficult period and encouraged me to complete this thesis.

To these, and to the many coaches and mentors whose guidance over the years assisted in my growth, I shall be forever grateful!

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CHAPTER I

NATURE OF THE STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

One estimate made for the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD), states that as of 1981 about $30 billion (US) is spent annually on formal employee training. An additional estimated $180 billion (US) is spent on informal learning, on-the-job, acquired in the process of "work". These astronomical sums of money are often spent by organizations in an effort to enhance the productivity of their employees (ASTD, 1986). Coaching, which is part of that "on-the-job" learning is aimed at improved job performance (Kirkpatrick, 1982).

Interestingly, these figures represent an amount nearly equal to the combined total expenditures (in 1981) on Elementary and Secondary education in the USA ($144 billion US), Post Secondary education ($94 billion US), and Government training programs ($5 billion US) (ASTD, 1986).

The actual amount spent by organizations to enhance employee productivity is impossible to calculate, because it goes beyond the cost of training to include a wide variety of expenditures and activities such as employee counselling programs, improved facilities, attractive employee benefits, appropriate organizational structures and job descriptions, internal communication systems, and a myriad of other subjects. The key factor among these, however, is the interaction between the supervisor and the employee.

Management and supervisory skills, motivation, and productivity have been studied and reported upon extensively. Among other things, the literature acknowledges the need for effective and on-going communication between supervisor and employee (Marrow, 1967; Gordon, 1980; Blanchard and Johnson, 1982; Blanchard and Lorber, 1984; Axsmith, 1987), an understanding by employees of their performance goals and objectives (Arvey and Dewhirst, 1976; Ivancevich, 1976; Kim and Hamner, 1976; Schnake, Bushardt and Spottswood, 1984), creation of performance measurement criteria and the provision of performance feedback (Kim and Hamner, 1976; Gordon, 1980), and the development of a well motivated team of employees which would successfully advance the objectives of its employer (Peters, 1982; Blanchard and Johnson, 1982).

It is also apparent that these factors are not restricted to select professions, trades, or, organizational cultures (Peters, 1982). Instead, they bridge a variety of widely different organizational structures, objectives and human resources.

Frequent references are made in the literature to the roles of supervisors (which include managers), as leaders and trainers of their staff members (Knowles, 1972; French and Bell, 1978; Gordon, 1980). Supervisors have been encouraged to devote more time and attention to the needs, abilities and limitations of their staff members (Taibbi, 1983).

During the last 15 years, this concern has been reflected in a movement toward the development and implementation of specific management-related skills and practices to enhance staff member's potential.

These skills and practices are not new. They have been applied both widely and effectively in sports and in classrooms. They were often called "coaching", "counselling", and "teaching" skills. In time it was realized that the same skills which were used to develop a winning athlete, a star pupil, or a novice teacher, were equally potent in corporate boardrooms, offices, and shop floors.

2. THE SETTING FOR THE STUDY

This study was conducted in a Department of the Alberta Government, following an election which brought with it a major shuffle in the Alberta Public Service. A number of

Departments were restructured and reorganized, including the one involved in this study.

The economy of Alberta at the time of the study was sluggish, resulting in high unemployment, and high demand for social assistance. The Province's two key industries -- Agriculture and Petroleum -- were both in a slump.

In an effort to curtail its spending, the Alberta Government underwent a reduction of its Public Service. This activity, which was initiated about a year prior to the study, encouraged staff to retire early. The positions which were eventually "terminated" were frequently the ones left vacant by, or substituted for, these early retirements.

The effects of these early retirements and position reductions were still felt during the period of the study. Staff members were left with fewer career opportunities, a larger work load, and uncertainty about their goals and objectives. This situation was further complicated by the Federal Government's own reduction of staff, and its policy to hire first from within its own ranks.

3. NEED FOR THE STUDY

In view of the staggering costs to organizations for the training of their staff, the dwindling resources available for this training, the increasing demands for training to stay abreast of rapidly changing environments, and the increasing expectations of staff members to be "developed" within their work place, organizations are now forced to look for more effective and cost efficient means to develop their staff members. Supervisors are increasingly seen as the ideal resource to provide much of this training.

From the extensive literature written about communication, interpersonal skills and general management practices, it is apparent that effective supervisors at all levels must also be effective communicators, able staff trainers, on-the-job coaches, and staff developers. In short, effective supervisors are required, and are assumed to be, effective educators (Knowles, 1972; Zuker and Maher, 1983; Axsmith, 1987).

Although management (and supervisory) practices have been studied and reported upon since the turn of this century, it has only been in the last decade and a half that coaching and mentoring have been addressed as specific skills. Coaching and mentoring were often viewed and studied either as an educational tool for classroom use, or as a specific management tool aimed at developing select individuals in the senior executive, senior management or professional staff categories. These studies often report a number of gains, to both individuals and organizations, from the collective efforts of supervisors acting as coaches and/or mentors (Thompson, 1976; Collins and Scott, 1978;

Shapiro, Hazeltine and Rowe, 1978; Cameron and Blackburn, 1981; Farris and Ragan, 1981; Burke, 1984).

In view of the reported gains from the coaching and mentoring of management personnel, organizations may be well advised to apply similar practices to the development of their whole staff. It is noteworthy, however, that there are relatively few studies or reports on the coaching and mentoring of non-management personnel. Furthermore, the treatment of this issue within the Public Service environment has been largely neglected. The author is aware of only two studies which relate specifically to the application of coaching and mentoring practices to public servants (Klauss, 1981; Ryan and Friedman, 1985).

This study investigates the perception of the employees of the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health regarding the degree to which specific coaching/mentoring activities are practiced in this Department, and the nature of the changes which the employees would like to see in these activities.

The study received the support of the Department because it was agreed that the results of the study would assist the Department to review and make appropriate changes to its orientation package, performance management and career development systems, and the supervisor/manager development programs. Furthermore, since this study appears to be the first of its kind to investigate this topic in a Canadian public service environment, it may provide the basis and impetus for similar studies in other Federal or Provincial Departments.

4. THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to determine the degree to which respondents in the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health perceive themselves as being involved in a coaching/mentoring relationship, and perceive a need to improve this relationship.

This study will address the following questions:

1) Which coaching/mentoring activities are currently taking place in the Department?
2) Which coaching/mentoring roles are currently being performed by supervisors, and to what degree?
3) What is the employee's perception of the supervisor in the coach/mentor role?
4) What coaching/mentoring activities are perceived as requiring enhancement?
5) What, if any, are the differences in the perceptions of males and females, and among the three work categories?

5. ASSUMPTIONS

The fundamental assumption of this study is that respondents will be able to clearly identify the type, and to accurately assess the degree, of the coaching/mentoring activities with which they are involved.

One must assume that by their very nature, public service organizations (e.g. Departments, Boards) are often similar in their organizational behaviour characteristics (e.g. supervisor-employee interactions). We can also assume that the characteristics of the staff of the Department of Community and Occupational Health are similar to those of other government departments in Alberta and elsewhere. Consequently, we can only generalize from this study to other public service organizations.

The last assumption relates to the "model of coaching/mentoring in the work place" which is presented in Chapter 2. The model identifies a number of supervisor-employee activities. When one or more of these activities take place, AND, when the supervisor is perceived to have specific characteristics, there are one or more predictable outcomes for the organization, the supervisor, or the employee.

The last assumption is that the model reflects accurately all key and relevant activities and outcomes related to "coaching" and "mentoring".

6. DELIMITATIONS

This study is delimited to all employees of the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health during the period of September 01 to November 30, 1987. A second major delimitation is that the study will only concentrate on the activities between supervisor and employee, and the employee's perceptions of the supervisor. Therefore, the consequences of these activities and perceptions will not be dealt with in this study.

7. LIMITATIONS

A major limitation to this study is the potential inability of respondents to identify objectively the type of activity which they are experiencing, and/or its degree. Employees may, for example, be given an "orientation" to their work place. However, due to the unconventional nature of this orientation, or its protracted period, employees may claim that they have received either a limited orientation or none at all.

Secondly, employees' responses may be influenced by internal (e.g. change of duties) or external factors (e.g. relationships with members of other organizations) beyond the effects of the coaching or mentoring which they receive at their work place.

Another major limitation is the effect of the external environment on employee job satisfaction. Such issues as downsizing, proximity to retirement, job-market situation outside the organization, etc. all have a bearing on the employees' view of their organization, and their job satisfaction.

8. DEFINITION OF TERMS

8.1 Employee

Any individual who has an employment contract of over one month with the Department, and receives a monthly salary or hourly/daily wage for the provision of specific services.

8.2 Supervisor

The person to whom the employee reports directly regarding the completion of the majority of the employee's work duties.

8.3 Coach

In the context of organizational studies, a coach is a manager/supervisor who helps employees grow and improve their job competence on a day-to-day basis.

8.4 Mentor

A trusted counselor who guides the personal and career development of select individuals -- the protegees.

8.5 Sponsor

Sponsors discover and foster individuals for placement into other jobs within the organization as a whole.

8.6 Job performance

The achievement(s) of an employee within the work setting, measured against a specific and clearly understood set of output expectations, within a specific period of time.

9. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter I introduces the problem and outlines a few of the key studies leading to it. The problem is outlined, the research aims are detailed and a number of key relevant terms are defined. This chapter also includes a statement of assumptions, delimitations and limitations which are related to the study.

Chapter II contains an overview of the literature related to coaching and mentoring activities at the work place. A basis is provided for the conceptual framework upon which this study is based. This chapter also includes the findings of a number of researchers and practitioners on this subject.

The data of this chapter provided the basis for the development of the research instrument which was used to achieve the purposes of this study.

Chapter III describes the respondent groups, the instrument, and the methodology which was employed to investigate the five research questions posed in Chapter I.

Chapter IV reports the analysis of respondents' opinions about their work relationship with their current supervisor, within the context of the coaching and mentoring activities outlined in chapter II. This chapter includes analysis along gender, work categories, and supervisor-employee gender mix.

Chapter V contains the investigation of each of the five research questions, and the statement of findings resulting from analysis of data pertinent to each of them.

Chapter VI comprises a summary of the findings of this study, the researcher's conclusions based on these findings, and the implications for future practice and further research.

Two appendices follow Chapter VI. The first appendix provides a view of the complete questionnaire, and its two cover letters. The second appendix lists all individual responses to the three questions which required narrative responses. (Responses are unedited!)

10. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER I

In Chapter I the problem was introduced and was placed in perspective. The need for the study and its significance for the work place was defined. A statement of the problem was followed by key assumptions, definition of key terms, and statement of the delimitations and limitations of the scope of this study. Chapter I concluded with an outline of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

1. INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

Three key terms are often used when discussing that unique relationship at work, whereby an individual employee is "educated" by a more senior and/or experienced employee, within the work environment. These terms are: coaching, mentoring, and sponsoring. The literature sometimes refers to these three terms interchangeably, and there are many variations to each of the definitions.

These variations are noteworthy since they help clarify the specific issues and activities which are involved in each of these relationships. For the sake of simplicity, however, this chapter will use the term "mentor" interchangeably with the terms "coach" and "sponsor", and their respective relationships.

The term mentor was derived from Mentor, who was the wise counselor and very close friend of Ulysses, to whom Ulysses entrusted the care of his own son during his (Ulysses) ten year infamous odyssey. Mentor, in turn, played a number of key roles to the young boy. These included that of a father figure, teacher, trusted advisor and protector, all of which were based on mutual trust and affection (Klauss, 1981).

Roche (1979) argues that a mentoring relationship has always been an accepted process in the teaching and learning of the arts, when one "studied with a Master". This relationship is just as important to a young person's development in the field of business, as it is in the Arts. In fact, it can be of benefit in any field.

Mentorship is viewed as a relationship in which a person of greater rank or expertise teaches, counsels, guides and develops a novice in an organization or a profession. Among the many titles which help describe this relationship are: counsellor, guru, teacher, advisor, spouse (Burke, 1984), coach, referral agent (Leibovitz et al., 1986), heroes (Cummings, 1985), transitional figure, host, exemplar (Farris and Garan, 1981), moral supporter, confidence builder (Singer, 1983), rabbis, tutors, and patrons.

Such a relationship is described, in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, as the highest and most complex level of functioning in the people-related skills (Alleman and Newman, 1984). Katz and Schuehler (1981) support this definition and add that such a relationship is long term and provides both the encouragement for planned personal growth, and the linkages to resources to make this growth possible.

This relationship is, however, often limited to the novice's period of growth. Sometime referred to as transition, maturation, or decision period, this time frame is often two years with a maximum of five (Collins, 1979; Yoder et al., 1982; Taibbi, 1983; Levinson et al., 1978; Halcomb, 1979; Collin, 1979; Farris and Ragan, 1981; Burke, 1984).

According to Roche (1979), a mentor is one who takes a personal interest in another's career and guides him or her (Yoder et al., 1982).

"Coaches" have roughly the same roles as do mentors. Yet, the term "coach" is used to define a more formalized relationship, often characterized as a component of an employee-supervisor relationship (Klauss, 1981; Shore and Bloom, 1986). Taibbi (1983) makes a specific point that mentoring is in fact a continuation of the supervisory relationship. Kur and Pedler (1982) view coaching as that process which one person is assisted by another to solve a problem, or master a new skill.

"Sponsors" were reported as those who discover and foster individuals, for placement into other (often higher or more visible) positions within the organization (Shore and Bloom, 1986). Unlike coaches, sponsors often conduct a very informal relationship with their protegees (Klauss, 1981). Collins and Scott (1978) refer to sponsorship as a relationship resembling parenthood.

There is no single accepted definition of "mentor" (Speizer, 1981), "coach" or "sponsor". Furthermore, whatever their title -- coaches, mentors, or sponsors -- these people often have an especially positive (and long lasting) impact on their protegee's career and personal growth (Ryan and Friedman, 1983). They often have three basic characteristics: they know the ropes of their organization(s), they achieved recognition and success among their own peers, and are available to their protegee(s) (Atcherson and Jenny, 1983).

2. THE ROLES OF A MENTOR

Levinson (1979) and Burke (1984) argue that every manager should become a mentor. Scharinger (1981) and Kirkpatrick (1982) suggest that the role of managers is like that of coaches. Zaleznik (1979) and Farris and Ragan (1981) suggest that mentors take personal risks in working with their juniors, and that this risk does not always pays off to the mentor. However, the willingness to take these (mentoring) risks appears to be a crucial component to developing leaders (Scharinger, 1981). What then are the key roles which mentors are expected to play?

The definitions listed above certainly give an initial framework for mentor relationships. These relationships, and their corresponding wide range of activities, may be further defined by the specific roles of a "mentor", identified by a number of studies.

Bolton (1980) and Burke (1984), identify the roles of role model, guide, tutor, coach and confidante. Acherson and Jenny (1983) identify the following key activities: guidance and provision of moral support, sponsorship, sharing of resources, collaboration, introduction into networks, enhancement of visibility (of the protegee), and support for promotion.

Singer (1983) adds the activities of building the confidence of the protegee and providing a sounding board, while Taibbi (1983) includes exploring the professional aspirations of the protegee, and being accessible to that individual.

Mentors are sometime seen as transitional figures in their novice's life, between parents and peers (Taibbi, 1983). According to Levinson et al. (1978), and Farris and Raggan (1981), a mentor is neither a parent nor a crypto parent, but is a transitional figure.

Kanter (1977) and Farris and Ragan (1981) identify three crucial activities which mentors provide for their protegees: they stand up for their protegees and promote them at the higher levels of the organization; they provide an opportunity for the protegees to bypass the hierarchy of the organization (to cut the "red tape"); and, they signal to other members of the organization that the protegee in question has their support and resource backing.

One study (Burke, 1984) lists the five most common roles of mentors, as identified by protegees. These roles are: being a positive role model, building the protegee's self confidence, going to bat on the protegee's behalf, teaching, coaching and training, and employing job assignments to develop the protegee.

In another study (Roche, 1979) respondents ranked the characteristic most important in a mentor as the mentor's willingness to share knowledge with the protegee and to be understanding. Kram (1980) suggests that "role modeling" is the most frequently reported psychosocial function of the mentor.

In his discussion on supervisor development, Phillips (1986:48) cautions, however, that "although supervisors may come to view their coach as a role model, the coaching process does not provide leadership. The coach does not carry the ball ... (or) solve the problem for the supervisor."

Halcomb (1979:130) suggests that "... the mentor helps the protege fight inner battles and conquer inner fears, doubts and obstacles." These roles fall under Kram's (1980,

1983) "psychosocial functions" of a mentor where the mentor assists the protegee to gain a sense of competence and balance.

Kirkpatrick provides perhaps the most composite image of the ideal coach:

> The ideal coach has the following personal qualities: Enthusiasm and dedication, self-control, patience, impartiality, integrity and honesty, friendliness, self-confidence, humility, perseverence, genuine concern for (individuals), warmth, willingness to admit mistakes, optimism, resourcefulness, vision, forcefulness, consistency, being part of the team, open-mindedness, willingness to accept criticism, sense of humor, flexibility, ... willingness to accept success and failure as part of the game, strong sense of moral values. Finally a good coach sets an example (1982:79).

To fill that role, a mentor should possess desireable characteristics in three areas -- personal, position, and success. The protegee, in turn, should have ambition, trust, ability and desire (Frey and Voller, 1983).

Three roles were in turn identified for the protegee: initiating the relationship, sharing their feelings thoughts and expectations with their mentor, and listening to the mentor's comments (Klauss, 1981).

From the above, it appears that the roles of the mentor are far from simple, yet can be summarized as: being available to share valuable and relevant information with the protegee, and, provide support (visible as well as from behind the scenes) to their protegee.

3. EXPECTATIONS AND BENEFITS

The mentor relationship is often, though not always, a voluntary relationship whose success depends upon the commitment to the relationship of both mentor and protegee. As in any other relationship, both members have their specific individual benefit-expectations and goals. The mentoring relationship potentially benefits the protegee, the mentor, and the organization.

Not surprisingly, these sets of benefits do overlap and are interrelated. And, since these benefits can not be easily quantified, it is difficult to claim with certainty which of the three -- protegee, mentor, organization -- benefits most from the relationship. This conclusion is disputed by Kram (1984), Kaye (1985), and Marshall-Triner (1986) who believe that the mentor is the primary beneficiary of the mentor-protegee relationship.

The notion of protegees, that their mentors had a positive influence on the protegees' careers, has been well documented (Roche, 1979; Fit and Newton, 1981; Klauss, 1981; Burke, 1984; Kram, 1984; London, 1985; Reich, 1986). Kaye (1985) and Marshall-Triner (1986) even suggest that protegees should have a number of mentors who would provide different types of assistance.

Kram (1984) also emphasizes that having a mentor is not a guarantee of success. Furthermore, the first mentor which a person encounters in his/her personal growth, is reported to be the most influential on the protegee (Ryan and Friedman, 1983).

Ryan and Friedman (1983) review the literature of Epstein (1973), Kanter (1977), Levinson (1978), Roche (1979), Kram (1980), George and Kummerow (1981), Moore and Salimbene (1981), Phillips-Jones (1982). Their review yields twelve commonly mentioned contributions of mentors:

1. Verbal encouragement,
2. Guidance in a one-to-one relationship,
3. Acclimation of the protegee to the organization,
4. Teaching the actual job and its components,
5. Sharing knowledge and expertise relevant to the protegee's career,
6. Sponsoring by exposure to powerful decision makers,
7. Critiquing the protegee's work,
8. Caring in an altruistic manner,
9. Being perceived as a role model,
10. Providing opportunities for protegee's visibility,
11. Socializing after hours,
12. Advising the protegee about career changes.

Although protegees learn a wide variety of subjects from their mentors, among the most commonly learned topics are: ways of dealing with people, increased self confidence, managerial and technical skills, self insight, ways to approach problems at work, and greater understanding of their organization (Burke, 1984). Those who were mentored also indicated a higher satisfaction level with their career progression and their job duties (Roche, 1979).

A survey of protegees revealed that most of them expected to have some gain through direct guidance and feedback on both short and long term goals, and to broaden themselves (Klauss, 1981). Most mentors, in the same survey, stated that they expected to gain self satisfaction from assisting a junior in their organization. Some also expressed their reason for mentoring as a personal learning experience, and/or as a benefit to their organization (Klauss, 1981).

Another survey of protegees summarizes the most important benefits of mentors (by priority) as follows: assignment to special projects, creation of new positions of growth for the protegee, and the granting of some freedom in the fulfillment of tasks (Reich, 1986). This is further supported by the research of Atcherson and Jenny (1983) who report additional reasons given by mentors for their involvement in mentoring relationships. These additional reasons include the excitement of discussing new ideas, exploring areas of mutual interest, professional recognition for their efforts as mentors, and the ability to practice diplomacy. Note, however, that the survey of Atcherson and Jenny (1981) was restricted to the mentoring of academic staff within a university environment. This may explain the additional factors.

A study conducted by Reich (1986) reports that both female and male mentors (85% and 87% respectively) noted improved performance of their work group due to mentoring practices. Furthermore, 66% of the female mentors and 78% of the male mentors indicated that they were helped by keeping a top protegee on their work team.

Kaye (1985) states that mentors stand to gain much from the mentor-protegee relationship. Protegees may lend credibility to their mentors, may assist their mentors with special reports or projects, and often share valuable information with their mentors. The Staff of Catalyst (1982) point out that the mentor's role allows the mentor to secure a future in the organization.

Kur and Pedler (1982) argue that: "... coaching may be among the most effective methods available for developing supervisors and sales persons." From an organizational perspective, mentors (or coaches) help insure continuous and stable succession of management, reduce the time spent on re-inventing the wheel, reduce operating errors (similar to those done in the past), and stress well rounded development of both mentor and protegee (Farris and Ragan, 1981).

Mentorship programs in turn achieve the following: they recognize organizational members as individuals with unique needs and abilities; they enhance employees' sense of direction, purpose and motivation; they allow for growth; they enhance manager-employee communication; and, they develop team work (Shore and Bloom, 1986).

Kaye (1985) adds the following benefits: the development of a positive corporate image; goal commitment and clarification; equal opportunity; and, reduced legal conflicts. She suggests that all organizations, both formal and informal, have three main systems to provide support for their members: networks, mentors, and support groups.

London is quoted by Hunt and Michael (1983:219) as claiming that "mentoring relationships can rejuvinate older professionals by letting them pass on the wisdom and experience they have learned throughout their professional careers."

There is a mistaken belief, however, that only fast-track performers need coaching. In reality, all individuals need coaching, including that large group of often average performers (Phillips, 1986). And, the degree of success of that coaching (or mentoring) relationship depends on the degree to which individuals are prepared to take risks with one another (Missirian, 1982). "Mentoring without emotional support and intensity may shortchange the protegee's career progress" warns Bowen (1986).

4. GOAL SETTING

Since the mentor-protegee relationship is conducted almost exclusively at work, the relationship generates a number of organizational outcomes, the most basic of which relates to goal setting and feedback. Locke's (1968) theory, that an individual's actions are regulated by the individual's conscious intentions, is a fundamental premise to these outcomes. Furthermore, performance is determined by goal, and goal setting (Schnake et al., 1984; French and Bell, 1978).

"Few things demotivate an individual as much as not knowing what he or she is working toward and not knowing how what the individual is doing contributes to goal attainment" (French and Bell, 1978:103). Ziglar (1987:160) takes it a step further to suggest that: "The essence of good management is letting people know what you expect, inspecting what is done, and supporting those things that are done well."

Concilio (1986:21) notes that "the main reasons for poor employee performance are that the employee:

- does not know what is expected of him or her.
- does not know how well he or she is performing.
- cannot do the job because he or she does not know how

- lacks organizational support from his or her supervisor."

Schnake et al. (1984) refer to the studies conducted by Becker (1978) and Kim and Hamner (1976) as evidence that goal setting alone can lead to increased performance. When goal setting is coupled with feedback, performance is further enhanced. They also refer to Latham and Yukl's (1975) statement that the positive impact of certain goal-attributes such as: goal clarity, goal difficulty and feedback on task performance is substantially supported by research.

Latham and Yukl (1975) are supported by Locke, Shaw, Saari and Latham (1981). The above mentioned goal-attributes are positively and significantly related to employee job satisfaction (Arbey and Dewhirst, 1976; Ivancevich, 1976, 1977; Kim and Hamner, 1976; Steers, 1976; Umstot et al., 1976).

Schnake et al. (1984) state that employees perform better and are more highly satisfied when they must complete specific challenging goals instead of general easy-to-attain goals. Schnake et al. base their conclusion on the work of Bryan and Locke (1967), Hamner and Locke (1967), Hamner and Hartnett (1974), Ilgen and Hamstra (1972), Locke (1967), Locke and Bryan (1966a, 1966b, 1967), Locke, Bryan, and Kendall (1968), Terorg (1976), White, Mitchell, and Bell

(1977), Matsui, Okada, and Kakuyama (1982).

Goal setting and feedback, which are the major components of mentoring, provide a key benefit to the organization by enhancing the goal attainment of both the protegee and the mentor.

Goal attainment is also depended upon the expectations of goal attainment by the mentor, protegee, and the organization. Hill and Ritchie (1977) report that Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968) and Rosenthal (1973) demonstrated that a teacher's expectations can greatly influence the achievement of the student. This influence may be, and often is, unconscious. It may have both positive and negative impact. This influence, sometime termed "the Pygmalion effect", is as applicable in the field of business and work, as in the field of education. Livingston (1969) adds that the belief of a manager in his/her capabilities, influences the expectations which that manager places on subordinates.

Hill and Ritchie (1977) report that Schein (1961, 1964) found that the influence of expectations is stronger on young managers than their older counterparts. (This may help to explain why the influence of a protegee's first mentor has more significant impact than subsequent mentors). That influence is also stronger on an employee who is new to the organization, than on one who has been with the organization for a lengthy period of time.

The above may represent an argument in favour of the orientation of new employees to their organization. This orientation is an integral component of coaching, because it requires the supervisor/manager to impart specific information to the new employee in order for the latter to operate effectively within the employee's new environment.

In discussing employee orientation and goal setting, Wright (1983) highlights research findings of a strong correlation between preliminary expectations of an individual employee's performance and success at work. He adds that failure to reach understanding and agreement regarding goal expectation, will lead to alienation or even departure of the employee, regardless of the employee's level in the organization!

Goddard (1987:15-16) reports on

> one series of studies on communication conducted in the late 1970s covered more than 2,000 employees in staff departments. The findings showed that the two most important pieces of information people want from their organizations relate to their job performance and job opportunities; they were far more interested in honest feedback about their work than in any other subject.

"Feedback is crucial to career development. ...Employees who understand how they contribute to (the organization's) mission, know they make a difference" (Leibowitz et al., 1986:79). Smith (1987:20) says that "feedback is a crucial part of performance improvement... ."

5. FEEDBACK

An individual's self esteem can be significantly enhanced, and improved performance can result, through the expectations of others (Kaufman, 1963; Denmark and Guttentag, 1967; Livingston, 1969; Kessler and Wiener, 1972; Hill and Ritchie, 1977).

Vroom (1964), reported in Nadler (1976), claims that feedback affects behaviour in three ways:

1. Through cueing - giving information on performance which implies obvious corrective action(s).
2. Through learning - giving information on performance that implies the need to search for new behaviour.
3. Through motivating - providing information on goal attainment, facilitating the setting of goals (Locke, cartledgge and Koeppel, 1968), and how intrinsic motivation is experienced.

Blanchard and Johnson (1982) recommend a three component system of feedback within the work place. These are the: one minute goal setting, one minute praising, and one minute reprimand. They recommend that the three activities be conducted when appropriate, briefly, objectively, and to the point.

Blanchard and Lorber (1984) elaborate on the above and proposed a feedback system, titled "PRICE", which includes the following activities:

Pinpoint the performance area(s) of interest.
Record or measure the current performance level(s).
Involve the employee and agree on expectations.
Coach the employee toward the desired performance.
Evaluate performance progress toward the desired level.

Feedback can generally be provided either in a directive or nondirective manner, depending on the requirements of the job, the experience level and readiness of the individual receiving the feedback to learn. The nondirective method, is based on the work of Carl Rogers (1951, 1983) and is reported upon in Joyce and Weil (1986). The nondirective method assumes that the individual is responsible for, and, is willing to learn. It is the teacher's (or mentor's) role, therefore, to explore new ideas and concepts with their students (or protegees).

Ultimately, the key benefit to an organization from the mentoring relationship is the ripple effect this relationship has upon the organization as a whole. Ryan and Friedman (1983) reported that a mentor's style and mentoring behaviour is often influenced by the mentor's own mentor.

Roche (1979) and Levinson (1980), Ryan and Friedman (1983), and Atcherson and Jenny (1983) report that those who were mentored or sponsored, are more likely to mentor or sponsor others. In this manner, the circle of encouragement, support, guidance and teaching is maintained throughout the organization through generations of managers.

6. OBSTACLES TO EFFECTIVE MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS

Like all other human relationships, mentor-protegee relationships are not obstacle free. Yodel et al. (1982) report that the failure of mentor-protegee relationships may be traced either to organizational barriers, or to interpersonal factors. Good chemistry between the mentor and the protegee is required to make the relationship succeed (Burke, 1984; Reich, 1986).

Klauss (1981) reports the results of interviews which identify four broad areas of difficulty in the mentor-protegee relationship. These areas relate to: role responsibilities, match of mentor and protegee, hierarchical tensions, and the quality of the relationship. Klauss recommends that potential mentors be carefully screened, and that protegees should subsequently be oriented to, and even trained for, their respective roles. And, their respective expectations should be tailored to be as realistic as possible. The results of this study may be biased, however, since the respondents of the survey did not represent women and minority groups.

Other key obstacles to effective mentor-protegee relationships, are the blocks to effective communication, which are identified by Gordon (1980) and Singer (1983) as follows:

1. Directing, ordering, or commanding (you must, you have to, you will).
2. Warning, threatening or admonishing (if you don't).
3. Moralizing, preaching, or obliging (it is your responsibility, you should, you are required to).
4. Persuading with logic, arguing, instructing, lecturing (do you realize, this is why you are wrong, don't you understand that).
5. Advising, recommending, providing answers or solutions (why don't you, if I were you I would).
6. Evaluating, judging negatively, disapproving, blaming, name calling, or criticizing (you are ineffective).
7. Praising, judging, or evaluating positively, approving (you have done well, you are good).
8. Supporting, reassuring, excusing, sympathizing (it's not so bad, don't worry it will be O.K).
9. Diagnosing, psychoanalyzing, interpreting, reading, offering insight (what you need is, your problem is, the way I see it).
10. Questioning, probing, cross-examining, prying or interrogating (why, who, where, what, how).

11. Diverting, avoiding, by-passing, digressing, shifting (lets not talk about it, lets forget it, we can discuss it later).
12. Kidding, teasing, joking, being sarcastic.

Fitt and Newton (1981) relate the fear of some protegees that they may be linking their future to an unsuccessful mentor. In being unable to survive in their own organization, such mentors may not only be unable to help their protegees, but may also hinder their protegees' efforts.

The situation is further complicated in cross-gender relationships by the fears of becoming, or the expectations to become, sexually involved. Even the mere perception of sexual involvement creates a major obstacle to the success of that work relationship (Halcomb, 1979; Fitt and Newton, 1981).

Being a kin to a love relationship, it is difficult to terminate a mentor-protegee relationship in a reasonable, civil manner (Levinson, 1980). This risk, and the risk of early termination of the relationship, may leave the mentor, protegee or both feeling hard done by (Kram, 1984; Marshall-Triner, 1986).

7. MENTORING AND THE GENDER FACTOR

The statistics/findings relating to mentoring relationships and their effects on, and impact by the gender of the participants, are somewhat biased. This is primarily due to the relatively lower representation of females at the higher levels of management in both the private and public sectors. Consequently, women who rise through the levels of their organizations, are less likely than their male counterparts, to find a same-gender mentor. Consequently, most mentors for both men and women are in fact men (Atcherson and Jenny, 1983). Higginson and Quick (1980) state that women on the fast-track must have a mentor to succeed.

It is of course an assumption that women do not have mentors in the first place. Burke (1984) suggests that much of the writing on mentors (Fitt and Newton, 1981; Cook, 1979; Shapiro, Haseltine and Rowe, 1978) implies that women often lack available mentors or sponsors to assist them in their career advancement. Women are thus deprived of an appropriate role model, and may therefore be reluctant to present upcoming female junior managers with their version of mentoring. He is supported by Levinson (1980).

Kanter (1977) found that women tended to be excluded from the socialization function of mentoring, which is often represented through the process of "networking". Ryan and Friedman (1983) report that Laws (1975) discovered that mentors were often willing to sponsor and advise women, but tended to exclude women from the inner circle of power.

Ryan and Friedman's (1983) study indicates that although cross-gender mentoring did occur, same-gender mentoring was more common. Furthermore, the type of mentoring behaviour employed by both same-gender and cross-gender mentors were similar. Fitt and Newton (1981) state that although the general activities are the same, there are some differences based on the degree of emphasis. At the lower levels of the organization, women typically need more encouragement than their male counterparts, while at the higher levels the mentors of women need to devote more time to sell their protegees.

8. THE MENTORING PROCESSES

Shore and Bloom (1986) reviewed the process of "coaching" and concluded that the process is comprised of the following four key phases:

1. Collecting information on the employee performance.
2. Discussing with the employee areas for improvement.
3. Planning the actions required to be taken.
4. Reviewing the plan's implementation.

On-the-job training, which is somewhat similar to coaching, is defined by Sullivan and Miklas (1985) as including the following key ingredients:

1. Establishment of well defined performance criteria.
2. Thorough planning.
3. Careful monitoring.
4. Sensitivity to the employee's individual needs.

The four primary reasons for employee performance breakdown are: lack of clear standards, lack of frequent feedback, task interference, and skill deficiency (Leibowitz et al., 1986). "Mentoring" (or "coaching") is the process through which the obstacles to effective communication are overcome.

Coaching "requires that the manager constructively communicate to individuals how they are currently performing the job and then, in a definitive manner, provide positive solutions to improve behavior" (Scharinger, 1981:94).

Blanchard and Lorber (1984), for example, suggest that there are five basic steps to train an employee for better performance. One needs to tell the employee what to perform or achieve, show the employee how to perform the task, let the employee try the task, observe the employee's performance, and praise the employee's progress or re-direct the activity. These activities naturally require a clear understanding of the task and how it is to be completed, and an ability to communicate clearly.

Although the above processes illustrate components of mentoring, no specific model of mentoring was discovered to illustrate the whole concept. However, Singer (1983) is close to doing so when she defines the type of activities which mentors perform, or are asked to perform by their protegees. When viewed as a whole, these activities define mentoring.

Singer (1983) suggests that to be viewed as mentors, individuals need to perform one or more of the following tasks, for a specific individual (protegee): listen, ask good questions, further develop the protegee's plan(s), help protegee solve own problems, expect protegee to use own best judgement, help protegee find own skills and potential, don't expect protegee to be the mentor's replica, challenge and prod the protegee, give protegee advice on technical or organizational matters, share the protegee's ups and down, and provide the protegee with realistic personal information.

To conduct these activities effectively, the mentor requires strong interpersonal communication skills, and knowledge of models of learning. Gilley and Moore (1986) recommend a number of communication techniques which would enhance the success of such mentoring behaviours. These skills include: active listening, reflecting, paraphrasing, clarifying, interpreting, questioning, silence, encouraging, tentative analysis, and summarizing. It is worth remembering that by necessity mentoring is a process where the mentor exists to facilitate the growth of the protegee. Coaching is slightly different, since due to its nature, the coach may be more directive, and more focused on job performance versus individual growth.

9. A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The related literature confirms that coaching and mentoring are, in practice, two overlapping processes. As in all other processes, both coaching and mentoring have inputs and outputs. Figure 2.1 illustrates the key influential inputs and outputs, as seen from the organization's perspective.

Work places, like other venues for human relationships, reflect a dynamic interaction between the needs of the organization, the needs of individual employees, time, and the environment in which they interact. Although it is often agreed that it is management's role to meet the productivity goals which are set for the organization, this effort can not be achieved without also addressing the needs of individuals.

By establishing a framework for: goal/expectation setting, communication, evaluation, and feedback, managers and organizations can enhance the likelihood of strong performance by their employees.

Figure 2.1

Coaching and Mentoring

From the Organization's Perspective

INPUTS	PROCESS	OUTPUTS
Organizational needs, goals & objectives Individual needs, goals & objectives Time and effort Organizational culture	COACHING AND MENTORING	Higher productivity Low staff turnover Reduced costs Higher motivation Team work Excellence Good public relations

Figure 2.2 illustrates a "model of coaching/mentoring at the work place". The model identifies a number of activities which typify coaching/mentoring relationships. These activities are listed along a spectrum so that at the one end (the top of the model) the activities are typically of greater benefit to the organization, while at the other end (the bottom) they are typically of greater benefit to

Figure 2.2

A MODEL OF COACHING/MENTORING AT THE WORKPLACE

Meets primarily the needs of the organization.

When any of these activities take place . . .

- Clarification of goals/ expectations
- Guidance toward goal achievement
- Appropriate informal training
- Appropriate formal training
- Performance feedback
- Re-orientation (where applicable)
- Socialization to the organization
- Advice on opportunities
- Availability of broader experiences
- Availability of manager as a sounding board
- Being credited for good performance
- Being exposed to influential people beyond one's immediate work group
- Provision of career planning counselling
- Referral of protege to others
- Active and visible support of protege

When the mentor is viewed as . . .

Caring
Supportive
Trustworthy
Role model

the result is . . .

Role clarity
Goal clarity
Process clarity
Higher Productivity
Commitment
Motivation
Self Confidence
Self Growth

(Meets primarily the needs of the individual) the employee. Each activity may potentially benefit both the organization and the employee, with the key difference being the degree of the benefit to each.

According to this model, when one or more of these activities take place in the supervisor-employee relationship, AND when the supervisor (coach or mentor) is perceived by the employee to have all four personality traits, there will likely be a positive change in one or more of the outcomes listed on the right hand side of the model.

One of the limitations of this model is that it does not separate coaching-related from mentoring-related activities. It assumes that the two sets of activities overlap and may be viewed as coaching or mentoring depending on the situation in which they are taking place.

Figure 2.3 illustrates two separate cycles. The first cycle identifies a sequence of activities aimed at improving the employee's job performance, through performance appraisal, feedback and coaching.

The second cycle relates to the development of an employee's career. The two cycles may be viewed either as independent or interdependent cycles. Either one can enhance the employee's short and long range performance.

This model (Figure 2.3) represents what has to be achieved. The mechanics of each step are defined or detailed through a variety of theories and propositions such as those proposed by: Nader (1976), Kanter (1978), Katz (1981), Blanchard and Johnson (1982), Blanchard and Lorber (1984), Kram (1984), Ryan (1985), and Sullivan and Miklas (1985).

Figure 2.3

Linkages Between

Job-performance and Career-management Cycles

(Shore and Bloom, 1986:40)

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due to copyright restrictions.

10. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER II

This chapter reviewed the literature and conceptual framework related to coaching/mentoring activities.

The term "mentor" was reviewed, first through its definitions, then through the roles typically associated with, and expected of, a "mentor". The benefits of mentor relationships to the organization, the mentor, and the protegee were discussed, as were the concepts of goal setting and feedback.

The obstacles to an effective mentor relationship, and the complications of cross-gender mentor relationships were described, followed by an outline of the key phases and functions of the process of mentoring.

A conceptual model was developed to illustrate the relationship between the inputs and outputs of a mentor relationship, and between performance management and career development.

A detailed model, illustrating the key activities of a coaching/mentoring relationship was discussed. Its components are the basis for the questions asked on the survey questionnaire.

CHAPTER III

INSTRUMENTATION AND METHODOLOGY

1. INTRODUCTION

The following are presented in this chapter: a discussion of the instrument, a description of the population (staff members employed by the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health), the treatment of the data, and relevant references.

The description of the instrument includes a brief discussion of the validity of the instrument. The description of the population includes an outline of the total population of the Department, as well as that of the respondent group. The processes of selecting potential respondents, as well as the distribution of the questionnaire are outlined.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTRUMENT

Gardner (1978) defines four major purposes of research. These are: to make predictions, to evaluate, to explain, and finally to describe a situation or an event. The questionnaire employed in this study is used primarily for descriptive purposes, though to a lesser degree it may also be used to explain employee dissatisfaction.

This questionnaire evolved from the reading on the subject of supervisor-employee interactions, particularly as they related to coaching and mentoring activities. Initially, the questionnaire was established to measure the satisfaction level of employees with their current supervisor-employee work relationship. However, in time the emphasis shifted to the definition and measurement of the coaching/mentoring activities which the employee believes he or she is exposed to.

The "Model of Coaching and Mentoring at the Work Place" outlines a range of key activities which define in broad terms the behaviours associated with coaching/mentoring. A number of questionnaires were reviewed in an attempt to identify a useable questionnaire which would assist, in whole or in part, to measure the types of activities listed in the above model.

Since no questionnaire was found suitable for the study, a questionnaire was developed by reviewing each of the activities listed in the model. The questions which related to these activities were designed to define both the frequency and the degree to which these activities are taking place.

In the final version of the questionnaire, the element of frequency was removed because it was felt that respondents would have great difficulty of accurately measuring the frequency of such activities as: goal setting, counselling, provision of feedback, coaching or mentoring.

The questionnaire used in this study (see appendix A), is comprised of three parts. Part A solicits broad information about the respondent and the supervisor. Responses are numeric, and are easily compiled into statistics.

Part B is the longest section in the questionnaire. It contains a Likert-type response scale of 5 options which reveal employee's satisfaction level with selected supervisor-employee interactions. These responses represent the bulk of the statistical findings.

Part C is divided into two sections. The first is a set of two lengthy questions aimed at measuring the level of employee satisfaction with selected organizational practices (e.g. orientation, career development, etc.). The second section contains four questions, three of which require a narrative response from employees, about their perceptions of their supervisors.

2.1 Validity of the Questionnaire

Borg and Gall (1983) define the content validity of a questionnaire, as its ability to measure that which it is designed to measure. Face validity, they suggest, is based on the researcher's appraisal of the questionnaire. "Construct validity is the extent to which a particular test can be shown to measure a hypothetical construct" (Borg and Gall, 1983: 280).

The face validity of the questionnaire was appraised by the researcher as he developed each of the questions. Once completed, the questionnaire was given to a colleague from outside the Department, who was asked to identify questions which were unclear.

The construct covered by this study relates to employee's satisfaction level with their supervisor-employee interactions. It may be correctly argued that the terms used to define these interactions may change, creating a different construct, and resulting in a corresponding change of responses. Though it is difficult to control against, the researcher attempted to use terminology which is easily understood by, or familiar to respondents.

Due to the importance of the questionnaire to the success of the study, a further step was taken to ensure the face validity the questionnaire. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the questionnaire, and thus not influence potential respondents, it was decided first of all, to have the questionnaire reviewed and filled in by five people who were all members of the researcher's own Department. These respondents included a senior manager, a manager/supervisor and three secretaries.

They were given no explanation, and were asked to fill in the questionnaire. Their responses were reviewed to validate the questionnaire. The time required to complete the questionnaire was also recorded. Once the required changes were made, and based on the feedback from this initial group, a second more formal pilot was conducted.

The formal pilot of the questionnaire was conducted using a work unit of 21 people. These people were all public servants and included: one manager, four supervisors, and 16 support staff. This group was representative of the intended population of the survey.

Because they worked in another Department, this group posed no risk to the disclosure of the questionnaire content to those who would be selected in the main study. Thus, the respondents to the questionnaire at Community and Occupational Health had no chance to prepare for it.

The pilot group was advised that their participation was voluntary, and that their individual responses would be kept confidential. They were promised, and did receive, a generalized summary report at the end of the pilot study. The purpose of the study was explained to them.

Feedback from the pilot study resulted in a number of changes to the wording of some questions, but the general concept and format remained unchanged. Much care was taken at that point to ensure that the questions were not viewed as an evaluation of the supervisor. Instead questions were structured in a way as to be descriptive of the supervisor-employee relationship.

2.2 Reliability of the Questionnaire

Borg and Gall (1983) define the reliability of a questionnaire as the "... level of internal consistency or stability of the measuring device over time" (281).

The questionnaire's Part B (except its last question) was subjected to two separate reliability tests. The first was the Guttman Split-Half method, which uses the computations of alternate responses to the numerically coded questions. This method resulted in a reliability rating of 0.9697 which is considered very reliable.

A second method -- the Crombach Alpha method -- resulted in a reliability rating of 0.9489. In both methods, a result of 1.00 would reflect absolute reliability.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION

This survey was conducted within the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health. The Department's mandate is to provide service to Albertans on such issues as Mental Health, Public Health (including the services of

Health Units, Communicable Disease Control clinics, Environmental Health, and Rehabilitation), Occupational Health, and Occupational Safety.

Although not specifically measured, the average education level within the Department is significantly higher than many other organizations -- public or private -- and many of the managers see themselves primarily as "Professionals" and secondly as "Managers".

The Department provided the researcher with a computer print-out which listed all of the Department's personnel (as of August 31, 1987) by their specific work classification. This print out became the corner stone for the selection of respondents, and the collection of statistics on respondents (their office location, work category, and gender). It also assisted in the identification of late respondents, for follow-up phone calls requesting them to complete and return their questionnaire.

3.1 Breakdown of the Population

The total population of the Department was 1302 employees (excluding vacant positions). This population included 403 males (31% of the total population) and 899 females (69% of the total population).

The employees of the Department represent 140 work classifications. In order to make the data of the survey more manageable, it was decided to group the respondents into three general work categories -- Management, Professional, and Support Staff. The easiest to categorize were those in the "Management" category, since their positions were already coded as management.

Next easiest to categorize were those in the "Support Staff" category. The most difficult to define, because of their overlap with the other two categories, were those in the "Professional" category. When dividing the population into the three broad categories, the researcher relied upon the expertise of the Department's personnel administrators. Based on their experience, they were able to define accurately the groupings of these 140 specific categories.

Table 3.1 outlines the breakdown of the population by gender and by general work classification.

TABLE 3.1

POPULATION BREAKDOWN BY GENDER AND WORK CLASSIFICATION

WORK CLASSIFICATION	MALE		FEMALE	
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
Management	88	73	33	27
Professional	215	44	269	56
Support Staff	100	14	597	86

Interestingly, there were some discrepancies between the actual work category of individuals and their perception of their work category. Fourteen individuals who, based on their classification, were identified by the researcher as "support staff", identified themselves as "professionals". By contrast, all of those in the professional and management work categories correctly perceived their own work categories. In all cases, responses were analyzed based on the work classification code which the researcher identified from the personnel print-out, and not on respondent's perception.

The Department operates in a decentralized structure, with staff members located throughout the Province of Alberta. The Department's staff is concentrated in five centres: Edmonton (about 650 people), Clairsholm (265), Camrose (250), Calgary (70), and Raymond (40).

Table 3.2 outlines employees years of service in the Alberta Public Service, and in the Department, by work category. The support staff employees are organizationally, the least mobile group, having the highest average of years in the Department and in the Public Service. On the average, the professional group appears to be the most mobile within the Public Service.

Average years of service in the Alberta Public Service of male employees was much higher (mean = 11.99 years, standard deviation = 7.1) than that of females employees (mean = 8.73 years, standard deviation = 5.2).

Table 3.2

Average "Years of Service" by Work Category

	In Alberta's Public Service	In the Department
All	10.6	3.7
Support staff	11.6	4.2
Professional	9.3	3.7
Management	10.7	3.1

The variances relating to the years of service among the different gender groups were analyzed, and are reported in Table 3.3. The major differences appear to be among male employees (with male supervisors), and female employees (with female supervisors). This difference is significant, with a probability of 0.0032.

It is assumed that Public Service employees are randomly distributed by age across the different Departments. As such, the age factor of the staff is assumed to bear little significance on results, and does not restrict the otherwise generalizability of the results.

Table 3.3

Years of Service Variance (by Gender)

Employee/supervisor	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male/male	97	11.95	7.09
Male/female	15	12.27	7.39
Female/male	42	9.48	6.19
Female/female	47	8.06	4.09

Supervisors. More employees (139, or 69.2%) had male supervisors, than female supervisors (62, or 30.8%). Same-gender employee-supervisor teams were more common (144, or 71.7%) than cross-gender relationships (57, or 44.3%).

Table 3.4

Gender Distribution of Supervisors and Employees

		Supervisors	
		Males	Females
Employees	Males	97 (48.3%)	15 (7.5%)
	Females	42 (20.9%)	47 (23.4%)

3.2 SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS

The selection of respondents for the study's sample began by a review of the employees in the "Management" category. The researcher decided to include all of the management personnel, since their input was significant not only in defining their own expectations for themselves, but also the degree of their willingness to support their own employees. It was decided, however, not to include in the survey 10 of the individuals classified as managers, because they were either not permanent employees of the Department, or else were hired for their medical speciality and not their "management" role.

In the case of the Support Staff category, the issue of gender representation became significant. The support staff group comprised of 100 (14%) males and 597 (86%) females. Since responses were to be analyzed against the respondent's gender, it was decided to draw an equal number (70) of respondents from each of the male and the female support staff groups.

Since the Professional work category was closely divided between male and female (44% and 56% respectively), there was no need to specifically select by gender. Instead a random sample of 100 respondents was established.

Actual selection of respondents was based upon a computerized list of all employees of the Department (as of

August 31, 1987). This print-out listed employees (by position number) within each of the 140 job classifications. These employees were then listed sequentially within their respective work category (i.e. Support Staff, Professional, and Management). A random number table was employed to select individual employees, until the required number of respondents from each work category was met.

Each employee was given a unique identification number, which was placed at the top of the questionnaire sent to that individual. Respondents were advised that this number would be used only for follow-up action ,or, requests for clarification, should these be necessary. In time, this list did become useful, particularly when it was realized that some individuals to whom the questionnaire was sent were not available to complete it because they either recently departed from the Department (three people), or, were on extended sick leave (four people).

In cases where potential respondents were truly unavailable to complete the questionnaire, their questionnaire was returned to the researcher who deleted their name and questionnaire identification number from the master list. The researcher replaced each of these individuals with the employee, listed next on the personnel print-out, who matched the gender and work category of the individual who could not respond to the questionnaire. In this manner the original integrity of gender and work category breakdown was maintained.

3.3 DISTRIBUTION OF QUESTIONNAIRES

A cover letter (see appendix A) from the Executive Director of Human Resources to all questionnaire recipients expressed the support of the Department for the survey. The letter reaffirmed the confidentiality of the survey, and requested recipients to reply to, and mail, the questionnaire directly to the researcher. Another cover letter, from the researcher, was included to provided additional instructions to respondents.

Respondents' addresses were generated through a computer list received from the Department's Administrative Support Division. Individual questionnaires were mailed separately to the employee's work site using the Departmental mail system. The completed questionnaires were then returned directly to the researcher, via the Departmental mail system.

3.4 RESPONDENT POPULATION

Of the 349 questionnaires which were mailed, 206 (59%) were returned. (According to Borg and Gall (1983), such return rates are quite satisfactory). Of these, five were unusable due to the removal of the identification code by the respondents, rendering data analysis impossible.

Initial response to the questionnaire was less than satisfactory, and required the researcher to phone all those who could be reached, and request their completed questionnaires. Some of those who were phoned had questions regarding the intent of the study, and most returned the questionnaire completed.

Table 3.5 identifies the potential vs. actual respondents by their work category, and gender.

Table 3.5

Potential vs. Actual Respondents

	Support Staff		Professional		Management	
Questionnaire	male	female	male	female	male	female
Sent	70	70	44	56	80	29
Received	32	40	30	36	50	13
% returned	45.7	57.1	68.2	64.3	62.5	44.8

In the process of compiling the data from the returned questionnaires, it was noted that many respondents from one isolated work site did not respond to the questionnaire. The researcher was told informally that employees at that site were "advised" by their Union representatives not to reply to the questionnaire, as it symbolized "another Management ploy". This Union-Management strife has little influence on this study because of the adequate response rates.

4. TREATMENT OF THE DATA

The data generated by the questionnaire were primarily numeric, representing a level of satisfaction with, or a preference for, a specific supervisor-employee activity. The questionnaire's last three questions, however, required respondents to identify in a narrative format their preferences regarding their relationship with the individual who currently supervises them.

Each respondent's numeric and narrative responses were keyed into a computerized data base. The narrative responses were grouped into the responses for each of the three questions, according to gender and work category (e.g. male and female responses of support staff, professional staff, and management personnel).

The numeric responses were categorized as addressing one or more topic areas (i.e. career development, communication, feedback, goal setting, cooperation, etc.). This categorization then provided the basis for some general analysis which supplemented the numeric responses.

The numerically coded responses were analyzed using a computer statistical program which generated a number of descriptive statistical reports. These reports provided the researcher with mean, standard deviation, and frequency count for each of the questions. It also provided these statistics along gender (of the employee), gender match (employee/supervisor), and work category breakdowns.

Since early questionnaire returns indicated gender and work category response difference, it was decided to further analyze the data along the gender of the respondent, the gender mix of the supervisor and employee, and the work category of the respondent.

Analysis of variance tests were conducted, including both "F" and "T" tests, to determine whether there were significant differences among the genders, or the different work categories.

Where appropriate, the data were also rank ordered (based on the mean response of the different groups), to illustrate the priority of and relationship among the different issues. Some rank ordering was conducted based on frequency counts.

5. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER III

In Chapter III the instrumentation of the study, its methodology, and its population were defined and outlined.

The instrument of the study was described from its inception, through its pilot phase, to its final form (see appendix A). The methodology for the collection and treatment of the data was outlined. The description of the study's population included a description of the population from which a sample was taken, an analysis of the selected population, and a review of actual respondents to the questionnaire.

The statistical tools used in the study were also discussed.

The complete questionnaire, and its cover letters, are in Appendix A.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a preliminary analysis of the data collected by the questionnaire. The responses to the individual questions are reported through a number of statistical tools: mean scores, standard deviations, frequency counts, and analysis of variance.

Where applicable, due to statistical significance or general interest, responses are also reported by gender and/or work category of the respondent. In a few instances, responses are further separated and discussed based on the gender match between the supervisor and the employee.

To maintain consistency throughout the study, data analysis is reported using key supervisor-employee activities (listed in Figure 2.2). An understanding of these activities assists in understanding the whole relationship.

The content of this chapter will be presented as follows: an overview of key response analysis, specific numerical and narrative response, and the responses specifically related to the following: employee job orientation, supervisor-employee relationship, goal setting, provision of feedback, and career development.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES

The analysis of responses generally did not indicate a statistically significant difference among male and female respondents, OR among respondents of the three work categories -- support staff, professional, and management. This was startling since it contradicted some of the literature. The few differences which may be more of interest than statistical significance, will be reported in the section relevant to their content topic area.

As well, employees' level of satisfaction with their supervisor-employee relationship was generally above average (or, "moderately satisfactory"). Employees also indicated their supervisor-employee relationship to be generally active (versus passive or neutral).

Not surprisingly, respondents indicated a higher level of concern for and satisfaction with their job duties -- goal setting and feedback -- than for career development.

3. SPECIFIC RESPONSES

Responses to the main part of the questionnaire may be divided into two parts: those which were numeric in nature, and those which were in a narrative form. The analysis of the numeric responses to each question indicated, among other factors, the relevant mean, mode, standard error, and standard deviation.

Table 4.1 represents the rank order of responses to all questions requiring a response using a 1-5 Likert scale. The scale values were as follows: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

With but one exception, the mean response to all questions was above the "3" or "neutral" level on the response spectrum. That exception was the employee's perception of the supervisor as the "advisor on career development opportunities", and its mean response was 2.95!

Another interesting finding is that six of the top seven statements in Table 4.1 indicated agreement by the employee that the supervisor was caring, and reflected a general satisfaction with supervisor-employee relationships.

An interesting, and not surprising correlation exists between the mean of employees' direct and indirect measurement of their satisfaction with an issue. An obvious example of this correlation is their response to the statement "my satisfaction with my current job duties" (mean = 3.79). Responses to related questions ranged from a mean of 3.88 to a mean of 3.62. Tables 4.2 and 4.3 give more specific detail by each work category.

Table 4.1

Rank Order of Responses According to the Mean Scores

Rank	Response statements	Mean	S.D
1	My supervisor is approachable to discuss my performance.	4.26	0.93
2	My supervisor and I communicate freely.	4.12	0.95
3	My satisfaction with my relationship with current supervisor.	4.10	1.00
4.	If informed of my personal problem, my supervisor would show understanding.	3.97	0.93
5.	When applicable, my supervisor credits me for my successes.	3.95	0.99
6.	If requested, my supervisor would listen to my personal problem.	3.93	0.88
7.	My supervisor appears interested in my well being.	3.92	0.94
8.	When asked by me, my supervisor explains my unit's goals.	3.88	0.97
9.	Generally, when I am assigned a task it is clearly stated.	3.88	0.87
10.	When requested, my supervisor provides me with guidance on my performance.	3.80	0.98

Table 4.1 (cont.)

Rank Order of Responses

According to the Mean Scores

Rank	Response statements	Mean	S.D
11.	I discuss freely my work expectations with my supervisor.	3.80	1.01
12	My satisfaction level with my current job duties.	3.79	0.94
13	My supervisor should be involved in my career development.	3.79	0.89
14	When asked by me, my supervisor clarifies my work goals.	3.79	0.91
15	My supervisor expresses his/her job expectations.	3.75	0.99
16	My supervisor and I discuss ways to achieve my goal expectations.	3.62	1.00
17	I aspire to reach quality of work similar to my supervisor.	3.61	1.08
18	My supervisor encourages my career development plans.	3.56	1.04
19	My supervisor discusses my skills/abilities with key people.	3.49	0.91

Table 4.1 (cont.)

Rank Order of Responses

According to the Mean Scores

Rank	Response statements	Mean	S.D
20	My supervisor provides me with timely performance feedback.	3.49	1.10
21	My supervisor is my key feedback provider.	3.45	1.14
22	When required by my job I am sent on courses or seminars.	3.41	1.16
23	My satisfaction level with the job orientation which I received.	3.36	1.19
24	My supervisor and I discuss ways to broaden my work experiences.	3.34	1.09
25	My supervisor has helped my career development efforts.	3.17	1.10
26	I received most of my work assignments from my supervisor.	3.10	1.18
27	My satisfaction with my career development opportunities.	3.10	1.09
28	My supervisor is my advisor on career development opportunities.	2.95	1.14

Table 4.2

Top Five Satisfaction Responses

Rank-Ordered By Work Category

Response statements	Mean	S.D
Support staff		
My supervisor is approachable.	4.11	1.04
My supervisor listens to my problems.	4.10	0.92
My relationship with my supervisor is... .	4.07	1.08
Generally tasks assigned to me are clear.	4.06	0.71
My supervisor understands my problems.	4.04	0.97
Professional staff		
My supervisor is approachable.	4.26	0.86
My supervisor and I communicate freely.	4.20	0.83
My relationship with my supervisor is	4.06	0.99
My supervisor credits my successes.	3.98	0.87
My supervisor understands my problems.	3.97	0.84
Management staff		
My supervisor is approachable.	4.44	0.82
My relationship with my supervisor is	4.17	0.93
My supervisor and I communicate freely.	4.14	0.96
My supervisor credits my successes.	4.05	0.81
My supervisor is interested in my well being.	3.98	0.83

Table 4.3

Bottom Five Satisfaction Responses

Rank-Ordered By Work Category

Response statements	Mean	S.D
Support staff		
My supervisor helps my career development.	3.06	1.15
My satisfaction with career opportunities.	3.06	1.09
My supervisor advises on career development.	3.11	1.12
My supervisor broadens my experience.	3.28	1.13
My supervisor gives me most of my assignments.	3.29	1.19
Professional staff		
My supervisor advises on career development.	2.96	1.16
My satisfaction with career opportunities.	2.97	1.08
My supervisor gives me most of my assignments.	3.11	1.16
My supervisor helps my career development.	3.15	1.06
My satisfaction with my orientation.	3.34	1.08
Management staff		
My supervisor advises on career development.	2.71	1.11
My supervisor gives me most of my assignments.	2.87	1.17
My satisfaction with my orientation.	3.12	1.17
My supervisor broadens my experience.	3.27	1.06
My satisfaction with career opportunities.	3.29	1.08

It is interesting to note the similarity among the responses of members of the three work categories, in their statements of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Of particular note is the fact that all three groups identified their highest satisfaction with the approachability of the supervisor, and registered most of their dissatisfaction with issues relating to career development or opportunities.

Another noteworthy observation is that even among the five strongest points of dissatisfaction, the mean response on many issues is at the neutral level (3), and not the mildly dissatisfied level (2). And, it is the management group which registered the strongest dissatisfaction.

Surprisingly, all three groups indicated some dissatisfaction (or disagreement) with the fact that their supervisor provides them with the majority of their work assignments.

One factor analysis came close to being statistically significant. It relates to the statement: "If requested, my supervisor would listen to my personal problem." Mean responses by work category were: support staff 4.10 (S.D = 0.92), professional 3.92 (S.D = 0.75), and management 3.73 (S.D = 0.94). The "F" probability was = 0.0541.

Orientation

Most employees (147 or 73.1%) recalled having some sort of a job orientation for their most current position. Of the whole survey population (201), the largest number of respondents (78 or 38.8%) indicated that it took place longer than 24 months previously, while nearly a similar group (69 or 34.3%) indicated that its last job orientation was within the previous 24 months. Over a quarter of the survey population either could not remember having had an orientation (19 or 9.5%), or stated that no orientation took place (35 or 17.4%).

The general satisfaction level with the orientation which respondents received for their current job was "neutral" (mean = 3.36, and S.D = 1.19). Respondents were then asked to elaborate on the specific topics which their orientation covered, and those topics which they wished or required more information on.

Table 4.4 indicates the topic areas which respondents identified as covered during their last job orientation. These topics are rank ordered in descending order according to the number of respondents who indicated its coverage.

Note that seven of the eight topics most frequently covered during the job orientation, directly related to the conduct of the employee's job duties. The remainder may be seen as related to "career development".

Table 4.4 reflects the responses of 73.1% of the respondent population. It is note worthy that over 50% of these respondents indicated that during their last job orientation they covered all but two of the listed topics.

Table 4.4

Rank Order of Job Orientation Topics

According to Indication of Their Coverage

Rank	Topic	Respondents Indicating "Yes"
1	Explanation of job duties.	129 (64.2%)
2	Explanation of work unit goals/objectives.	126 (62.7%)
3	Introduction to members of the unit.	126 (62.7%)
4	Explanation of unit procedures.	111 (55.2%)
5	Statement of the goals of the Division.	107 (53.2%)
6	Statement of the goals of the Department.	106 (52.7%)
7	Opportunity to express employee expectation.	104 (51.7%)
8	Statement of supervisor's expectation.	101 (50.2%)
9	Explanation of employee benefit package.	90 (44.8%)
10	Discussion of employee concerns.	88 (43.8%)

Table 4.5 reflects the information provided by Table 4.4 along the gender mix of the employee and the supervisor. Although not statistically significant, the data highlights

a number of interesting observations. First among these relates to female and male employees who have a male supervisor. When the two groups of employees were compared, the female employees indicated a higher frequency of coverage on ALL but two orientation topic areas. When the same comparison was made between male and female employees who had a female supervisor, the coverage appeared balanced.

Table 4.5

Coverage of Job Orientation Topics

By (%) of Respondents, and the Employee/Supervisor Gender

Topic	M/M	M/F	F/M	F/F
Job duties.	57.7	73.3	64.3	74.5
Work unit goals/objectives.	59.8	60.0	61.9	70.2
Introduction to unit members.	57.7	66.7	66.7	68.1
Unit procedures.	46.4	73.3	54.8	68.1
Goals of the Division.	52.6	66.7	42.9	59.6
Goals of the Department.	54.6	66.7	45.2	51.1
Chance to express own expectation.	48.5	60.0	54.8	53.2
Supervisor's expectation.	43.3	53.3	52.4	61.7
Employee benefit package.	44.3	46.7	50.0	40.4
Employee concerns.	37.1	60.0	52.4	44.7

More employees with female supervisors, than employees with male supervisors, reported the coverage of all but one of the job orientation topics. That exception was related to the supervisor "explaining the employee benefit package".

In Table 4.6, the same data was compared by whether the employee-supervisor teams were same or cross-gender. Cross-gender supervisors were reported more frequently as covering all but three of the orientation topic areas.

Table 4.6

Coverage of Job Orientation Topics

By (%) of Respondents, and the Employee/Supervisor Gender

Topic	Same-gender	Cross-gender
Job duties.	63.2	66.7
Work unit goals/objectives.	63.2	61.4
Introduction to unit members.	61.1	66.7
Unit procedures.	53.5	59.6
Goals of the Division.	54.9	49.1
Goals of the Department.	53.5	50.9
Chance to express own expectation.	50.0	56.1
Supervisor's expectation.	49.3	52.6
Employee benefit package.	43.1	49.1
Employee concerns.	39.6	54.4

Differences between the reported coverage frequency of topics, by same and cross-gender supervisors, typically ranged between 1.8% and 6.1%. In one issue -- discussion of the employee concerns -- however, the difference is 14.8%. More cross-gender supervisors were identified as covering this topic, than their same-gender counterpart.

Table 4.7 reflects the counter side of Table 4.4. Respondents were asked to indicate in which of the topic areas listed in Table 4.4 they received insufficient information, and wished a more detailes coverage. Table 4.7 identifies these topics in descending rank order according to the frequency of "yes" responses.

Table 4.4 does not indicate, and the questionnaire did not measure, how well the orientation's topic areas were covered. A comparison of the rank orders in Table 4.4 and Table 4.7 reflect an interesting relationship. The top four topic areas (in Table 4.4) which were covered by the orientation were identified (by Table 4.7) as the topics whose coverage requires the least additional information. This may reflect a general satisfaction with the manner with which these topic areas were covered.

A separate view of responses, by work category, reveals a more detailed breakdown of responses regarding coverage of orientation topics. Though there are no statistically significant differences among the three work categories --

Table 4.7

Rank Order of Job Orientation Topics

According to the Desire for Their Increased Coverage

Rank	Topic	"Yes" responses
1	Statement of the employer's expectations.	52 (25.9%)
2	Explanation of the employee benefit package.	49 (24.4%)
3	Opportunity to express employee's expectation.	38 (18.9%)
4	Statement of the goals of the Department.	36 (17.9%)
5	Discussion of employee's concerns.	36 (17.9%)
6	Statement of the goals of the Division.	35 (17.4%)
7	Explanation of unit procedures.	34 (16.9%)
8	Explanation of work unit's objectives.	32 (15.9%)
9	Explanation of employee's duties.	28 (13.9%)
10	Introduction to members of the unit.	16 (8.0%)

support staff, professional, and management -- there are however, a number of interesting points to observe.

Table 4.8 reflects the percentage of respondents in each of the work categories, whose orientation covered the respective topic. A comparison of overall responses across the Table reveals a trend. With but two exception in each case, the professional group indicated the highest frequency of coverage of the stated topics. The management group indicated the lowest frequency.

Another difference among the responses of the three groups, is the coverage which was given to each topic. In the orientation of the support staff, for example, the top three topics were the explanation of: job duties (68.1%), unit goals/objectives (65.3%), and unit procedures (62.5%).

Table 4.8

Stated Frequency of Job Orientation Topics

According to Respondent Work Category

Topic	Support Staff	Professional	Management
Explain unit goals.	65.3%	69.7%	52.4%
Explain job duties.	68.1	72.7	50.8
State Supervisor expectation.	52.8	60.6	36.5
Express own expectation.	54.2	56.1	44.4
Explain unit procedures.	62.5	62.1	39.7
Introduction to unit members.	58.3	74.2	55.6
State goals of Division.	47.2	60.6	52.4
State goals of Department.	48.6	50.6	49.2
Explain employee benefits.	44.4	48.5	41.3
Discuss own concerns.	47.2	47.0	36.5

The three most frequently covered topics in the orientation of the professional staff were: introduction to unit members (74.2%), explanation of job duties (72.7%), and explanation of unit goals/objectives (69.7%). In the case of management personnel, the three most frequently covered topics were: introduction to unit members (55.6%), explanation of unit goals or objectives (52.4%), and an explanation of the goals of the Division (52.4%)

By contrast, responses by work category relating to the desire for more coverage of these topics bear no trend or interesting observation. Responses generally indicated a limited desire for additional information during future job orientations.

An analysis of responses based on the gender of the employee, highlighted a few interesting points. More females (22 or 24.7%) said that they wanted increased coverage of the "goals of the Division" than males (13 or 11.6%). A larger number of females (22 or 24.7%) said that they wanted to know more about the "goals of the Department", than men (14 or 12.5%).

A similar analysis of responses based on the gender of the supervisor and the employee revealed that a larger number of employees whose gender is different from that of supervisor (15 or 26.3%) said that they wanted more information on the "goals of the Division", than those whose gender is the same as their supervisor (20 or 13.9%). More employees whose gender is different from that of their supervisor (31 or 54.4%) indicated that their concerns were discussed during the orientation, than those whose gender is similar to their supervisor (57 or 39.6%).

Supervisor-Employee Relationship

As illustrated earlier, in Table 4.1, the highest employee satisfaction level was reported on the issue of the "supervisor-employee relationship". The employee's second highest satisfaction level was with "the supervisor as a caring individual". Responses to these two issues (Table 4.9) reflect a high level of communication between employees and their supervisors.

When asked who provided them with an inspirational standard of performance, employees most frequent response was their "supervisor". Males reported that their job inspiration came from: the supervisor (45.4%), persons senior to the supervisor (12.0%), peers (7.4%), and others (5.6%). However, nearly a third (29.6%) reported that "no one" gave them inspiration.

Female employees had a slightly different pattern of responses: the supervisor (47.1%), a senior person (11.8%), others (4.7%), and peers (2.4%). More than a third of the female employees (34.1%) stated that 'no one' inspired them.

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ISBN 0-315-55340-5

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A STUDY OF COACHING AND MENTORING IN A PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT

BY

RON KUBAN ©

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF EDUCATION
IN
ADULT AND HIGHER EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
FALL, 1989

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

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TITLE OF THESIS: A Study of Coaching and Mentoring in a Public Service Department

DEGREE: Master of Education

YEAR THIS DEGREE IS GRANTED: 1989

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Writing a book is an adventure.

To begin with, it is a toy, then an amusement.
Then it becomes a mistress, and then it becomes a monster, then it becomes a tyrant.

And, the last phase is that just as you are about to become reconciled to your servitude, you kill the monster and reel him about to the public.

Sir Winston Churchill

"I Can Hear It Now," Columbia Masterworks, KL 5066, n.d.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled A Study of Coaching and Mentoring in a Public Service Department submitted by Ron Kuban in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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Date: May 26, 1989

This document is dedicated
to my precious daughters -
NAOMI, BETH and ELAYNE,
who taught me about love, laughter, and life.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the extent to which employees of the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health were involved in coaching and mentoring relationships, within their work environment. The relationship of employees with their supervisor was explored to identify the type of activities (if any) which were taking place, and the employee's satisfaction level with each of these activities as well as with the supervisor's function as coach or mentor.

Respondents included both males and females, and members of the three work categories -- support staff, professional, and management. In view of this diversity, the study also attempted to identify the perception differences among these groups.

A questionnaire was developed specifically for this study, and was the single source of data collection used. There was an overall return rate of 59%, with 201 questionnaires usable for statistical analysis.

Several major findings of the study have been listed below:

1. There were no significant trend differences between the perceptions of males and females, or among the three work categories.

2. To one degree or another, respondents reported the occurrence of all coaching/mentoring type of activities.

3. Respondents indicated a general satisfaction with

their supervisor, but desired greater involvement by their supervisor in "communication" -- goal setting and feedback, as well as career development opportunities.

4. Career development was identified as the topic area requiring the greatest enhancement. It was the only topic area with a mean response score at the "dissatisfied" level.

5. Job-orientation was identified as lacking by nearly 27% of respondents! They indicated a desire for a detailed orientation program.

The relationship between the findings of this study and the literature was examined. A number of recommendations were made regarding the role of supervisors as coaches and mentors of their employees. Also addressed were implications for future practice by the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health, and, for further research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my parents -- RACHEL KUBAN and BEN KUBAN -- for instilling in me a life-long desire to learn, and for encouraging me through the process.

I also wish to thank Dr. R. GORDON McINTOSH, whose support, advice, encouragement, and above all patience, made the difference between the dream and the finished reality of this study. I am also grateful to Mrs. CHRISTINE PROKOP who provided me with timely and much needed advice on the computer analysis of this study's data.

My thanks to the members of my thesis committee, and especially to Dr. D. AL MacKAY who provided me with inspiration and a role model.

I am grateful to the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health, and its Executive Director of Human Resources -- TERRY CHUGG, whose backing provided me with a practical setting and a population for this study.

A special thank you to a very dear friend -- WENDY MITCHELL, who stood by me during my most difficult period and encouraged me to complete this thesis.

To these, and to the many coaches and mentors whose guidance over the years assisted in my growth, I shall be forever grateful!

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CHAPTER I

NATURE OF THE STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

One estimate made for the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD), states that as of 1981 about $30 billion (US) is spent annually on formal employee training. An additional estimated $180 billion (US) is spent on informal learning, on-the-job, acquired in the process of "work". These astronomical sums of money are often spent by organizations in an effort to enhance the productivity of their employees (ASTD, 1986). Coaching, which is part of that "on-the-job" learning is aimed at improved job performance (Kirkpatrick, 1982).

Interestingly, these figures represent an amount nearly equal to the combined total expenditures (in 1981) on Elementary and Secondary education in the USA ($144 billion US), Post Secondary education ($94 billion US), and Government training programs ($5 billion US) (ASTD, 1986).

The actual amount spent by organizations to enhance employee productivity is impossible to calculate, because it goes beyond the cost of training to include a wide variety of expenditures and activities such as employee counselling programs, improved facilities, attractive employee benefits, appropriate organizational structures and job descriptions, internal communication systems, and a myriad of other subjects. The key factor among these, however, is the interaction between the supervisor and the employee.

Management and supervisory skills, motivation, and productivity have been studied and reported upon extensively. Among other things, the literature acknowledges the need for effective and on-going communication between supervisor and employee (Marrow, 1967; Gordon, 1980; Blanchard and Johnson, 1982; Blanchard and Lorber, 1984; Axsmith, 1987), an understanding by employees of their performance goals and objectives (Arvey and Dewhirst, 1976; Ivancevich, 1976; Kim and Hamner, 1976; Schnake, Bushardt and Spottswood, 1984), creation of performance measurement criteria and the provision of performance feedback (Kim and Hamner, 1976; Gordon, 1980), and the development of a well motivated team of employees which would successfully advance the objectives of its employer (Peters, 1982; Blanchard and Johnson, 1982).

It is also apparent that these factors are not restricted to select professions, trades, or, organizational cultures (Peters, 1982). Instead, they bridge a variety of widely different organizational structures, objectives and human resources.

Frequent references are made in the literature to the roles of supervisors (which include managers), as leaders and trainers of their staff members (Knowles, 1972; French and Bell, 1978; Gordon, 1980). Supervisors have been encouraged to devote more time and attention to the needs, abilities and limitations of their staff members (Taibbi, 1983).

During the last 15 years, this concern has been reflected in a movement toward the development and implementation of specific management-related skills and practices to enhance staff member's potential.

These skills and practices are not new. They have been applied both widely and effectively in sports and in classrooms. They were often called "coaching", "counselling", and "teaching" skills. In time it was realized that the same skills which were used to develop a winning athlete, a star pupil, or a novice teacher, were equally potent in corporate boardrooms, offices, and shop floors.

2. THE SETTING FOR THE STUDY

This study was conducted in a Department of the Alberta Government, following an election which brought with it a major shuffle in the Alberta Public Service. A number of

Departments were restructured and reorganized, including the one involved in this study.

The economy of Alberta at the time of the study was sluggish, resulting in high unemployment, and high demand for social assistance. The Province's two key industries -- Agriculture and Petroleum -- were both in a slump.

In an effort to curtail its spending, the Alberta Government underwent a reduction of its Public Service. This activity, which was initiated about a year prior to the study, encouraged staff to retire early. The positions which were eventually "terminated" were frequently the ones left vacant by, or substituted for, these early retirements.

The effects of these early retirements and position reductions were still felt during the period of the study. Staff members were left with fewer career opportunities, a larger work load, and uncertainty about their goals and objectives. This situation was further complicated by the Federal Government's own reduction of staff, and its policy to hire first from within its own ranks.

3. NEED FOR THE STUDY

In view of the staggering costs to organizations for the training of their staff, the dwindling resources available for this training, the increasing demands for training to stay abreast of rapidly changing environments, and the increasing expectations of staff members to be "developed" within their work place, organizations are now forced to look for more effective and cost efficient means to develop their staff members. Supervisors are increasingly seen as the ideal resource to provide much of this training.

From the extensive literature written about communication, interpersonal skills and general management practices, it is apparent that effective supervisors at all levels must also be effective communicators, able staff trainers, on-the-job coaches, and staff developers. In short, effective supervisors are required, and are assumed to be, effective educators (Knowles, 1972; Zuker and Maher, 1983; Axsmith, 1987).

Although management (and supervisory) practices have been studied and reported upon since the turn of this century, it has only been in the last decade and a half that coaching and mentoring have been addressed as specific skills. Coaching and mentoring were often viewed and studied either as an educational tool for classroom use, or as a specific management tool aimed at developing select individuals in the senior executive, senior management or professional staff categories. These studies often report a number of gains, to both individuals and organizations, from the collective efforts of supervisors acting as coaches and/or mentors (Thompson, 1976; Collins and Scott, 1978;

Shapiro, Hazeltine and Rowe, 1978; Cameron and Blackburn, 1981; Farris and Ragan, 1981; Burke, 1984).

In view of the reported gains from the coaching and mentoring of management personnel, organizations may be well advised to apply similar practices to the development of their whole staff. It is noteworthy, however, that there are relatively few studies or reports on the coaching and mentoring of non-management personnel. Furthermore, the treatment of this issue within the Public Service environment has been largely neglected. The author is aware of only two studies which relate specifically to the application of coaching and mentoring practices to public servants (Klauss, 1981; Ryan and Friedman, 1985).

This study investigates the perception of the employees of the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health regarding the degree to which specific coaching/mentoring activities are practiced in this Department, and the nature of the changes which the employees would like to see in these activities.

The study received the support of the Department because it was agreed that the results of the study would assist the Department to review and make appropriate changes to its orientation package, performance management and career development systems, and the supervisor/manager development programs. Furthermore, since this study appears to be the first of its kind to investigate this topic in a Canadian public service environment, it may provide the basis and impetus for similar studies in other Federal or Provincial Departments.

4. THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to determine the degree to which respondents in the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health perceive themselves as being involved in a coaching/mentoring relationship, and perceive a need to improve this relationship.

This study will address the following questions:

1) Which coaching/mentoring activities are currently taking place in the Department?
2) Which coaching/mentoring roles are currently being performed by supervisors, and to what degree?
3) What is the employee's perception of the supervisor in the coach/mentor role?
4) What coaching/mentoring activities are perceived as requiring enhancement?
5) What, if any, are the differences in the perceptions of males and females, and among the three work categories?

5. ASSUMPTIONS

The fundamental assumption of this study is that respondents will be able to clearly identify the type, and to accurately assess the degree, of the coaching/mentoring activities with which they are involved.

One must assume that by their very nature, public service organizations (e.g. Departments, Boards) are often similar in their organizational behaviour characteristics (e.g. supervisor-employee interactions). We can also assume that the characteristics of the staff of the Department of Community and Occupational Health are similar to those of other government departments in Alberta and elsewhere. Consequently, we can only generalize from this study to other public service organizations.

The last assumption relates to the "model of coaching/mentoring in the work place" which is presented in Chapter 2. The model identifies a number of supervisor-employee activities. When one or more of these activities take place, AND, when the supervisor is perceived to have specific characteristics, there are one or more predictable outcomes for the organization, the supervisor, or the employee.

The last assumption is that the model reflects accurately all key and relevant activities and outcomes related to "coaching" and "mentoring".

6. DELIMITATIONS

This study is delimited to all employees of the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health during the period of September 01 to November 30, 1987. A second major delimitation is that the study will only concentrate on the activities between supervisor and employee, and the employee's perceptions of the supervisor. Therefore, the consequences of these activities and perceptions will not be dealt with in this study.

7. LIMITATIONS

A major limitation to this study is the potential inability of respondents to identify objectively the type of activity which they are experiencing, and/or its degree. Employees may, for example, be given an "orientation" to their work place. However, due to the unconventional nature of this orientation, or its protracted period, employees may claim that they have received either a limited orientation or none at all.

Secondly, employees' responses may be influenced by internal (e.g. change of duties) or external factors (e.g. relationships with members of other organizations) beyond the effects of the coaching or mentoring which they receive at their work place.

Another major limitation is the effect of the external environment on employee job satisfaction. Such issues as downsizing, proximity to retirement, job-market situation outside the organization, etc. all have a bearing on the employees' view of their organization, and their job satisfaction.

8. DEFINITION OF TERMS

8.1 Employee

Any individual who has an employment contract of over one month with the Department, and receives a monthly salary or hourly/daily wage for the provision of specific services.

8.2 Supervisor

The person to whom the employee reports directly regarding the completion of the majority of the employee's work duties.

8.3 Coach

In the context of organizational studies, a coach is a manager/supervisor who helps employees grow and improve their job competence on a day-to-day basis.

8.4 Mentor

A trusted counselor who guides the personal and career development of select individuals -- the protegees.

8.5 Sponsor

Sponsors discover and foster individuals for placement into other jobs within the organization as a whole.

8.6 Job performance

The achievement(s) of an employee within the work setting, measured against a specific and clearly understood set of output expectations, within a specific period of time.

9. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter I introduces the problem and outlines a few of the key studies leading to it. The problem is outlined, the research aims are detailed and a number of key relevant terms are defined. This chapter also includes a statement of assumptions, delimitations and limitations which are related to the study.

Chapter II contains an overview of the literature related to coaching and mentoring activities at the work place. A basis is provided for the conceptual framework upon which this study is based. This chapter also includes the findings of a number of researchers and practitioners on this subject.

The data of this chapter provided the basis for the development of the research instrument which was used to achieve the purposes of this study.

Chapter III describes the respondent groups, the instrument, and the methodology which was employed to investigate the five research questions posed in Chapter I.

Chapter IV reports the analysis of respondents' opinions about their work relationship with their current supervisor, within the context of the coaching and mentoring activities outlined in chapter II. This chapter includes analysis along gender, work categories, and supervisor-employee gender mix.

Chapter V contains the investigation of each of the five research questions, and the statement of findings resulting from analysis of data pertinent to each of them.

Chapter VI comprises a summary of the findings of this study, the researcher's conclusions based on these findings, and the implications for future practice and further research.

Two appendices follow Chapter VI. The first appendix provides a view of the complete questionnaire, and its two cover letters. The second appendix lists all individual responses to the three questions which required narrative responses. (Responses are unedited!)

10. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER I

In Chapter I the problem was introduced and was placed in perspective. The need for the study and its significance for the work place was defined. A statement of the problem was followed by key assumptions, definition of key terms, and statement of the delimitations and limitations of the scope of this study. Chapter I concluded with an outline of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

1. INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

Three key terms are often used when discussing that unique relationship at work, whereby an individual employee is "educated" by a more senior and/or experienced employee, within the work environment. These terms are: coaching, mentoring, and sponsoring. The literature sometimes refers to these three terms interchangeably, and there are many variations to each of the definitions.

These variations are noteworthy since they help clarify the specific issues and activities which are involved in each of these relationships. For the sake of simplicity, however, this chapter will use the term "mentor" interchangeably with the terms "coach" and "sponsor", and their respective relationships.

The term mentor was derived from Mentor, who was the wise counselor and very close friend of Ulysses, to whom Ulysses entrusted the care of his own son during his (Ulysses) ten year infamous odyssey. Mentor, in turn, played a number of key roles to the young boy. These included that of a father figure, teacher, trusted advisor and protector, all of which were based on mutual trust and affection (Klauss, 1981).

Roche (1979) argues that a mentoring relationship has always been an accepted process in the teaching and learning of the arts, when one "studied with a Master". This relationship is just as important to a young person's development in the field of business, as it is in the Arts. In fact, it can be of benefit in any field.

Mentorship is viewed as a relationship in which a person of greater rank or expertise teaches, counsels, guides and develops a novice in an organization or a profession. Among the many titles which help describe this relationship are: counsellor, guru, teacher, advisor, spouse (Burke, 1984), coach, referral agent (Leibovitz et al., 1986), heroes (Cummings, 1985), transitional figure, host, exemplar (Farris and Garan, 1981), moral supporter, confidence builder (Singer, 1983), rabbis, tutors, and patrons.

Such a relationship is described, in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, as the highest and most complex level of functioning in the people-related skills (Alleman and Newman, 1984). Katz and Schuehler (1981) support this definition and add that such a relationship is long term and provides both the encouragement for planned personal growth, and the linkages to resources to make this growth possible.

This relationship is, however, often limited to the novice's period of growth. Sometime referred to as transition, maturation, or decision period, this time frame is often two years with a maximum of five (Collins, 1979; Yoder et al., 1982; Taibbi, 1983; Levinson et al., 1978; Halcomb, 1979; Collin, 1979; Farris and Ragan, 1981; Burke, 1984).

According to Roche (1979), a mentor is one who takes a personal interest in another's career and guides him or her (Yoder et al., 1982).

"Coaches" have roughly the same roles as do mentors. Yet, the term "coach" is used to define a more formalized relationship, often characterized as a component of an employee-supervisor relationship (Klauss, 1981; Shore and Bloom, 1986). Taibbi (1983) makes a specific point that mentoring is in fact a continuation of the supervisory relationship. Kur and Pedler (1982) view coaching as that process which one person is assisted by another to solve a problem, or master a new skill.

"Sponsors" were reported as those who discover and foster individuals, for placement into other (often higher or more visible) positions within the organization (Shore and Bloom, 1986). Unlike coaches, sponsors often conduct a very informal relationship with their protegees (Klauss, 1981). Collins and Scott (1978) refer to sponsorship as a relationship resembling parenthood.

There is no single accepted definition of "mentor" (Speizer, 1981), "coach" or "sponsor". Furthermore, whatever their title -- coaches, mentors, or sponsors -- these people often have an especially positive (and long lasting) impact on their protegee's career and personal growth (Ryan and Friedman, 1983). They often have three basic characteristics: they know the ropes of their organization(s), they achieved recognition and success among their own peers, and are available to their protegee(s) (Atcherson and Jenny, 1983).

2. THE ROLES OF A MENTOR

Levinson (1979) and Burke (1984) argue that every manager should become a mentor. Scharinger (1981) and Kirkpatrick (1982) suggest that the role of managers is like that of coaches. Zaleznik (1979) and Farris and Ragan (1981) suggest that mentors take personal risks in working with their juniors, and that this risk does not always pays off to the mentor. However, the willingness to take these (mentoring) risks appears to be a crucial component to developing leaders (Scharinger, 1981). What then are the key roles which mentors are expected to play?

The definitions listed above certainly give an initial framework for mentor relationships. These relationships, and their corresponding wide range of activities, may be further defined by the specific roles of a "mentor", identified by a number of studies.

Bolton (1980) and Burke (1984), identify the roles of role model, guide, tutor, coach and confidante. Acherson and Jenny (1983) identify the following key activities: guidance and provision of moral support, sponsorship, sharing of resources, collaboration, introduction into networks, enhancement of visibility (of the protegee), and support for promotion.

Singer (1983) adds the activities of building the confidence of the protegee and providing a sounding board, while Taibbi (1983) includes exploring the professional aspirations of the protegee, and being accessible to that individual.

Mentors are sometime seen as transitional figures in their novice's life, between parents and peers (Taibbi, 1983). According to Levinson et al. (1978), and Farris and Raggan (1981), a mentor is neither a parent nor a crypto parent, but is a transitional figure.

Kanter (1977) and Farris and Ragan (1981) identify three crucial activities which mentors provide for their protegees: they stand up for their protegees and promote them at the higher levels of the organization; they provide an opportunity for the protegees to bypass the hierarchy of the organization (to cut the "red tape"); and, they signal to other members of the organization that the protegee in question has their support and resource backing.

One study (Burke, 1984) lists the five most common roles of mentors, as identified by protegees. These roles are: being a positive role model, building the protegee's self confidence, going to bat on the protegee's behalf, teaching, coaching and training, and employing job assignments to develop the protegee.

In another study (Roche, 1979) respondents ranked the characteristic most important in a mentor as the mentor's willingness to share knowledge with the protegee and to be understanding. Kram (1980) suggests that "role modeling" is the most frequently reported psychosocial function of the mentor.

In his discussion on supervisor development, Phillips (1986:48) cautions, however, that "although supervisors may come to view their coach as a role model, the coaching process does not provide leadership. The coach does not carry the ball ... (or) solve the problem for the supervisor."

Halcomb (1979:130) suggests that "... the mentor helps the protege fight inner battles and conquer inner fears, doubts and obstacles." These roles fall under Kram's (1980,

1983) "psychosocial functions" of a mentor where the mentor assists the protegee to gain a sense of competence and balance.

Kirkpatrick provides perhaps the most composite image of the ideal coach:

> The ideal coach has the following personal qualities: Enthusiasm and dedication, self-control, patience, impartiality, integrity and honesty, friendliness, self-confidence, humility, perseverence, genuine concern for (individuals), warmth, willingness to admit mistakes, optimism, resourcefulness, vision, forcefulness, consistency, being part of the team, open-mindedness, willingness to accept criticism, sense of humor, flexibility, ... willingness to accept success and failure as part of the game, strong sense of moral values. Finally a good coach sets an example (1982:79).

To fill that role, a mentor should possess desireable characteristics in three areas -- personal, position, and success. The protegee, in turn, should have ambition, trust, ability and desire (Frey and Voller, 1983).

Three roles were in turn identified for the protegee: initiating the relationship, sharing their feelings thoughts and expectations with their mentor, and listening to the mentor's comments (Klauss, 1981).

From the above, it appears that the roles of the mentor are far from simple, yet can be summarized as: being available to share valuable and relevant information with the protegee, and, provide support (visible as well as from behind the scenes) to their protegee.

3. EXPECTATIONS AND BENEFITS

The mentor relationship is often, though not always, a voluntary relationship whose success depends upon the commitment to the relationship of both mentor and protegee. As in any other relationship, both members have their specific individual benefit-expectations and goals. The mentoring relationship potentially benefits the protegee, the mentor, and the organization.

Not surprisingly, these sets of benefits do overlap and are interrelated. And, since these benefits can not be easily quantified, it is difficult to claim with certainty which of the three -- protegee, mentor, organization -- benefits most from the relationship. This conclusion is disputed by Kram (1984), Kaye (1985), and Marshall-Triner (1986) who believe that the mentor is the primary beneficiary of the mentor-protegee relationship.

The notion of protegees, that their mentors had a positive influence on the protegees' careers, has been well documented (Roche, 1979; Fit and Newton, 1981; Klauss, 1981; Burke, 1984; Kram, 1984; London, 1985; Reich, 1986). Kaye (1985) and Marshall-Triner (1986) even suggest that protegees should have a number of mentors who would provide different types of assistance.

Kram (1984) also emphasizes that having a mentor is not a guarantee of success. Furthermore, the first mentor which a person encounters in his/her personal growth, is reported to be the most influential on the protegee (Ryan and Friedman, 1983).

Ryan and Friedman (1983) review the literature of Epstein (1973), Kanter (1977), Levinson (1978), Roche (1979), Kram (1980), George and Kummerow (1981), Moore and Salimbene (1981), Phillips-Jones (1982). Their review yields twelve commonly mentioned contributions of mentors:

1. Verbal encouragement,
2. Guidance in a one-to-one relationship,
3. Acclimation of the protegee to the organization,
4. Teaching the actual job and its components,
5. Sharing knowledge and expertise relevant to the protegee's career,
6. Sponsoring by exposure to powerful decision makers,
7. Critiquing the protegee's work,
8. Caring in an altruistic manner,
9. Being perceived as a role model,
10. Providing opportunities for protegee's visibility,
11. Socializing after hours,
12. Advising the protegee about career changes.

Although protegees learn a wide variety of subjects from their mentors, among the most commonly learned topics are: ways of dealing with people, increased self confidence, managerial and technical skills, self insight, ways to approach problems at work, and greater understanding of their organization (Burke, 1984). Those who were mentored also indicated a higher satisfaction level with their career progression and their job duties (Roche, 1979).

A survey of protegees revealed that most of them expected to have some gain through direct guidance and feedback on both short and long term goals, and to broaden themselves (Klauss, 1981). Most mentors, in the same survey, stated that they expected to gain self satisfaction from assisting a junior in their organization. Some also expressed their reason for mentoring as a personal learning experience, and/or as a benefit to their organization (Klauss, 1981).

Another survey of protegees summarizes the most important benefits of mentors (by priority) as follows: assignment to special projects, creation of new positions of growth for the protegee, and the granting of some freedom in the fulfillment of tasks (Reich, 1986). This is further supported by the research of Atcherson and Jenny (1983) who report additional reasons given by mentors for their involvement in mentoring relationships. These additional reasons include the excitement of discussing new ideas, exploring areas of mutual interest, professional recognition for their efforts as mentors, and the ability to practice diplomacy. Note, however, that the survey of Atcherson and Jenny (1981) was restricted to the mentoring of academic staff within a university environment. This may explain the additional factors.

A study conducted by Reich (1986) reports that both female and male mentors (85% and 87% respectively) noted improved performance of their work group due to mentoring practices. Furthermore, 66% of the female mentors and 78% of the male mentors indicated that they were helped by keeping a top protegee on their work team.

Kaye (1985) states that mentors stand to gain much from the mentor-protegee relationship. Protegees may lend credibility to their mentors, may assist their mentors with special reports or projects, and often share valuable information with their mentors. The Staff of Catalyst (1982) point out that the mentor's role allows the mentor to secure a future in the organization.

Kur and Pedler (1982) argue that: "... coaching may be among the most effective methods available for developing supervisors and sales persons." From an organizational perspective, mentors (or coaches) help insure continuous and stable succession of management, reduce the time spent on re-inventing the wheel, reduce operating errors (similar to those done in the past), and stress well rounded development of both mentor and protegee (Farris and Ragan, 1981).

Mentorship programs in turn achieve the following: they recognize organizational members as individuals with unique needs and abilities; they enhance employees' sense of direction, purpose and motivation; they allow for growth; they enhance manager-employee communication; and, they develop team work (Shore and Bloom, 1986).

Kaye (1985) adds the following benefits: the development of a positive corporate image; goal commitment and clarification; equal opportunity; and, reduced legal conflicts. She suggests that all organizations, both formal and informal, have three main systems to provide support for their members: networks, mentors, and support groups.

London is quoted by Hunt and Michael (1983:219) as claiming that "mentoring relationships can rejuvinate older professionals by letting them pass on the wisdom and experience they have learned throughout their professional careers."

There is a mistaken belief, however, that only fast-track performers need coaching. In reality, all individuals need coaching, including that large group of often average performers (Phillips, 1986). And, the degree of success of that coaching (or mentoring) relationship depends on the degree to which individuals are prepared to take risks with one another (Missirian, 1982). "Mentoring without emotional support and intensity may shortchange the protegee's career progress" warns Bowen (1986).

4. GOAL SETTING

Since the mentor-protegee relationship is conducted almost exclusively at work, the relationship generates a number of organizational outcomes, the most basic of which relates to goal setting and feedback. Locke's (1968) theory, that an individual's actions are regulated by the individual's conscious intentions, is a fundamental premise to these outcomes. Furthermore, performance is determined by goal, and goal setting (Schnake et al., 1984; French and Bell, 1978).

"Few things demotivate an individual as much as not knowing what he or she is working toward and not knowing how what the individual is doing contributes to goal attainment" (French and Bell, 1978:103). Ziglar (1987:160) takes it a step further to suggest that: "The essence of good management is letting people know what you expect, inspecting what is done, and supporting those things that are done well."

Concilio (1986:21) notes that "the main reasons for poor employee performance are that the employee:

- does not know what is expected of him or her.
- does not know how well he or she is performing.
- cannot do the job because he or she does not know how

- lacks organizational support from his or her supervisor."

Schnake et al. (1984) refer to the studies conducted by Becker (1978) and Kim and Hamner (1976) as evidence that goal setting alone can lead to increased performance. When goal setting is coupled with feedback, performance is further enhanced. They also refer to Latham and Yukl's (1975) statement that the positive impact of certain goal-attributes such as: goal clarity, goal difficulty and feedback on task performance is substantially supported by research.

Latham and Yukl (1975) are supported by Locke, Shaw, Saari and Latham (1981). The above mentioned goal-attributes are positively and significantly related to employee job satisfaction (Arbey and Dewhirst, 1976; Ivancevich, 1976, 1977; Kim and Hamner, 1976; Steers, 1976; Umstot et al., 1976).

Schnake et al. (1984) state that employees perform better and are more highly satisfied when they must complete specific challenging goals instead of general easy-to-attain goals. Schnake et al. base their conclusion on the work of Bryan and Locke (1967), Hamner and Locke (1967), Hamner and Hartnett (1974), Ilgen and Hamstra (1972), Locke (1967), Locke and Bryan (1966a, 1966b, 1967), Locke, Bryan, and Kendall (1968), Terorg (1976), White, Mitchell, and Bell

(1977), Matsui, Okada, and Kakuyama (1982).

Goal setting and feedback, which are the major components of mentoring, provide a key benefit to the organization by enhancing the goal attainment of both the protegee and the mentor.

Goal attainment is also depended upon the expectations of goal attainment by the mentor, protegee, and the organization. Hill and Ritchie (1977) report that Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968) and Rosenthal (1973) demonstrated that a teacher's expectations can greatly influence the achievement of the student. This influence may be, and often is, unconscious. It may have both positive and negative impact. This influence, sometime termed "the Pygmalion effect", is as applicable in the field of business and work, as in the field of education. Livingston (1969) adds that the belief of a manager in his/her capabilities, influences the expectations which that manager places on subordinates.

Hill and Ritchie (1977) report that Schein (1961, 1964) found that the influence of expectations is stronger on young managers than their older counterparts. (This may help to explain why the influence of a protegee's first mentor has more significant impact than subsequent mentors). That influence is also stronger on an employee who is new to the organization, than on one who has been with the organization for a lengthy period of time.

The above may represent an argument in favour of the orientation of new employees to their organization. This orientation is an integral component of coaching, because it requires the supervisor/manager to impart specific information to the new employee in order for the latter to operate effectively within the employee's new environment.

In discussing employee orientation and goal setting, Wright (1983) highlights research findings of a strong correlation between preliminary expectations of an individual employee's performance and success at work. He adds that failure to reach understanding and agreement regarding goal expectation, will lead to alienation or even departure of the employee, regardless of the employee's level in the organization!

Goddard (1987:15-16) reports on

> one series of studies on communication conducted in the late 1970s covered more than 2,000 employees in staff departments. The findings showed that the two most important pieces of information people want from their organizations relate to their job performance and job opportunities; they were far more interested in honest feedback about their work than in any other subject.

"Feedback is crucial to career development. ...Employees who understand how they contribute to (the organization's) mission, know they make a difference" (Leibowitz et al., 1986:79). Smith (1987:20) says that "feedback is a crucial part of performance improvement... ."

5. FEEDBACK

An individual's self esteem can be significantly enhanced, and improved performance can result, through the expectations of others (Kaufman, 1963; Denmark and Guttentag, 1967; Livingston, 1969; Kessler and Wiener, 1972; Hill and Ritchie, 1977).

Vroom (1964), reported in Nadler (1976), claims that feedback affects behaviour in three ways:

1. Through cueing - giving information on performance which implies obvious corrective action(s).
2. Through learning - giving information on performance that implies the need to search for new behaviour.
3. Through motivating - providing information on goal attainment, facilitating the setting of goals (Locke, cartledgge and Koeppel, 1968), and how intrinsic motivation is experienced.

Blanchard and Johnson (1982) recommend a three component system of feedback within the work place. These are the: one minute goal setting, one minute praising, and one minute reprimand. They recommend that the three activities be conducted when appropriate, briefly, objectively, and to the point.

Blanchard and Lorber (1984) elaborate on the above and proposed a feedback system, titled "PRICE", which includes the following activities:

Pinpoint the performance area(s) of interest.
Record or measure the current performance level(s).
Involve the employee and agree on expectations.
Coach the employee toward the desired performance.
Evaluate performance progress toward the desired level.

Feedback can generally be provided either in a directive or nondirective manner, depending on the requirements of the job, the experience level and readiness of the individual receiving the feedback to learn. The nondirective method, is based on the work of Carl Rogers (1951, 1983) and is reported upon in Joyce and Weil (1986). The nondirective method assumes that the individual is responsible for, and, is willing to learn. It is the teacher's (or mentor's) role, therefore, to explore new ideas and concepts with their students (or protegees).

Ultimately, the key benefit to an organization from the mentoring relationship is the ripple effect this relationship has upon the organization as a whole. Ryan and Friedman (1983) reported that a mentor's style and mentoring behaviour is often influenced by the mentor's own mentor.

Roche (1979) and Levinson (1980), Ryan and Friedman (1983), and Atcherson and Jenny (1983) report that those who were mentored or sponsored, are more likely to mentor or sponsor others. In this manner, the circle of encouragement, support, guidance and teaching is maintained throughout the organization through generations of managers.

6. OBSTACLES TO EFFECTIVE MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS

Like all other human relationships, mentor-protegee relationships are not obstacle free. Yodel et al. (1982) report that the failure of mentor-protegee relationships may be traced either to organizational barriers, or to interpersonal factors. Good chemistry between the mentor and the protegee is required to make the relationship succeed (Burke, 1984; Reich, 1986).

Klauss (1981) reports the results of interviews which identify four broad areas of difficulty in the mentor-protegee relationship. These areas relate to: role responsibilities, match of mentor and protegee, hierarchical tensions, and the quality of the relationship. Klauss recommends that potential mentors be carefully screened, and that protegees should subsequently be oriented to, and even trained for, their respective roles. And, their respective expectations should be tailored to be as realistic as possible. The results of this study may be biased, however, since the respondents of the survey did not represent women and minority groups.

Other key obstacles to effective mentor-protegee relationships, are the blocks to effective communication, which are identified by Gordon (1980) and Singer (1983) as follows:

1. Directing, ordering, or commanding (you must, you have to, you will).
2. Warning, threatening or admonishing (if you don't).
3. Moralizing, preaching, or obliging (it is your responsibility, you should, you are required to).
4. Persuading with logic, arguing, instructing, lecturing (do you realize, this is why you are wrong, don't you understand that).
5. Advising, recommending, providing answers or solutions (why don't you, if I were you I would).
6. Evaluating, judging negatively, disapproving, blaming, name calling, or criticizing (you are ineffective).
7. Praising, judging, or evaluating positively, approving (you have done well, you are good).
8. Supporting, reassuring, excusing, sympathizing (it's not so bad, don't worry it will be O.K).
9. Diagnosing, psychoanalyzing, interpreting, reading, offering insight (what you need is, your problem is, the way I see it).
10. Questioning, probing, cross-examining, prying or interrogating (why, who, where, what, how).

11. Diverting, avoiding, by-passing, digressing, shifting (lets not talk about it, lets forget it, we can discuss it later).
12. Kidding, teasing, joking, being sarcastic.

Fitt and Newton (1981) relate the fear of some protegees that they may be linking their future to an unsuccessful mentor. In being unable to survive in their own organization, such mentors may not only be unable to help their protegees, but may also hinder their protegees' efforts.

The situation is further complicated in cross-gender relationships by the fears of becoming, or the expectations to become, sexually involved. Even the mere perception of sexual involvement creates a major obstacle to the success of that work relationship (Halcomb, 1979; Fitt and Newton, 1981).

Being a kin to a love relationship, it is difficult to terminate a mentor-protegee relationship in a reasonable, civil manner (Levinson, 1980). This risk, and the risk of early termination of the relationship, may leave the mentor, protegee or both feeling hard done by (Kram, 1984; Marshall-Triner, 1986).

7. MENTORING AND THE GENDER FACTOR

The statistics/findings relating to mentoring relationships and their effects on, and impact by the gender of the participants, are somewhat biased. This is primarily due to the relatively lower representation of females at the higher levels of management in both the private and public sectors. Consequently, women who rise through the levels of their organizations, are less likely than their male counterparts, to find a same-gender mentor. Consequently, most mentors for both men and women are in fact men (Atcherson and Jenny, 1983). Higginson and Quick (1980) state that women on the fast-track must have a mentor to succeed.

It is of course an assumption that women do not have mentors in the first place. Burke (1984) suggests that much of the writing on mentors (Fitt and Newton, 1981; Cook, 1979; Shapiro, Haseltine and Rowe, 1978) implies that women often lack available mentors or sponsors to assist them in their career advancement. Women are thus deprived of an appropriate role model, and may therefore be reluctant to present upcoming female junior managers with their version of mentoring. He is supported by Levinson (1980).

Kanter (1977) found that women tended to be excluded from the socialization function of mentoring, which is often represented through the process of "networking". Ryan and Friedman (1983) report that Laws (1975) discovered that mentors were often willing to sponsor and advise women, but tended to exclude women from the inner circle of power.

Ryan and Friedman's (1983) study indicates that although cross-gender mentoring did occur, same-gender mentoring was more common. Furthermore, the type of mentoring behaviour employed by both same-gender and cross-gender mentors were similar. Fitt and Newton (1981) state that although the general activities are the same, there are some differences based on the degree of emphasis. At the lower levels of the organization, women typically need more encouragement than their male counterparts, while at the higher levels the mentors of women need to devote more time to sell their protegees.

8. THE MENTORING PROCESSES

Shore and Bloom (1986) reviewed the process of "coaching" and concluded that the process is comprised of the following four key phases:

1. Collecting information on the employee performance.
2. Discussing with the employee areas for improvement.
3. Planning the actions required to be taken.
4. Reviewing the plan's implementation.

On-the-job training, which is somewhat similar to coaching, is defined by Sullivan and Miklas (1985) as including the following key ingredients:

1. Establishment of well defined performance criteria.
2. Thorough planning.
3. Careful monitoring.
4. Sensitivity to the employee's individual needs.

The four primary reasons for employee performance breakdown are: lack of clear standards, lack of frequent feedback, task interference, and skill deficiency (Leibowitz et al., 1986). "Mentoring" (or "coaching") is the process through which the obstacles to effective communication are overcome.

Coaching "requires that the manager constructively communicate to individuals how they are currently performing the job and then, in a definitive manner, provide positive solutions to improve behavior" (Scharinger, 1981:94).

Blanchard and Lorber (1984), for example, suggest that there are five basic steps to train an employee for better performance. One needs to tell the employee what to perform or achieve, show the employee how to perform the task, let the employee try the task, observe the employee's performance, and praise the employee's progress or re-direct the activity. These activities naturally require a clear understanding of the task and how it is to be completed, and an ability to communicate clearly.

Although the above processes illustrate components of mentoring, no specific model of mentoring was discovered to illustrate the whole concept. However, Singer (1983) is close to doing so when she defines the type of activities which mentors perform, or are asked to perform by their protegees. When viewed as a whole, these activities define mentoring.

Singer (1983) suggests that to be viewed as mentors, individuals need to perform one or more of the following tasks, for a specific individual (protegee): listen, ask good questions, further develop the protegee's plan(s), help protegee solve own problems, expect protegee to use own best judgement, help protegee find own skills and potential, don't expect protegee to be the mentor's replica, challenge and prod the protegee, give protegee advice on technical or organizational matters, share the protegee's ups and down, and provide the protegee with realistic personal information.

To conduct these activities effectively, the mentor requires strong interpersonal communication skills, and knowledge of models of learning. Gilley and Moore (1986) recommend a number of communication techniques which would enhance the success of such mentoring behaviours. These skills include: active listening, reflecting, paraphrasing, clarifying, interpreting, questioning, silence, encouraging, tentative analysis, and summarizing. It is worth remembering that by necessity mentoring is a process where the mentor exists to facilitate the growth of the protegee. Coaching is slightly different, since due to its nature, the coach may be more directive, and more focused on job performance versus individual growth.

9. A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The related literature confirms that coaching and mentoring are, in practice, two overlapping processes. As in all other processes, both coaching and mentoring have inputs and outputs. Figure 2.1 illustrates the key influential inputs and outputs, as seen from the organization's perspective.

Work places, like other venues for human relationships, reflect a dynamic interaction between the needs of the organization, the needs of individual employees, time, and the environment in which they interact. Although it is often agreed that it is management's role to meet the productivity goals which are set for the organization, this effort can not be achieved without also addressing the needs of individuals.

By establishing a framework for: goal/expectation setting, communication, evaluation, and feedback, managers and organizations can enhance the likelihood of strong performance by their employees.

Figure 2.1

Coaching and Mentoring

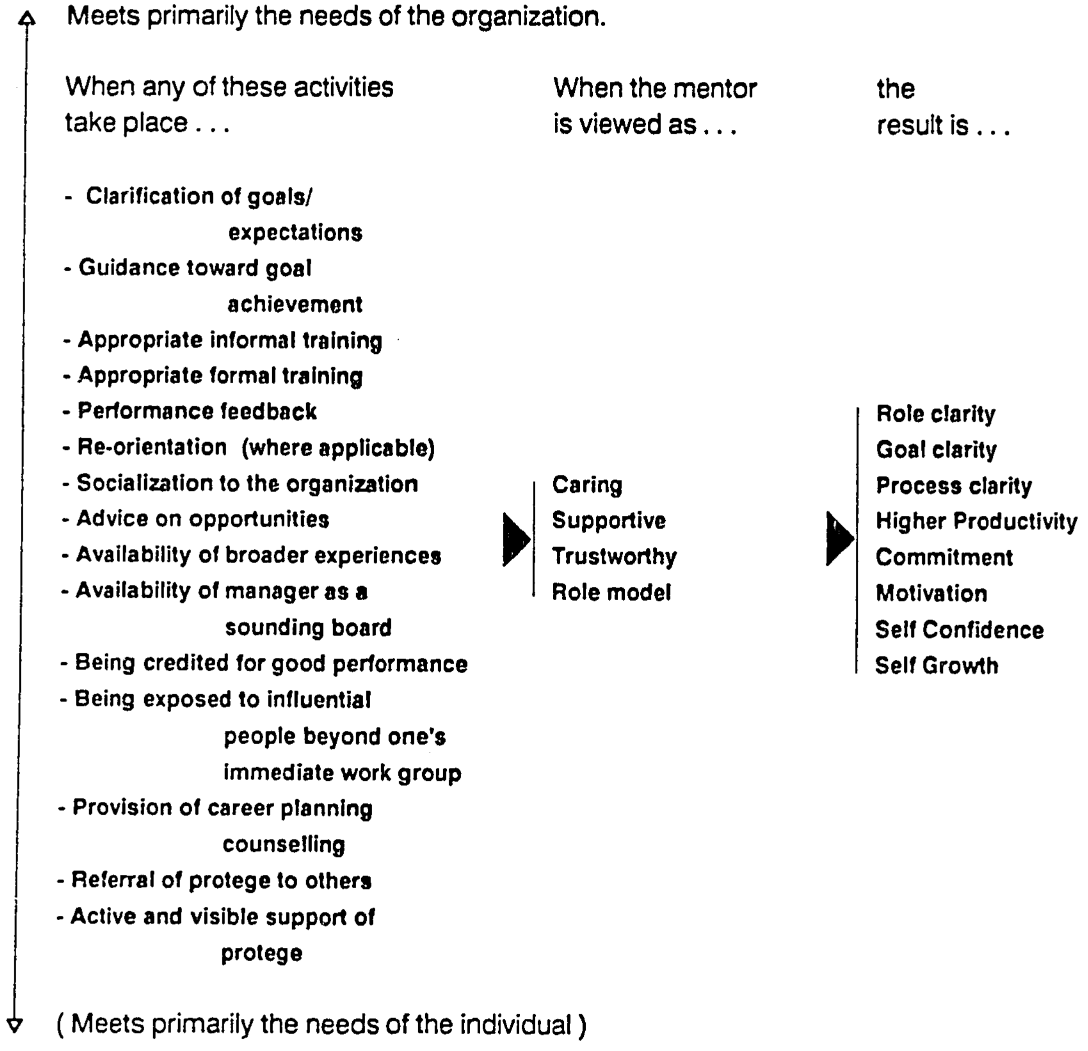
From the Organization's Perspective

INPUTS	PROCESS	OUTPUTS
Organizational needs, goals & objectives Individual needs, goals & objectives Time and effort Organizational culture	COACHING AND MENTORING	Higher productivity Low staff turnover Reduced costs Higher motivation Team work Excellence Good public relations

Figure 2.2 illustrates a "model of coaching/mentoring at the work place". The model identifies a number of activities which typify coaching/mentoring relationships. These activities are listed along a spectrum so that at the one end (the top of the model) the activities are typically of greater benefit to the organization, while at the other end (the bottom) they are typically of greater benefit to

Figure 2.2

A MODEL OF COACHING/MENTORING AT THE WORKPLACE



Meets primarily the needs of the organization.

When any of these activities take place . . .

- Clarification of goals/ expectations
- Guidance toward goal achievement
- Appropriate informal training
- Appropriate formal training
- Performance feedback
- Re-orientation (where applicable)
- Socialization to the organization
- Advice on opportunities
- Availability of broader experiences
- Availability of manager as a sounding board
- Being credited for good performance
- Being exposed to influential people beyond one's immediate work group
- Provision of career planning counselling
- Referral of protege to others
- Active and visible support of protege

When the mentor is viewed as . . .

Caring
Supportive
Trustworthy
Role model

the result is . . .

Role clarity
Goal clarity
Process clarity
Higher Productivity
Commitment
Motivation
Self Confidence
Self Growth

(Meets primarily the needs of the individual) the employee. Each activity may potentially benefit both the organization and the employee, with the key difference being the degree of the benefit to each.

According to this model, when one or more of these activities take place in the supervisor-employee relationship, AND when the supervisor (coach or mentor) is perceived by the employee to have all four personality traits, there will likely be a positive change in one or more of the outcomes listed on the right hand side of the model.

One of the limitations of this model is that it does not separate coaching-related from mentoring-related activities. It assumes that the two sets of activities overlap and may be viewed as coaching or mentoring depending on the situation in which they are taking place.

Figure 2.3 illustrates two separate cycles. The first cycle identifies a sequence of activities aimed at improving the employee's job performance, through performance appraisal, feedback and coaching.

The second cycle relates to the development of an employee's career. The two cycles may be viewed either as independent or interdependent cycles. Either one can enhance the employee's short and long range performance.

This model (Figure 2.3) represents what has to be achieved. The mechanics of each step are defined or detailed through a variety of theories and propositions such as those proposed by: Nader (1976), Kanter (1978), Katz (1981), Blanchard and Johnson (1982), Blanchard and Lorber (1984), Kram (1984), Ryan (1985), and Sullivan and Miklas (1985).

Figure 2.3
Linkages Between
Job-performance and Career-management Cycles
(Shore and Bloom, 1986:40)

This figure is not shown
due to copyright restrictions.

10. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER II

This chapter reviewed the literature and conceptual framework related to coaching/mentoring activities.

The term "mentor" was reviewed, first through its definitions, then through the roles typically associated with, and expected of, a "mentor". The benefits of mentor relationships to the organization, the mentor, and the protegee were discussed, as were the concepts of goal setting and feedback.

The obstacles to an effective mentor relationship, and the complications of cross-gender mentor relationships were described, followed by an outline of the key phases and functions of the process of mentoring.

A conceptual model was developed to illustrate the relationship between the inputs and outputs of a mentor relationship, and between performance management and career development.

A detailed model, illustrating the key activities of a coaching/mentoring relationship was discussed. Its components are the basis for the questions asked on the survey questionnaire.

CHAPTER III

INSTRUMENTATION AND METHODOLOGY

1. INTRODUCTION

The following are presented in this chapter: a discussion of the instrument, a description of the population (staff members employed by the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health), the treatment of the data, and relevant references.

The description of the instrument includes a brief discussion of the validity of the instrument. The description of the population includes an outline of the total population of the Department, as well as that of the respondent group. The processes of selecting potential respondents, as well as the distribution of the questionnaire are outlined.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTRUMENT

Gardner (1978) defines four major purposes of research. These are: to make predictions, to evaluate, to explain, and finally to describe a situation or an event. The questionnaire employed in this study is used primarily for descriptive purposes, though to a lesser degree it may also be used to explain employee dissatisfaction.

This questionnaire evolved from the reading on the subject of supervisor-employee interactions, particularly as they related to coaching and mentoring activities. Initially, the questionnaire was established to measure the satisfaction level of employees with their current supervisor-employee work relationship. However, in time the emphasis shifted to the definition and measurement of the coaching/mentoring activities which the employee believes he or she is exposed to.

The "Model of Coaching and Mentoring at the Work Place" outlines a range of key activities which define in broad terms the behaviours associated with coaching/mentoring. A number of questionnaires were reviewed in an attempt to identify a useable questionnaire which would assist, in whole or in part, to measure the types of activities listed in the above model.

Since no questionnaire was found suitable for the study, a questionnaire was developed by reviewing each of the activities listed in the model. The questions which related to these activities were designed to define both the frequency and the degree to which these activities are taking place.

In the final version of the questionnaire, the element of frequency was removed because it was felt that respondents would have great difficulty of accurately measuring the frequency of such activities as: goal setting, counselling, provision of feedback, coaching or mentoring.

The questionnaire used in this study (see appendix A), is comprised of three parts. Part A solicits broad information about the respondent and the supervisor. Responses are numeric, and are easily compiled into statistics.

Part B is the longest section in the questionnaire. It contains a Likert-type response scale of 5 options which reveal employee's satisfaction level with selected supervisor-employee interactions. These responses represent the bulk of the statistical findings.

Part C is divided into two sections. The first is a set of two lengthy questions aimed at measuring the level of employee satisfaction with selected organizational practices (e.g. orientation, career development, etc.). The second section contains four questions, three of which require a narrative response from employees, about their perceptions of their supervisors.

2.1 Validity of the Questionnaire

Borg and Gall (1983) define the content validity of a questionnaire, as its ability to measure that which it is designed to measure. Face validity, they suggest, is based on the researcher's appraisal of the questionnaire. "Construct validity is the extent to which a particular test can be shown to measure a hypothetical construct" (Borg and Gall, 1983: 280).

The face validity of the questionnaire was appraised by the researcher as he developed each of the questions. Once completed, the questionnaire was given to a colleague from outside the Department, who was asked to identify questions which were unclear.

The construct covered by this study relates to employee's satisfaction level with their supervisor-employee interactions. It may be correctly argued that the terms used to define these interactions may change, creating a different construct, and resulting in a corresponding change of responses. Though it is difficult to control against, the researcher attempted to use terminology which is easily understood by, or familiar to respondents.

Due to the importance of the questionnaire to the success of the study, a further step was taken to ensure the face validity the questionnaire. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the questionnaire, and thus not influence potential respondents, it was decided first of all, to have the questionnaire reviewed and filled in by five people who were all members of the researcher's own Department. These respondents included a senior manager, a manager/supervisor and three secretaries.

They were given no explanation, and were asked to fill in the questionnaire. Their responses were reviewed to validate the questionnaire. The time required to complete the questionnaire was also recorded. Once the required changes were made, and based on the feedback from this initial group, a second more formal pilot was conducted.

The formal pilot of the questionnaire was conducted using a work unit of 21 people. These people were all public servants and included: one manager, four supervisors, and 16 support staff. This group was representative of the intended population of the survey.

Because they worked in another Department, this group posed no risk to the disclosure of the questionnaire content to those who would be selected in the main study. Thus, the respondents to the questionnaire at Community and Occupational Health had no chance to prepare for it.

The pilot group was advised that their participation was voluntary, and that their individual responses would be kept confidential. They were promised, and did receive, a generalized summary report at the end of the pilot study. The purpose of the study was explained to them.

Feedback from the pilot study resulted in a number of changes to the wording of some questions, but the general concept and format remained unchanged. Much care was taken at that point to ensure that the questions were not viewed as an evaluation of the supervisor. Instead questions were structured in a way as to be descriptive of the supervisor-employee relationship.

2.2 Reliability of the Questionnaire

Borg and Gall (1983) define the reliability of a questionnaire as the "... level of internal consistency or stability of the measuring device over time" (281).

The questionnaire's Part B (except its last question) was subjected to two separate reliability tests. The first was the Guttman Split-Half method, which uses the computations of alternate responses to the numerically coded questions. This method resulted in a reliability rating of 0.9697 which is considered very reliable.

A second method -- the Crombach Alpha method -- resulted in a reliability rating of 0.9489. In both methods, a result of 1.00 would reflect absolute reliability.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION

This survey was conducted within the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health. The Department's mandate is to provide service to Albertans on such issues as Mental Health, Public Health (including the services of

Health Units, Communicable Disease Control clinics, Environmental Health, and Rehabilitation), Occupational Health, and Occupational Safety.

Although not specifically measured, the average education level within the Department is significantly higher than many other organizations -- public or private -- and many of the managers see themselves primarily as "Professionals" and secondly as "Managers".

The Department provided the researcher with a computer print-out which listed all of the Department's personnel (as of August 31, 1987) by their specific work classification. This print out became the corner stone for the selection of respondents, and the collection of statistics on respondents (their office location, work category, and gender). It also assisted in the identification of late respondents, for follow-up phone calls requesting them to complete and return their questionnaire.

3.1 Breakdown of the Population

The total population of the Department was 1302 employees (excluding vacant positions). This population included 403 males (31% of the total population) and 899 females (69% of the total population).

The employees of the Department represent 140 work classifications. In order to make the data of the survey more manageable, it was decided to group the respondents into three general work categories -- Management, Professional, and Support Staff. The easiest to categorize were those in the "Management" category, since their positions were already coded as management.

Next easiest to categorize were those in the "Support Staff" category. The most difficult to define, because of their overlap with the other two categories, were those in the "Professional" category. When dividing the population into the three broad categories, the researcher relied upon the expertise of the Department's personnel administrators. Based on their experience, they were able to define accurately the groupings of these 140 specific categories.

Table 3.1 outlines the breakdown of the population by gender and by general work classification.

TABLE 3.1

POPULATION BREAKDOWN BY GENDER AND WORK CLASSIFICATION

WORK	MALE		FEMALE	
CLASSIFICATION	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
Management	88	73	33	27
Professional	215	44	269	56
Support Staff	100	14	597	86

Interestingly, there were some discrepancies between the actual work category of individuals and their perception of their work category. Fourteen individuals who, based on their classification, were identified by the researcher as "support staff", identified themselves as "professionals". By contrast, all of those in the professional and management work categories correctly perceived their own work categories. In all cases, responses were analyzed based on the work classification code which the researcher identified from the personnel print-out, and not on respondent's perception.

The Department operates in a decentralized structure, with staff members located throughout the Province of Alberta. The Department's staff is concentrated in five centres: Edmonton (about 650 people), Clairsholm (265), Camrose (250), Calgary (70), and Raymond (40).

Table 3.2 outlines employees years of service in the Alberta Public Service, and in the Department, by work category. The support staff employees are organizationally, the least mobile group, having the highest average of years in the Department and in the Public Service. On the average, the professional group appears to be the most mobile within the Public Service.

Average years of service in the Alberta Public Service of male employees was much higher (mean = 11.99 years, standard deviation = 7.1) than that of females employees (mean = 8.73 years, standard deviation = 5.2).

Table 3.2

Average "Years of Service" by Work Category

	In Alberta's Public Service	In the Department
All	10.6	3.7
Support staff	11.6	4.2
Professional	9.3	3.7
Management	10.7	3.1

The variances relating to the years of service among the different gender groups were analyzed, and are reported in Table 3.3. The major differences appear to be among male employees (with male supervisors), and female employees (with female supervisors). This difference is significant, with a probability of 0.0032.

It is assumed that Public Service employees are randomly distributed by age across the different Departments. As such, the age factor of the staff is assumed to bear little significance on results, and does not restrict the otherwise generalizability of the results.

Table 3.3

Years of Service Variance (by Gender)

Employee/supervisor	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male/male	97	11.95	7.09
Male/female	15	12.27	7.39
Female/male	42	9.48	6.19
Female/female	47	8.06	4.09

Supervisors. More employees (139, or 69.2%) had male supervisors, than female supervisors (62, or 30.8%). Same-gender employee-supervisor teams were more common (144, or 71.7%) than cross-gender relationships (57, or 44.3%).

Table 3.4

Gender Distribution of Supervisors and Employees

		Supervisors	
		Males	Females
Employees	Males	97 (48.3%)	15 (7.5%)
	Females	42 (20.9%)	47 (23.4%)

3.2 SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS

The selection of respondents for the study's sample began by a review of the employees in the "Management" category. The researcher decided to include all of the management personnel, since their input was significant not only in defining their own expectations for themselves, but also the degree of their willingness to support their own employees. It was decided, however, not to include in the survey 10 of the individuals classified as managers, because they were either not permanent employees of the Department, or else were hired for their medical speciality and not their "management" role.

In the case of the Support Staff category, the issue of gender representation became significant. The support staff group comprised of 100 (14%) males and 597 (86%) females. Since responses were to be analyzed against the respondent's gender, it was decided to draw an equal number (70) of respondents from each of the male and the female support staff groups.

Since the Professional work category was closely divided between male and female (44% and 56% respectively), there was no need to specifically select by gender. Instead a random sample of 100 respondents was established.

Actual selection of respondents was based upon a computerized list of all employees of the Department (as of

August 31, 1987). This print-out listed employees (by position number) within each of the 140 job classifications. These employees were then listed sequentially within their respective work category (i.e. Support Staff, Professional, and Management). A random number table was employed to select individual employees, until the required number of respondents from each work category was met.

Each employee was given a unique identification number, which was placed at the top of the questionnaire sent to that individual. Respondents were advised that this number would be used only for follow-up action ,or, requests for clarification, should these be necessary. In time, this list did become useful, particularly when it was realized that some individuals to whom the questionnaire was sent were not available to complete it because they either recently departed from the Department (three people), or, were on extended sick leave (four people).

In cases where potential respondents were truly unavailable to complete the questionnaire, their questionnaire was returned to the researcher who deleted their name and questionnaire identification number from the master list. The researcher replaced each of these individuals with the employee, listed next on the personnel print-out, who matched the gender and work category of the individual who could not respond to the questionnaire. In this manner the original integrity of gender and work category breakdown was maintained.

3.3 DISTRIBUTION OF QUESTIONNAIRES

A cover letter (see appendix A) from the Executive Director of Human Resources to all questionnaire recipients expressed the support of the Department for the survey. The letter reaffirmed the confidentiality of the survey, and requested recipients to reply to, and mail, the questionnaire directly to the researcher. Another cover letter, from the researcher, was included to provided additional instructions to respondents.

Respondents' addresses were generated through a computer list received from the Department's Administrative Support Division. Individual questionnaires were mailed separately to the employee's work site using the Departmental mail system. The completed questionnaires were then returned directly to the researcher, via the Departmental mail system.

3.4 RESPONDENT POPULATION

Of the 349 questionnaires which were mailed, 206 (59%) were returned. (According to Borg and Gall (1983), such return rates are quite satisfactory). Of these, five were unusable due to the removal of the identification code by the respondents, rendering data analysis impossible.

Initial response to the questionnaire was less than satisfactory, and required the researcher to phone all those who could be reached, and request their completed questionnaires. Some of those who were phoned had questions regarding the intent of the study, and most returned the questionnaire completed.

Table 3.5 identifies the potential vs. actual respondents by their work category, and gender.

Table 3.5

Potential vs. Actual Respondents

	Support Staff		Professional		Management	
Questionnaire	male	female	male	female	male	female
Sent	70	70	44	56	80	29
Received	32	40	30	36	50	13
% returned	45.7	57.1	68.2	64.3	62.5	44.8

In the process of compiling the data from the returned questionnaires, it was noted that many respondents from one isolated work site did not respond to the questionnaire. The researcher was told informally that employees at that site were "advised" by their Union representatives not to reply to the questionnaire, as it symbolized "another Management ploy". This Union-Management strife has little influence on this study because of the adequate response rates.

4. TREATMENT OF THE DATA

The data generated by the questionnaire were primarily numeric, representing a level of satisfaction with, or a preference for, a specific supervisor-employee activity. The questionnaire's last three questions, however, required respondents to identify in a narrative format their preferences regarding their relationship with the individual who currently supervises them.

Each respondent's numeric and narrative responses were keyed into a computerized data base. The narrative responses were grouped into the responses for each of the three questions, according to gender and work category (e.g. male and female responses of support staff, professional staff, and management personnel).

The numeric responses were categorized as addressing one or more topic areas (i.e. career development, communication, feedback, goal setting, cooperation, etc.). This categorization then provided the basis for some general analysis which supplemented the numeric responses.

The numerically coded responses were analyzed using a computer statistical program which generated a number of descriptive statistical reports. These reports provided the researcher with mean, standard deviation, and frequency count for each of the questions. It also provided these statistics along gender (of the employee), gender match (employee/supervisor), and work category breakdowns.

Since early questionnaire returns indicated gender and work category response difference, it was decided to further analyze the data along the gender of the respondent, the gender mix of the supervisor and employee, and the work category of the respondent.

Analysis of variance tests were conducted, including both "F" and "T" tests, to determine whether there were significant differences among the genders, or the different work categories.

Where appropriate, the data were also rank ordered (based on the mean response of the different groups), to illustrate the priority of and relationship among the different issues. Some rank ordering was conducted based on frequency counts.

5. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER III

In Chapter III the instrumentation of the study, its methodology, and its population were defined and outlined.

The instrument of the study was described from its inception, through its pilot phase, to its final form (see appendix A). The methodology for the collection and treatment of the data was outlined. The description of the study's population included a description of the population from which a sample was taken, an analysis of the selected population, and a review of actual respondents to the questionnaire.

The statistical tools used in the study were also discussed.

The complete questionnaire, and its cover letters, are in Appendix A.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a preliminary analysis of the data collected by the questionnaire. The responses to the individual questions are reported through a number of statistical tools: mean scores, standard deviations, frequency counts, and analysis of variance.

Where applicable, due to statistical significance or general interest, responses are also reported by gender and/or work category of the respondent. In a few instances, responses are further separated and discussed based on the gender match between the supervisor and the employee.

To maintain consistency throughout the study, data analysis is reported using key supervisor-employee activities (listed in Figure 2.2). An understanding of these activities assists in understanding the whole relationship.

The content of this chapter will be presented as follows: an overview of key response analysis, specific numerical and narrative response, and the responses specifically related to the following: employee job orientation, supervisor-employee relationship, goal setting, provision of feedback, and career development.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES

The analysis of responses generally did not indicate a statistically significant difference among male and female respondents, OR among respondents of the three work categories -- support staff, professional, and management. This was startling since it contradicted some of the literature. The few differences which may be more of interest than statistical significance, will be reported in the section relevant to their content topic area.

As well, employees' level of satisfaction with their supervisor-employee relationship was generally above average (or, "moderately satisfactory"). Employees also indicated their supervisor-employee relationship to be generally active (versus passive or neutral).

Not surprisingly, respondents indicated a higher level of concern for and satisfaction with their job duties -- goal setting and feedback -- than for career development.

3. SPECIFIC RESPONSES

Responses to the main part of the questionnaire may be divided into two parts: those which were numeric in nature, and those which were in a narrative form. The analysis of the numeric responses to each question indicated, among other factors, the relevant mean, mode, standard error, and standard deviation.

Table 4.1 represents the rank order of responses to all questions requiring a response using a 1-5 Likert scale. The scale values were as follows: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

With but one exception, the mean response to all questions was above the "3" or "neutral" level on the response spectrum. That exception was the employee's perception of the supervisor as the "advisor on career development opportunities", and its mean response was 2.95!

Another interesting finding is that six of the top seven statements in Table 4.1 indicated agreement by the employee that the supervisor was caring, and reflected a general satisfaction with supervisor-employee relationships.

An interesting, and not surprising correlation exists between the mean of employees' direct and indirect measurement of their satisfaction with an issue. An obvious example of this correlation is their response to the statement "my satisfaction with my current job duties" (mean = 3.79). Responses to related questions ranged from a mean of 3.88 to a mean of 3.62. Tables 4.2 and 4.3 give more specific detail by each work category.

Table 4.1

Rank Order of Responses According to the Mean Scores

Rank	Response statements	Mean	S.D
1	My supervisor is approachable to discuss my performance.	4.26	0.93
2	My supervisor and I communicate freely.	4.12	0.95
3	My satisfaction with my relationship with current supervisor.	4.10	1.00
4.	If informed of my personal problem, my supervisor would show understanding.	3.97	0.93
5.	When applicable, my supervisor credits me for my successes.	3.95	0.99
6.	If requested, my supervisor would listen to my personal problem.	3.93	0.88
7.	My supervisor appears interested in my well being.	3.92	0.94
8.	When asked by me, my supervisor explains my unit's goals.	3.88	0.97
9.	Generally, when I am assigned a task it is clearly stated.	3.88	0.87
10.	When requested, my supervisor provides me with guidance on my performance.	3.80	0.98

Table 4.1 (cont.)

Rank Order of Responses

According to the Mean Scores

Rank	Response statements	Mean	S.D
11.	I discuss freely my work expectations with my supervisor.	3.80	1.01
12	My satisfaction level with my current job duties.	3.79	0.94
13	My supervisor should be involved in my career development.	3.79	0.89
14	When asked by me, my supervisor clarifies my work goals.	3.79	0.91
15	My supervisor expresses his/her job expectations.	3.75	0.99
16	My supervisor and I discuss ways to achieve my goal expectations.	3.62	1.00
17	I aspire to reach quality of work similar to my supervisor.	3.61	1.08
18	My supervisor encourages my career development plans.	3.56	1.04
19	My supervisor discusses my skills/abilities with key people.	3.49	0.91

Table 4.1 (cont.)

Rank Order of Responses

According to the Mean Scores

Rank	Response statements	Mean	S.D
20	My supervisor provides me with timely performance feedback.	3.49	1.10
21	My supervisor is my key feedback provider.	3.45	1.14
22	When required by my job I am sent on courses or seminars.	3.41	1.16
23	My satisfaction level with the job orientation which I received.	3.36	1.19
24	My supervisor and I discuss ways to broaden my work experiences.	3.34	1.09
25	My supervisor has helped my career development efforts.	3.17	1.10
26	I received most of my work assignments from my supervisor.	3.10	1.18
27	My satisfaction with my career development opportunities.	3.10	1.09
28	My supervisor is my advisor on career development opportunities.	2.95	1.14

Table 4.2

Top Five Satisfaction Responses Rank-Ordered By Work Category

Response statements	Mean	S.D
Support staff		
My supervisor is approachable.	4.11	1.04
My supervisor listens to my problems.	4.10	0.92
My relationship with my supervisor is.... .	4.07	1.08
Generally tasks assigned to me are clear.	4.06	0.71
My supervisor understands my problems.	4.04	0.97
Professional staff		
My supervisor is approachable.	4.26	0.86
My supervisor and I communicate freely.	4.20	0.83
My relationship with my supervisor is	4.06	0.99
My supervisor credits my successes.	3.98	0.87
My supervisor understands my problems.	3.97	0.84
Management staff		
My supervisor is approachable.	4.44	0.82
My relationship with my supervisor is	4.17	0.93
My supervisor and I communicate freely.	4.14	0.96
My supervisor credits my successes.	4.05	0.81
My supervisor is interested in my well being.	3.98	0.83

Table 4.3

Bottom Five Satisfaction Responses

Rank-Ordered By Work Category

Response statements	Mean	S.D
Support staff		
My supervisor helps my career development.	3.06	1.15
My satisfaction with career opportunities.	3.06	1.09
My supervisor advises on career development.	3.11	1.12
My supervisor broadens my experience.	3.28	1.13
My supervisor gives me most of my assignments.	3.29	1.19
Professional staff		
My supervisor advises on career development.	2.96	1.16
My satisfaction with career opportunities.	2.97	1.08
My supervisor gives me most of my assignments.	3.11	1.16
My supervisor helps my career development.	3.15	1.06
My satisfaction with my orientation.	3.34	1.08
Management staff		
My supervisor advises on career development.	2.71	1.11
My supervisor gives me most of my assignments.	2.87	1.17
My satisfaction with my orientation.	3.12	1.17
My supervisor broadens my experience.	3.27	1.06
My satisfaction with career opportunities.	3.29	1.08

It is interesting to note the similarity among the responses of members of the three work categories, in their statements of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Of particular note is the fact that all three groups identified their highest satisfaction with the approachability of the supervisor, and registered most of their dissatisfaction with issues relating to career development or opportunities.

Another noteworthy observation is that even among the five strongest points of dissatisfaction, the mean response on many issues is at the neutral level (3), and not the mildly dissatisfied level (2). And, it is the management group which registered the strongest dissatisfaction.

Surprisingly, all three groups indicated some dissatisfaction (or disagreement) with the fact that their supervisor provides them with the majority of their work assignments.

One factor analysis came close to being statistically significant. It relates to the statement: "If requested, my supervisor would listen to my personal problem." Mean responses by work category were: support staff 4.10 (S.D = 0.92), professional 3.92 (S.D = 0.75), and management 3.73 (S.D = 0.94). The "F" probability was = 0.0541.

Orientation

Most employees (147 or 73.1%) recalled having some sort of a job orientation for their most current position. Of the whole survey population (201), the largest number of respondents (78 or 38.8%) indicated that it took place longer than 24 months previously, while nearly a similar group (69 or 34.3%) indicated that its last job orientation was within the previous 24 months. Over a quarter of the survey population either could not remember having had an orientation (19 or 9.5%), or stated that no orientation took place (35 or 17.4%).

The general satisfaction level with the orientation which respondents received for their current job was "neutral" (mean = 3.36, and S.D = 1.19). Respondents were then asked to elaborate on the specific topics which their orientation covered, and those topics which they wished or required more information on.

Table 4.4 indicates the topic areas which respondents identified as covered during their last job orientation. These topics are rank ordered in descending order according to the number of respondents who indicated its coverage.

Note that seven of the eight topics most frequently covered during the job orientation, directly related to the conduct of the employee's job duties. The remainder may be seen as related to "career development".

Table 4.4 reflects the responses of 73.1% of the respondent population. It is note worthy that over 50% of these respondents indicated that during their last job orientation they covered all but two of the listed topics.

Table 4.4

Rank Order of Job Orientation Topics

According to Indication of Their Coverage

Rank	Topic	Respondents Indicating "Yes"
1	Explanation of job duties.	129 (64.2%)
2	Explanation of work unit goals/objectives.	126 (62.7%)
3	Introduction to members of the unit.	126 (62.7%)
4	Explanation of unit procedures.	111 (55.2%)
5	Statement of the goals of the Division.	107 (53.2%)
6	Statement of the goals of the Department.	106 (52.7%)
7	Opportunity to express employee expectation.	104 (51.7%)
8	Statement of supervisor's expectation.	101 (50.2%)
9	Explanation of employee benefit package.	90 (44.8%)
10	Discussion of employee concerns.	88 (43.8%)

Table 4.5 reflects the information provided by Table 4.4 along the gender mix of the employee and the supervisor. Although not statistically significant, the data highlights

a number of interesting observations. First among these relates to female and male employees who have a male supervisor. When the two groups of employees were compared, the female employees indicated a higher frequency of coverage on ALL but two orientation topic areas. When the same comparison was made between male and female employees who had a female supervisor, the coverage appeared balanced.

Table 4.5

Coverage of Job Orientation Topics

By (%) of Respondents, and the Employee/Supervisor Gender

Topic	M/M	M/F	F/M	F/F
Job duties.	57.7	73.3	64.3	74.5
Work unit goals/objectives.	59.8	60.0	61.9	70.2
Introduction to unit members.	57.7	66.7	66.7	68.1
Unit procedures.	46.4	73.3	54.8	68.1
Goals of the Division.	52.6	66.7	42.9	59.6
Goals of the Department.	54.6	66.7	45.2	51.1
Chance to express own expectation.	48.5	60.0	54.8	53.2
Supervisor's expectation.	43.3	53.3	52.4	61.7
Employee benefit package.	44.3	46.7	50.0	40.4
Employee concerns.	37.1	60.0	52.4	44.7

More employees with female supervisors, than employees with male supervisors, reported the coverage of all but one of the job orientation topics. That exception was related to the supervisor "explaining the employee benefit package".

In Table 4.6, the same data was compared by whether the employee-supervisor teams were same or cross-gender. Cross-gender supervisors were reported more frequently as covering all but three of the orientation topic areas.

Table 4.6

Coverage of Job Orientation Topics

By (%) of Respondents, and the Employee/Supervisor Gender

Topic	Same-gender	Cross-gender
Job duties.	63.2	66.7
Work unit goals/objectives.	63.2	61.4
Introduction to unit members.	61.1	66.7
Unit procedures.	53.5	59.6
Goals of the Division.	54.9	49.1
Goals of the Department.	53.5	50.9
Chance to express own expectation.	50.0	56.1
Supervisor's expectation.	49.3	52.6
Employee benefit package.	43.1	49.1
Employee concerns.	39.6	54.4

Differences between the reported coverage frequency of topics, by same and cross-gender supervisors, typically ranged between 1.8% and 6.1%. In one issue -- discussion of the employee concerns -- however, the difference is 14.8%. More cross-gender supervisors were identified as covering this topic, than their same-gender counterpart.

Table 4.7 reflects the counter side of Table 4.4. Respondents were asked to indicate in which of the topic areas listed in Table 4.4 they received insufficient information, and wished a more detailes coverage. Table 4.7 identifies these topics in descending rank order according to the frequency of "yes" responses.

Table 4.4 does not indicate, and the questionnaire did not measure, how well the orientation's topic areas were covered. A comparison of the rank orders in Table 4.4 and Table 4.7 reflect an interesting relationship. The top four topic areas (in Table 4.4) which were covered by the orientation were identified (by Table 4.7) as the topics whose coverage requires the least additional information. This may reflect a general satisfaction with the manner with which these topic areas were covered.

A separate view of responses, by work category, reveals a more detailed breakdown of responses regarding coverage of orientation topics. Though there are no statistically significant differences among the three work categories --

Table 4.7

Rank Order of Job Orientation Topics According to the Desire for Their Increased Coverage

Rank	Topic	"Yes" responses
1	Statement of the employer's expectations.	52 (25.9%)
2	Explanation of the employee benefit package.	49 (24.4%)
3	Opportunity to express employee's expectation.	38 (18.9%)
4	Statement of the goals of the Department.	36 (17.9%)
5	Discussion of employee's concerns.	36 (17.9%)
6	Statement of the goals of the Division.	35 (17.4%)
7	Explanation of unit procedures.	34 (16.9%)
8	Explanation of work unit's objectives.	32 (15.9%)
9	Explanation of employee's duties.	28 (13.9%)
10	Introduction to members of the unit.	16 (8.0%)

support staff, professional, and management -- there are however, a number of interesting points to observe.

Table 4.8 reflects the percentage of respondents in each of the work categories, whose orientation covered the respective topic. A comparison of overall responses across the Table reveals a trend. With but two exception in each case, the professional group indicated the highest frequency of coverage of the stated topics. The management group indicated the lowest frequency.

Another difference among the responses of the three groups, is the coverage which was given to each topic. In the orientation of the support staff, for example, the top three topics were the explanation of: job duties (68.1%), unit goals/objectives (65.3%), and unit procedures (62.5%).

Table 4.8

Stated Frequency of Job Orientation Topics According to Respondent Work Category

Topic	Support Staff	Professional	Management
Explain unit goals.	65.3%	69.7%	52.4%
Explain job duties.	68.1	72.7	50.8
State Supervisor expectation.	52.8	60.6	36.5
Express own expectation.	54.2	56.1	44.4
Explain unit procedures.	62.5	62.1	39.7
Introduction to unit members.	58.3	74.2	55.6
State goals of Division.	47.2	60.6	52.4
State goals of Department.	48.6	50.6	49.2
Explain employee benefits.	44.4	48.5	41.3
Discuss own concerns.	47.2	47.0	36.5

The three most frequently covered topics in the orientation of the professional staff were: introduction to unit members (74.2%), explanation of job duties (72.7%), and explanation of unit goals/objectives (69.7%). In the case of management personnel, the three most frequently covered topics were: introduction to unit members (55.6%), explanation of unit goals or objectives (52.4%), and an explanation of the goals of the Division (52.4%)

By contrast, responses by work category relating to the desire for more coverage of these topics bear no trend or interesting observation. Responses generally indicated a limited desire for additional information during future job orientations.

An analysis of responses based on the gender of the employee, highlighted a few interesting points. More females (22 or 24.7%) said that they wanted increased coverage of the "goals of the Division" than males (13 or 11.6%). A larger number of females (22 or 24.7%) said that they wanted to know more about the "goals of the Department", than men (14 or 12.5%).

A similar analysis of responses based on the gender of the supervisor and the employee revealed that a larger number of employees whose gender is different from that of supervisor (15 or 26.3%) said that they wanted more information on the "goals of the Division", than those whose gender is the same as their supervisor (20 or 13.9%). More employees whose gender is different from that of their supervisor (31 or 54.4%) indicated that their concerns were discussed during the orientation, than those whose gender is similar to their supervisor (57 or 39.6%).

Supervisor-Employee Relationship

As illustrated earlier, in Table 4.1, the highest employee satisfaction level was reported on the issue of the "supervisor-employee relationship". The employee's second highest satisfaction level was with "the supervisor as a caring individual". Responses to these two issues (Table 4.9) reflect a high level of communication between employees and their supervisors.

When asked who provided them with an inspirational standard of performance, employees most frequent response was their "supervisor". Males reported that their job inspiration came from: the supervisor (45.4%), persons senior to the supervisor (12.0%), peers (7.4%), and others (5.6%). However, nearly a third (29.6%) reported that "no one" gave them inspiration.

Female employees had a slightly different pattern of responses: the supervisor (47.1%), a senior person (11.8%), others (4.7%), and peers (2.4%). More than a third of the female employees (34.1%) stated that 'no one' inspired them.

Table 4.9

Employee Satisfaction Levels

According to Select Topic Areas

Topic	Mean	S.D
Supervisor-Employee Relationship		
My supervisor is approachable to discuss my performance.	4.26	0.93
My supervisor and I communicate freely.	4.12	0.95
My satisfaction with the relationship with my current supervisor.	4.10	1.00
I aspire to reach the quality of work of my supervisor.	3.61	1.08
Supervisor Seen As Caring		
If informed of my personal problem, my supervisor would show understanding.	3.97	0.93
If requested, my supervisor would listen to my personal problem.	3.93	0.88
My supervisor appears interested in my well being.	3.92	0.94

Goal Setting and Feedback

The Department of Community and Occupational Health encouraged its supervisors to establish work-related goals/ objectives for their employees, assess their employee's progress toward these goals, and provide both verbal (on-going) and written feedback. Since the Department did not enforce these requirements, it was up to the supervisor whether these activities took place, and to what degree.

Goal Setting. Responses indicate that goal setting, in whatever form, did take place and was conducted in a moderately satisfactory manner. Table 4.10 identifies the employee satisfaction levels by the specific topic areas of "goal setting" and "performance feedback".

It is interesting to note that respondents did not clearly identify their supervisor as their key provider of work assignments. The question: "who is?", was not addressed by this survey, and may be worth further study.

Responses did reveal, however, a general satisfaction with the manner in which goals were communicated, and it also appears that employees typically had access to their supervisors for clarification of these goals as required.

Review of responses based on the employee gender reveal (probability = .008) that male respondents expressed a slightly higher satisfaction level with their supervisor "expressing job expectations" (mean = 3.91, standard deviation = 0.89), than female respondents (mean = 3.54, standard deviation = 1.07).

Table 4.10

Employee Satisfaction Levels

With Goal Setting Activities

Topic	Mean	S.D
When asked, my supervisor explains the unit goals.	3.88	0.97
Generally, when I am assigned a task it is clearly stated.	3.88	0.87
I discuss freely my work expectations with my supervisor.	3.80	1.01
When asked my supervisor clarifies my goals.	3.79	0.91
My supervisor expresses his expectations.	3.75	0.99
My supervisor and I discuss ways to achieve my goal expectations.	3.62	1.00
I receive most of my work assignments from my supervisor.	3.10	1.09

There were also significant differences in the response of the different gender mixes, to the statement: "My supervisor expresses his/her job expectations." Males with female supervisors recorded the highest ratio (mean = 4.07, S.D = .80), followed by males with male supervisors (mean = 3.89, S.D = .90), females with male supervisors (mean = 3.67, S.D = 1.01), and finally females with female supervisors (mean = 3.42, S.D = 1.12). An analysis of variance among these groups identified an "F" probability of 0.306 between the male/male team the female/female teams.

A significant difference (2-tail probability = 0.056) was also identified in the responses of same-gender , and, cross-gender teams to the statement: "when asked, my supervisor explains unit goals to me." Female employees with female supervisors reported a higher satisfaction level (mean = 4.09, S.D = 0.87), than did male employees with male supervisors (mean = 3.80, S.D = 0.99).

Performance Feedback. Table 4.11 lists the satisfaction level of employees with the feedback they received on their job performance.

Respondents were given a list of five methods through which they could receive performance feedback. They were asked to identify the method(s) which their supervisor employed. Table 4.12 identifies the percentage of employees, by work category, who were involved in each of the five stated methods of performance feedback.

Table 4.11

Employee Satisfaction Levels

With Performance Feedback Activities

Topic	Mean	S.D
When requested, my supervisor provides me with guidance on my performance.	3.80	0.98
My supervisor provides me with timely performance feedback.	3.49	1.10
My supervisor is my key feedback provider.	3.45	1.14

Noteworthy is the observation that the majority of respondents in each work category identified the "annual performance evaluation/letter" as their key source of performance feedback. (This may be explained by the mandatory requirement to complete written performance evaluations at least once a year). The second most significant method used was the "informal discussion(s)".

There is a minor but interesting difference between the support staff responses and those of respondents in the professional and management categories. Respondents in the support staff category indicated a lower frequency in the use of "formal meetings" and "informal written notes" than respondents in the other two work categories.

Furthermore, employees with the same gender as their supervisor reported a higher frequency (47 or 32.6%) of the use of "informal written notes and annotations", than their cross-gender employees (7 or 12.3%).

Table 4.12

Employee Involvement with Feedback Methods

By Work Category

Method	All	Support Staff	Professional	Management
Annual evaluation/letter.	90.5%	86.1%	92.4%	93.7%
Formal meetings.	25.4	18.1	25.8	33.3
Informal discussions.	65.4	58.3	65.2	74.6
Informal written notes.	26.9	18.1	30.3	33.3
Other.	10.0	5.6	12.1	12.7

The responses indicating the use of one or more of the feedback methods are also reviewed by the gender mix of the employee and supervisor (Table 4.3). It is interesting to note that "annual evaluations" are least used by the female/female teams; "formal meetings" are used most frequently by the male/male teams; and, "informal written notes" are used significantly less for female employees whose supervisors are male.

Table 4.13

Employee Involvement with Feedback Methods

By Employee/Supervisor Gender

Method	M/M	M/F	F/M	F/F
Annual evaluation/letter.	92.8%	93.3%	97.6%	78.7%
Formal meetings.	32.0	20.0	19.0	19.1
Informal discussions.	66.0	60.0	64.3	68.1
Informal written notes.	32.0	20.0	9.5	34.0
Other.	11.3	6.7	9.5	8.5

Support Systems. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they received "support" (e.g. performance feedback, guidance, inspiration, etc) from any one in their current organization, and if so from whom (i.e., their supervisor, peers, a person senior to the supervisor, others, or none).

Table 4.14 illustrates the percentage of respondent who identified the person (i.e. the supervisor) as doing the activity (i.e. provide performance feedback).

Table 4.14

Employee Perception of Available Support

By Percentage of "Yes" Responses

Activity	Supervisor	Peers	Senior Person	None	Others
Provide feedback.	74.5%	4.6%	9.2%	6.1%	5.6%
Provide active support.	60.0	4.1	24.6	6.7	4.6
Advice on ways to perform job better.	67.3	2.6	6.6	20.4	3.1
Act as sounding board.	57.7	3.6	28.9	6.7	3.1
Advise on career dev.	41.8	8.2	7.7	38.7	3.6
Provide inspiration.	46.1	5.2	11.9	31.6	5.2
Advise on proper org. behaviour.	57.2	8.2	8.2	25.3	1.0

It is significant that the supervisor is identified, to one degree or another, as being involved in all seven key activities which are listed in Table 4.14. In order of descending frequency, the supervisor is identified as being the key provider of: performance feedback (74.5%), advice on ways to do the job better (67.3%), active support (60.0%), and advice on proper organizational behaviour (57.2%). The supervisor was also identified as being a sounding board for the employee's ideas (57.7%).

The next individual most likely to be used as a support person for the employee was identified as a "person senior to the supervisor". Such a person was relied on mainly to act as a sounding board (28.9%), and provide active support (24.6%). In both activities this senior person was utilized most by the professional staff, and least by the support staff.

Peers were employed for nearly all activities. Notable exceptions were members of the management group who did not use their peers for "advice on how to perform the job better", and members of the professional staff who did not utilize their peers for "active support".

The "others" who were identified as providing one or more of these activities were often the spouses, friends, or even clients of these employees.

It is a sad reflection of the organization, however, when 38.7% report that they have no one to advise them on career development, 31.6% remark that no one is there to provide them inspiration, and 20.4% believe that no one provides them advice on how to better perform their job.

Career Development

The highest employee dissatisfaction level related to the availability of support for career development. Five of the bottom seven responses, rank ordered in Table 4.1, are related to career development issues!

Table 4.15

Employees Satisfaction Level with Their Career Development According to the Mean Response

Topic	Mean	S.D
My satisfaction with current duties.	3.79	0.94
My supervisor should be involved in my career development.	3.79	0.84
My supervisor encourages my development.	3.56	1.04
My supervisor discusses my skills/abilities with key people.	3.49	0.91
When required, I am sent on courses.	3.41	1.16
My supervisor and I discuss ways to broaden my experiences.	3.34	1.09
My supervisor helped my career development.	3.17	1.10
My satisfaction with my current career development opportunities.	3.10	1.09
My supervisor is my career advisor.	2.95	1.14

Table 4.15 outlines the responses relating to the employee's satisfaction level with the different factors

relating to the employee's career development. It also reflects mixed emotions by respondents.

On the one hand, respondents are moderately satisfied (mean = 3.79) with their current job duties, but on the other they are least satisfied (mean = 3.10) with their career development opportunities. On the one hand they identify the supervisor as encouraging their career development (mean = 3.56), while on the other they are less than satisfied with their supervisor as a career advisor (mean = 2.95).

These mixed feelings on the part of respondents may be explained by the environment of organizational uncertainty, reduced opportunities, and limited funds which the organization was going through during the period of the survey.

Table 4.16 highlights the major differences in the perception of male and female employees regarding their career development opportunities. The key, and statistically significant difference between the two groups, is their view on whether their supervisor should be involved in their career development. Male employees supported their supervisor's involvement more than their female counterparts. Inspection of the rest indicates no other significant differences.

Note that the only mean value below the "neutral" (3) level is the response of male employees to the statement "my supervisor is my career advisor."

Table 4.16

Employees Satisfaction Level

With Their Career Development, By Gender

Topic	Mean Score		2-Tail prob.
	Male	Female	
My supervisor should be involved in my career development.	3.91	3.63	0.030
My supervisor helped my development.	3.28	3.04	0.141
When required, I am sent on courses.	3.47	3.33	0.373
My supervisor discusses my skills/ abilities with key people.	3.54	3.44	0.458
My satisfaction with my current career development opportunities.	3.05	3.16	0.502
My supervisor is my career advisor.	2.90	3.00	0.546
My supervisor is interested in my well being.	3.89	3.94	0.702
My supervisor encourages my development.	3.55	3.56	0.956
My supervisor and I discuss ways to broaden my experiences.	3.34	3.34	0.989

More males (67.0%) than females (51.2%) stated that their supervisors provided them with active support. A review of the other apparent differences, between the responses of male and female employee (Table 4.17), identified no significant differences.

Table 4.17

The Supervisor as Career Developer

By Gender

Supervisor's activity	% saying "yes"		Chi-square	Probability
	Male	Female		
Provide active support.	67.0%	51.2%	10.4*	.0339
Act as a sounding board.	56.0	60.0	5.0	.2856
Advise on career development.	43.5	39.5	3.9	.4163
Advise on proper behaviour.	61.1	52.3	1.5	.8234

* statistically significant at the five percent level.

4. Narrative Responses

The last three questions of the questionnaire required narrative responses. Generally speaking, members of all three work categories, and males and females responded to these questions with equal frequency.

Respondents had generally the same concerns, though their narrative responses reflect predictable differences of perspective due to their different roles. One manager, for example, expressed concern over his inability to manage his budget due to interference from H.Q. Another respondent, from the Support Staff category, expressed the same concern by lamenting that his work can not be completed due to interruptions from the supervisor.

The questionnaire contains three questions which solicited narrative responses. Employee's responses are listed in Appendix B, by work category and gender, in order to reflect the subtle differences among the different work groups.

In general, the majority of the comments reflecting employee dissatisfaction, related to the immediate job duties, or, to the employee's responsibilities. Key among the issues was the lack of clear communication -- goal setting, feedback, and being kept informed. The second major issue was the lack of cooperation from, and support by, the supervisor. Responses often reflected disrespect for the supervisor, or even to those senior to the supervisor.

Correspondingly, when employees identified high satisfaction levels with their supervisor, it was often because communication was at a high level, and they felt supported by their supervisor. Satisfaction was also expressed with the employee's career development activities or opportunities. Comments on supervisors were often more respectful, and employees expressed themselves and their environment in more positive terms.

Question #1

This question asked: "What, if anything, does your supervisor do to hinder you from performing or better performing your duties?"

The most frequent response related to the lack of goals, or goal clarity. This was reflected through statements such as: "...lack of direction ... the Division appears to be a ship at sea without a helmsman ... (supervisor) does not provide direction or his ideas of where time should be spent in the job ... requests often lack any detail of expectations ... (supervisor) does not give clear enough direction/indication of his expectations of my performance ... sometimes (I) am required to be too much to too many. Have to go off in too many directions ... there is not sufficient information sharing process from the management ... does not give clear enough direction/ indication of his expectations of my performance. Information must often be requested since he will often not divulge his own opinion freely ... doesn't clarify what is expected".

The lack of clear expectations of the employee, was also reflected in two other key areas: feedback, and general communications."

The comments: "He never tells me what's going on, changes, new procedures ... forgets to inform me of key information or does so only on a 'need to know basis' which is usually too late to be useful" typify employees' frustration with not knowing what is expected of them, and how changes in their environment affect these expectations.

Some comments about feedback reflected poorly about both the supervisor-employee communications, as well as the specific job-related guidance which employees receive. These comments include the following: "Over the last year there was no mention of any negative performance on myself until (the) annual performance which I feel is too late for any kind of correction to happen on the part of the employee. No communication seemed to happen around this area throughout the year ... when things are running smoothly, I suddenly am called in the office and have received a dressing down for anything from (work) setting to our relationship (communication) ... provides only negative feedback."

The following comment reflects a great deal: "My supervisor does not give me enough critical feedback or set goals and follow through on weak areas. Sometimes he's too nice which I feel does not help me grow."

Question #2

This question asked: "What does your supervisor do to assist you to better perform your duties?"

Not surprisingly, the most common comments reflected a high level of communication, cooperation, goal setting and feedback, and active career development.

By far, the most active ingredient for the support supervisors provide their employees is "communication". This reflected in all aspects of the job: "give ideas and direction ... tells me what he expects ... provides suggestions in handling a crisis ... is willing to listen ... offers good feedback ... gives timely advice ... (supervisor) facilitates open straight forward communication promoting an interchange of information both for planning and problem-solving."

Another significant activity by the supervisor to assist the employee, is being cooperative. Admittedly, respondents had a variety of interpretation for the cooperation which they reported. To some it meant that the supervisor was being supportive, to others it meant that they had a free hand to perform their duties, and to another group it meant the acceptance of their suggestions. However defined, it is clear that the cooperation of the supervisor was viewed as an important factor assisting employees to better perform their duties.

The following comments illustrate the issue: "... allows me to use as much initiative and creativity as I want ... he gives me a job to do and lets me do it ... will help when work load is heavy and offers encouragement ... open to discussion ... accepts recommendations ... is always available."

It is also quite obvious that employees were enthusiastic about their career development, and felt that it was a positive factor in increasing their performance. Their comments included: "(Supervisor) advises me on qualifications or development areas. ... sometimes gives broader picture of the Department. ... encourages participation in appropriate staff development. ... (Supervisor) encourages me to learn any new jobs that are available in order to further my career and better my knowledge of our office."

Question #3

This question asked: "Which activities would you wish your supervisor to perform, to either enhance your performance and/or to enrich your duties?"

There were far less responses to this question than to the previous two. The pattern of responses for this question, however, is generally similar to the responses to the question #2. Respondents indicated a preference for communication, goal setting and feedback, and career development opportunities.

There are a number of responses which stand out as descriptive of employees expectations of their supervisors. The key among these comments are: "I feel the unit I work on is a great honor because the supervisor dedicates herself to all responsibilities and duties I have to do. She does not do my work nor does she carry my workload. However, she definitely shares valuable opinions and advice to me when I request it from her."

Another employee wrote: "My supervisor is a fantastic person to work for. She lets you work on your own, and yet she is always there for help. If you do something wrong she does not reprimand you in public she advises you of the situation and that is that. She advises you of all changes when they happen not after the fact."

5. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER IV

This chapter outlined the findings derived from both the numeric and narrative responses.

The review of findings begun with a brief overview, followed by a list of specific responses including the frequency and the mean of responses.

Responses relating to job-orientation were discussed first, followed by responses relating to the supervisor-employee relationship, goal setting and feedback, and finally career development.

In addition, analysis of the responses of males and females, the different work categories, and the different supervisor-employee gender teams, were reported.

Each of the three narrative-response questions were reported upon and analyzed. All narrative responses are listed unedited in Appendix B.

CHAPTER V

REVIEW OF THE FINDINGS BY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

As stated in Chapter I, the purpose of this study is to determine the degree to which respondents in the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health perceive themselves as being involved in a coaching/mentoring relationship, and perceive the need to improve this relationship. This chapter presents a response to each of the five research questions which are stated in Chapter I.

2. QUESTION #1

Question #1 asked: "Which coaching/mentoring activities are currently taking place in the Department?"

Respondents were asked to identify whether their relationship with their supervisor involved the specific activities oulined in Figure 2.2. Using a scale of 1-5 (or "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" respectively), they were asked to identify the occurence of these activities.

In all but one activity (i.e., the supervisor acting as "adviser on career development opportunities"), the mean response was above the "3", or neutral level. This implies a lack of dissatisfaction with all but one of the activities listed in Figure 2.2.

When asked specifically about the job-orientation which they received for their current position, 17.4% of respondents indicated that they did not receive any. Another 9.5% stated that they could "not remember" undergoing a job-orientation.

Among those who indicated that they did receive an orientation, only 44.8% indicated that they were given an explanation of the employee benefit package, and only 43.8% stated that they had an opportunity to discuss their concerns with their supervisor.

3. QUESTION #2

This question asked: "Which coaching/mentoring roles are currently being performed by supervisors, and to what degree?"

Generally speaking, supervisors were reported to be involved in all of the coaching/mentoring activities listed in Figure 2.2.

When respondents were asked to identify who provided them with each of seven key activities, they responded with the "supervisor" more often than any of the other four options -- peers, a senior person, none, or, others (Table 4.14). Note that this response does not reflect on the degree of the supervisor's involvement, nor on the supervisor's effectiveness.

The largest proportion of respondents (74.5%) agreed with the statement identifying their supervisor as "provider of performance feedback". In addition, the supervisor was reported to be performing in the following roles: "provider of advice on ways to perform the job better" (67.3%), "provider of active support" (60.0%), "as a sounding board" (57.7%), and "adviser on proper organizational behaviour" (57.2%).

Supervisors were also reported to be active, though to a lesser degree, as advisers on career development (41.8%), and as an inspiration to their employees (46.1%).

4. QUESTION #3

Question #3 asked: "What is the employee's perception of the supervisor in the coach/mentor role?"

The findings provide a strong indication that employees generally perceived their relationship with their supervisor in positive terms. When responses were rank ordered by their mean values, clearly six of the top seven statements (Table 4.1) reflected the employees' perception of their supervisor as accessible, caring, understanding, interested in their well being, and communicative. These are, incidentally, some of the key facets of coaching and mentoring.

When asked to rate their "satisfaction with (their) relationship with (their) current supervisor", respondents typically answered with an "agree" (mean=4.10). This was coupled with the sentiment that the "supervisor should be involved in (the employee's) career development" (mean=3.79).

Table 4.14 on page 88, however, presents the other side of the supervisor-employee relationship. Many respondents, though not most, identified people other than the supervisor as providing each of the different support activities. For example, when respondents were asked to identify who advised them on career development, or who served as their source of inspiration, 38.7% and 31.6% respectively replied that they had "no one"!

Respondents indicated that they received much support from a person other than the supervisor. Nearly a third of respondents (28.9%) identified a person senior to the supervisor as the one who acts as their "sounding board", and 24.6% identified that same person as the one who provides them with "active support". However, 25.3% reported that no one provided them "advice on proper organizational behaviour", and 20.4% stated that they had no one to advise them on "ways to perform the job better".

These results imply a general satisfaction with the activities which are currently performed by the supervisor, but also reflect an expectation to have these activities increase in range (what is done) and depth (how it is done).

5. QUESTION #4

Question #4 asked: "What coaching/mentoring activities are perceived as requiring enhancement?"

The response to this question is best made using a summary of the numeric and narrative responses separately, as the two complement each other.

The numeric responses leave little doubt that employees considered their career development as the most significant activity requiring enhancement. Their response to the statement "my supervisor is my adviser on career development opportunities" had a mean of 2.95, which was the only mean response among 28 statements which was less than "neutral" (mean=3.0). Furthermore, when mean response rates were rank ordered, four of the five statement with which respondents were least satisfied related to career development.

Job-orientation is another issue which requires enhancement. Perhaps the most significant aspect is the actual occurence of job-orientations. A large group of respondents (26.9%) reported that they have either not received, or could not remember receiving a job-orientation for their current position.

Respondents were also asked to identify the job-orientation subject areas requiring more detailed information. The two most mentioned topics were "statement of the employer's expectations" and "explanation of the employee benefit package". These were identified by 25.9% and 24.4% of respondents respectively. The other topic areas requiring further information, were reported by less than 20% of the population, and may be considered less significant.

Table 4.14 reports on the involvement of the supervisor in a variety of activities, from providing feedback to acting as an inspiration. The supervisor is identified as the single most frequent source of support to employees in these select activities. Many respondents, however, either reported other sources from which they gained their support, or, indicated that they had no one to support them. In either situation, the supervisor's involvement in these activities may (and should) be enhanced.

The narrative responses, particularly the responses to question #3, indicated a preference for enhanced communications, goal setting and feedback, and career development opportunities.

Respondents commented extensively about the inability of their supervisor to communicate. These comments, and other derogatory comments such as "he's here", identify a potential problem in the supervisor-employee relationship. It would be prudent to address this employee-perceived problem.

Employees also identified a significant need for supervisors to identify (and communicate) the goals of the Department, and to clarify the supervisor's performance expectations of the employee. This clarification of goals and performance expectations was frequently reported by respondents as an area requiring attention.

As a natural link to goal setting, respondents also highlighted a need for supervisors to provide more feedback. Those employees who were satisfied with their supervisors, reported frequent, meaningful, and appropriately delivered performance feedback. These activities were reported to be sadly lacking by those who expressed dissatisfaction with their supervisor.

6. QUESTION #5

This is the final question. It asked: "What, if any, are the differences in the perceptions of males and females, and among the three work categories?"

Responses were analyzed to check variation in the perceptions (and responses) by gender of respondent (i.e. male and female), among the three work categories (i.e. support staff, professional, and management), and among the four different work-team gender combinations (i.e. male supervisor with male or female employee, and female supervisor with male or female employee). Much to the surprise of the researcher, although there were a few significant differences, there were no trends in these differences!

There were, however, a few statistically significant differences. One such difference relates to the statement "if requested, my supervisor would listen to my personal problem." Responses of support staff had the highest mean score, while those of management personnel had the lowest mean response score ("F" probability=0.0541).

Male respondents expressed a slightly higher satisfaction level with their supervisor, than did female respondents (probability=0.008). More male than female respondents reported that their supervisor provided them with "active support" (probability=0.034). Male respondents also reported a higher satisfaction level, than female respondents, with the involvement of the supervisor in the employee's career development (probability=0.030).

The analysis of the responses of the four gender teams resulted in only one statistically significant difference. This difference relates to the statement "when asked, my supervisor explains unit goals to me." Female employees with female supervisors agreed with this statement more than male employees with male supervisors (probability=0.056).

There were a number of other observations of response differences; however, these were more interesting than statistically significant.

7. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER V

This chapter includes the specific replies to each of the five research questions. It highlights the key findings as reported in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE AND FURTHER RESEARCH

1. SUMMARY

This study involved members of the Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health, following a number of significant organizational changes -- creation of a new Department, general uncertainty over staff cuts, the introduction of a broad public service early retirement program, reduced career opportunities, both internal and external to the Department, and the review of many of the programs delivered by the Department.

Respondents in a sample of 350 employees at all levels of the Department, were asked to identify the type and scope of the activities which took place between them and their supervisor. Respondents were also asked to indicate their satisfaction level with these specific activities, and the supervisor-employee relationship in general.

Responses indicated a general, though not unanimous, satisfaction with the supervisor, and the activities of the supervisor-employee relationship. Respondents identified the supervisor as being involved, at least at a moderate level, in all key activities such as orientation, goal setting, feedback, and career development.

Responses did, however, highlight the desire of respondents to have a more detailed job-orientation, greater supervisor-employee communication (including goals and expectations, feedback, and advice on career-development), and greater support (in the form of encouragement, cooperation, and the ability to do one's job without interference from the supervisor).

The findings generally indicate no significant trend differences among the different genders, work categories, or supervisor-employee gender combinations.

It is worthy of note that the expectation of the employee to know what task is to be done, to be given the opportunity to perform that task, to be provided with the necessary support to complete the task, to be encouraged and given feedback, and to be "developed" in the process, is ... universal regardless of gender or work category!

2. IMPLICATION FOR FUTURE PRACTICE

The Alberta Department of Community and Occupational Health does not exist now as a separate entity. Shortly after this study was conducted, and a result of another government reorganization, most of the Department was amalgamated with another (larger) Department, while one of its Divisions was joined with a Division from yet another Department.

This study provides a detailed view of employees' perceptions of their relationship with their supervisor. Responses indicate a need for supervisors to become more communicative with the "basics" - overall Departmental goals, individual employee goals and expectations, and performance feedback. Responses indicate the desire by employees for their supervisors to become more involved with the employee's career development.

From an organizational perspective, there appears to be a need to have a consistent and comprehensive job-orientation program. There is also a need for more meaningful career development opportunities for employees at all levels. The organization must also be cognisant of the importance of a successful supervisor-employee relationship, and take the necessary steps to develop supervisors, who could then better perform the type of activities which are listed in Figure 2.2.

The additional changes, and stress, through which the study's respondents recently underwent in their re-reorganization only enhance the findings of this study and make it conclusions even more meaningful.

3. IMPLICATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The literature is generally ambiguous in distinguishing coaching and mentoring activities. Those writers who attempted to deal with one or the other were often contradicted by others who took a different approach to reviewing the relationship between coach/mentor and protegee, between supervisor and employee.

Attempts to completely separate coaching and mentoring activities may prove to be both ineffective and limited. On the other hand, viewing these activities along the same spectrum may provide researchers with a more flexible tool with which to analyze these activities.

Two sets of studies could logically follow this study. The first, and most important, is a study to measure the "results" outlined on the right hand edge of the model in Figure 2.2 (on page 41). Such a study should attempt to measure the effects of effective coaching/mentoring activities on employee productivity, self confidence, commitment (to the organization), and growth.

This study would require two groups of employees. Members of one group should receive training in such activities as interpersonal communication, goal setting, and coaching/mentoring (from the perspective of both mentor annd protegee). Supervisors of members of this group should also be trained on the conduct of job orientation, goal setting, feedback and coaching.

After a period of 4-6 months, the two groups should be surveyed and the perceptions of employees, regarding their relationship with their supervisor, should be compared. Similar comparisons should also be made of the productivity levels of members of each group.

The second set of studies could involve the replication of this study on another population of public servants (i.e., members of another Department in the Government of Alberta, the Government of Canada, or other public agencies). Such a study would illustrate the differences, if any, between the population of this study and that of other Departments or agencies.

Finally, this study emphasizes the importance of rather basic notions such as orientation, goal setting, feedback, guidance, and coaching to employees of one organization. Assuming that members of this Department represent employees typical to other -- private and public -- organizations, it may be worth while to further study the best techniques to foster coaching and mentoring activities in an organization, and to educate supervisors to carry them out.

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Appendix A:

The Employee Perception Questionnaire
with cover letter

Supervisor-Employee Interaction Study

Questionnaire

This questionnaire will require approximately ten (10) minutes to complete. When the completed questionnaire is returned to Staff Development, your responses will be handled in a manner to ensure your confidentiality.

Please complete ALL questions. As you respond to the questions, keep in mind the work relationship with your CURRENT supervisor. Note that a "supervisor" is defined as the person to whom you report directly regarding the majority of your work assignments. If your current supervisor has supervised you for less than one month, please respond to the questionnaire with your previous supervisor in mind.

If you have any questions when completing the questionnaire, please call Ron Kuban at 427-6974. Should you wish to elaborate on any point, kindly attach your notes to the questionnaire.

The completed questionnaire should be placed in a sealed envelope and mailed directly to:

Ron Kuban
Community and Occupational Health
Staff Development Branch

From : Terry Chugg
Executive Director
Human Resources Division

To: Distribution List.

Subject: Supervisor-Employee Interaction Study.

Ron Kuban is conducting a study of the types and degree of supervisor-employee work interactions currently occurring in this Department. The study, which is part of his thesis program, is also of great value to the Department because it will provide the necessary data base from which we could make decisions on the types of training, developmental and general programs required to enhance supervisor-employee interactions. The survey is NOT an evaluation of supervisors.

You are encouraged to complete this questionnaire. Note that you are assured complete confidentiality as Ron will be the only one to know the identity of respondents. At the completion of the study Ron will report on his findings, however, no reference will be made to individuals or individual responses.

If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire, please direct them to Ron Kuban at 427-6974.

# ______

Employee Perception Questionnaire.

Part A - General information.

1. To the nearest full year, with "0" indicating less than 6 months, record the number of years you have been employed:

    a) By the Alberta Public Service. ____ years, and
    b) In your current position (for current supervisor). ____ years.

2. Your general work category is (check one):

    () Support Staff (including clerical and administrative)
    () Professional (including technical and non-management)
    () Management

3. Your supervisor is: () Male () Female

4. Your most recent orientation was (check one):

    () Within the past 24 months
    () Longer than 24 months ago
    () You can not remember
    () Never had one

Part B.

Using the scale below, indicate the degree to which the following statements characterize your experiences in your current position. Circle the response which best describes how you feel regarding each statement.

Scale-	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5

		SD				SA
1.	Generally when I am assigned a task, it is clearly stated.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	My supervisor is approachable to discuss my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	My supervisor is my key provider of performance feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	My supervisor is my advisor on career developmental opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	When requested, my supervisor provides me with guidance on how to better perform my duties.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	My supervisor provides me with timely performance feedback.	1	2	3	4	5

SD SA

7. When required by my job, I am sent on courses or seminars. 1 2 3 4 5

8. My supervisor and I discuss ways to broaden my experience. 1 2 3 4 5

9. When applicable, my supervisor credits me for my success. 1 2 3 4 5

10. I believe that, where appropriate, my supervisor discusses my skills/abilities with key people in other units. 1 2 3 4 5

11. My supervisor appears interested in my well being. 1 2 3 4 5

12. My supervisor encourages my career development plan(s). 1 2 3 4 5

13. I aspire to reach quality of work similar to that of my supervisor. 1 2 3 4 5

14. My supervisor should be involved in my career development. 1 2 3 4 5

15. My supervisor has helped me in my career development. 1 2 3 4 5

16. I receive the majority of my work assignments from my supervisor. 1 2 3 4 5

17. My supervisor and I communicate freely. 1 2 3 4 5

18. When asked by me, my supervisor explains my unit's goals. 1 2 3 4 5

19. When asked by me, my supervisor clarifies my goals. 1 2 3 4 5

20. My supervisor expresses his/her job expectations of me. 1 2 3 4 5

21. I discuss freely my work expectations with my supervisor. 1 2 3 4 5

22. My supervisor and I discuss ways to achieve my expectations.1 2 3 4 5

23. If requested by me, my supervisor would listen to my personal problem(s). 1 2 3 4 5

24. If informed of my personal problem, my supervisor would show an understanding of my situation. 1 2 3 4 5

25. On a scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), indicate your satisfaction level with each of the following.

VD VS

a. The orientation which you received for your current job. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A
b. Your current job duties. 1 2 3 4 5
c. Your relationship with your current supervisor. 1 2 3 4 5
d. Your current career-development opportunities. 1 2 3 4 5

Part C. (Where applicable please elaborate).

1. Listed below are key topic areas which may be included in an employee's job orientation.

a) In Column A check all the topic areas which were covered in your last orientation. If you had no orientation, leave blank.
b) In Column B, check all topic areas in which you received insufficient or no information and therefore wanted more detail.

	Column A (topic areas covered)	Column B (wanted more)
a. Explanation of work unit goals/objectives.	a. ()	a. ()
b. Explanation of your job duties.	b. ()	b. ()
c. Statement of the employer's expectations.	c. ()	c. ()
d. Opportunity to express your expectations.	d. ()	d. ()
e. Explanation of unit procedures.	e. ()	e. ()
f. Introduction to members of unit.	f. ()	f. ()
g. Statement of the goals of the Division.	g. ()	g. ()
h. Statement of the goals of the Department.	h. ()	h. ()
i. Explanation of employee benefit package.	i. ()	i. ()
j. Discussion of your concerns.	j. ()	j. ()

k. Other topics which you would like to have included in your next orientation (Please specify)______________________________

____

2. Members of an organization may provide an employee with certain types of assistance. For each type of assistance listed below, check the one key person (if anyone) who provides you that type of assistance.

Person providing the assistance / Types of assistance.	Supervisor	A person senior to supervisor	Peers	No one	Other (please specify)
Provides performance feedback.					
Provides active support.					
Advises on ways to perform the job better.					
Acts as a sounding board for ideas.					
Advises on career development.					
Provides an inspirational standard of performance.					
Advises on proper behaviour within the organization.					

3. How are you generally provided with performance feedback? (Check ALL responses which apply).

   () Annual performance evaluation or letter(s).
   () Formal meeting(s) but no written follow up.
   () Informal discussions/chance meetings.
   () Informal written notes and annotations.
   () Other (please specify)____________________

4. What, if anything, does your supervisor do to hinder you from performing or better performing your duties? ________________

5. What does your supervisor do to assist you to better perform your duties? ________________

6. Which activities would you wish your supervisor to perform, to either enhance your performance and/or to enrich your duties? ________________

THANK YOU !
for taking the time and making the effort to answer this questionnaire.

Appendix B:

Narrative Responses
by Question and
by Gender Within Work Category

Question #1 : "What, if anything, does your supervisor do to hinder you from performing or better performing your duties?"

Male Support Staff

- Will not take in hand a matter of certain reasoning with co-workers (drinking or under the influence of liquor), lack of work (we sleeping on job at times and dosing off)
- sarcastic remarks; belittles
- he never tells me what's going on, changes, new procedures
- by not treating everyone equal it makes for bad feelings among the staff
- wastes time talking about issues not concerning our work-site. Has very little knowledge of work performance in our area.
- giving others work so my own work gets into back-log. When asked gives inadequate information and run around and as such the same work goes in repetition and in fact my other work suffers
- changes policies of department on "spur of the moment decisions" as to policies already established
- the supervisor not interfere with my duties
- he co-operates to the fullest
- Often it is difficult to complete a certain task due to

the nature of the job. This doesn't necessarily reflect on hindrance from the supervisor

- he does not always give a complete answer to a specific problem. Also by avoiding an answer he does not know.
- will not speak to me
- recent budget restraints had not allowed any funds for staff development programs as they reflect the specific training needs in our Department
- Very out-spoken and set in her ways. Breaks her own dept policies and will blow-up if others do same. Abuses over-time and time-off

Female Support Staff

- we are given very little encouragement in all phases of any operation
- office atmosphere is very cold. We are expected to report our whereabouts but we receive no consideration or co-operation from supervisor. We are treated as lowly clerical
- nothing, my supervisor does not hinder me from performing any of my duties
- none what-so-ever
- nothing, my supervisor does an excellent job. I do my job with hardly no interference at all from her.
- our department is short on modern equipment which would

help

- tends to organize tasks or activities to her own personal standards even if the activity is attended to by other staff
- nothing, if anything my superior request my advice on any new equipment purchases to ensure that the jobs go easier and faster
- our supervisor is very co-operative at all times
- stands around talking about things not concerning work, unabling me to continue my work
- over the last year there was no mention of any negative performances by myself until annual EPAS which I feel is too late for any kind of correction to happen on the part of the employee. No communication seemed to happen around this area throughout the year.
- too much repetition. All my varieties were taken from me & given to someone else except on but I do not blame my immediate supervisor, it falls higher!
- in our small Department of 4 staff there is a definite ranking order of staff members which we jokingly refer to as the "totem pole"
- my supervisor is a manager of a program and I find it very difficult to have a meeting with her to discuss problems or get answers to questions about my area of the program
- nothing, she does not know what are my duties and is very

unqualified as a supervisor. She gets very upset (crying jags) when she encounters problems & the only time she is considerate is when she needs our help.

- when things are running smoothly, I suddenly am called in the office and have received a dressing down for anything from preop setting to our relationship (communication). I find upsetting and leaves me confused. I feel she is not supporting me as a supervisor. I feel rushed when I approach about anything because she is busy or going somewhere.

Male Professional staff

- there is not sufficient information sharing process from the management
- pays lip service to many things, wants and tries to be involved but usually screws things up rather than be of benefit.
- whenever there is a controversy, simply denies he said so-and-so and does not back me up
- interferes with staff and is very poor with interpersonal relationships
- thinks he knows what is happening but unfortunately usually misinformed
- my supervisor is experiencing her own burnout. Presently (she is) seeking other employment. Is a good supervisor

only tends to be short tempered, less sharing with others and less encouraging, tends to favour one subordinate over others

- lack of staff development funds
- is often required to be absent from worksite to attend meetings etc. which occasionally delays in decision making
- unit/team work is essential, yet not actively worked on
- if he would do what I consider unnecessary paper (work) and allow me to get on with my work he would be the best help possible
- not the supervisor but the Division consistently finds additional inspections, surveys, etc. Numbers seem to be more important than quality
- thinks he knows it all. Once informed is an expert on the subject
- provides only negative feedback
- does not provide direction or his idea of where time should be spent in the job or if I am off base in what I am doing compared to others
- the Division's and Department's goals priorities and directives (when forthcoming) are as unclear to him as they are to me. The Division appears to be a ship at sea without a helmsman
- he is there
- fails to set an example by carrying a case load, tends to

place some of the supervisor's responsibilities into the hands of the staff. At time fails to provide backup help or support

- lack of direction, insufficient access and follow through or support
- allows work to be held up in his in basket too long

Female Professional Staff

- my supervisor does not hinder me in any way from performing my duties.
- supervisor very co-operative
- morale problem in office from my supervisor down, because of significant staff cutbacks
- Organization chart - unclear as to line of authority. (administrative and professional)
- he sometimes too busy to discuss issues as they arise, so we discuss them at a later time
- does not "hear" my need for advanced supervision. Since I'm doing fine on the job, I should be satisfied!
- She is very difficult to get an answer regarding anything from. She is often not available to discuss things ie; holidays, sick. Her office is also in a different building.
- no hindrance
- all caseloads are not equal; some employees have very

small caseloads. Others have new cases piled onto them in spite of their statements of overload etc., the potential for burn-out is very eminent with a number of staff.

- doesn't provide the latest ideas in doing things
- doesn't know my job
- sometimes she is too eager to help me in a difficult situation. When this happens I indicate I'd like to try resolving it on my own first
- doesn't provide the latest of ideas in doing things
- assigning new duties, different from the expected duties. (This is not done very often)
- there is a morale problem in the office from my supervisor down because of significant staff cutbacks
- limitation on the availability of staff development programs
- it is not my current supervisor who hinders performance, it is the nature of my current job which my supervisor has little control over
- indecisiveness, follow up feedback when information requested

Male Managers

- very little. He assists in any way he can.
- tendency to delegate assignments directly to subordinates, changing priorities

- maintains the majority of authority & does freely give authority to act on own initiatives without approval.
- requests often lack any detail of expectations. Supervisor must be prodded to communicate sufficient information to conclude work.
- not always available because of lack of time
- nothing, supervisor delegates and expects tasks completion
- undermines team moral
- because of the high docket load (I did 50 in 7 months) the supervisor could assist in dividing these up somewhat. I have discussed several possibilities for this to happen, but as yet no changes have been implemented
- he lacks the capacity to delegate responsibility and accountability
- possible over participation in details of branch operations from time to time
- does not give clear enough direction/indication of his expectations of my performance. Information must often be requested since he will often not divulge his own opinion freely.
- tends to be a "bottleneck" in some areas; eg staffing issues. Hidden agendas sometimes result in decisions which appear to run contrary to accepted policies and procedures. Involvement at too detailed a level in some activities

- inappropriate management style.
- forgets to inform me of key information or does so only on a "need to know basis" which is usually too late to be useful
- Works incredibly hard and long, 60-70 hr weeks typical, over achiever, excellent ability to assess and fine tune - this can cause over reliance or situations where work load can become unusually large.
- has a style that appears political. Line staff find it difficult to trust him because of this and tend to see head office as serving their own needs and not the needs of the patients
- was indecisive regarding my position in the organization; thus messages and communication were often ambiguous or aimed at maintaining a status quo in which important personnel issues were never settled.
- sometimes am required to be too much to too many. Have to go off in too many directions
- doesn't clarify what is expected, blames in front of others, unsupportive when I face difficulties and generally doesn't care what & how I do my job.
- assigns many "ad hoc" assignments of a political nature which must be done on very short time-lines.
- overrules certain initiatives previously agreed to.
- reverses decisions based on pressure from local members of

the Division

- overloads (e.g. prepare memoes for his signature)
- not being definitive enough, too political at times, occasionally does not convince the system of unit needs, worth or special circumstances
- lack of information passed along which I need to do my job
- infrequently asks me my opinion
- cross interference with my duties

Female Managers

- has trouble hearing; encourages conflict with off cuff non-accountable remarks; devalues areas of special interest; shares info re; "progress" with superiors without my knowledge; does little consulting at time of key decision making; does not reward meeting of objectives
- discusses concerns & problems with employees whom I supervise without including or involving me. Doesn't involve me in planning at a very early stage but waits until plans are so well formulated that I don't feel my input is valuable but my time is still lost.
- is unavailable for discussion due to breadth of responsibilities. Does not clarify other peoples roles or unity eg. in regards to financial matters
- does not appear open to discussing performance issues in a

nonjudgemental fashion

- the only "hindrance" is my supervisors newness to his position. His political acumen is rising but he is still considered naive by his peers, I believe.
- my supervisor does not give me enough critical feedback or set goals & follow through on weak areas. Sometimes he's too nice which I feel does not help me grow.
- does not know how to decide on the strengths his managers have. Creates a climate of uncertainty & insecurity that leaves all management "off balanced; threatened."
- my supervisor only hinders my work when his work is hindered ie. we plan then because of fiscal $ pressure or political pressure plans are changed
- not being available
- he is not specific, changes tasks from week to week and is not consistent. He changes priorities so frequently that short term/long term are irrelevant
- does not allow input regarding decisions that have great impact on staff supervised by me (i.e. reorganization. He consults on a small "piece of the pie" to show intent, then puts "pie" out as he wants anyway not to consider input)
- scheduled weekly meetings are often cancelled

Question #2 : "What does your supervisor do to assist you to better perform your duties?"

Male Support staff

- Sometime advises proper route to take.
- discussions - advice - co-operation
- remains neutral
- he is willing to listen to your ideas and to follow up on new ideas presented by myself. He is also willing and eager to help along side.
- give ideas & direction
- gives helpful hints, assists with duties, suggests more practical ways & more efficient ways to perform my duties.
- he sometimes backs up my decisions
- my female supervisor evaluates myself as an individual who is important in the nursing field. I personally feel she thinks more of her staff than herself at times. Not only does she help on the wards but she definitely does not have her nose out of joint. She in simple words is very truthful, honest and concerned about everyone she is involved with.
- support and guidance
- nothing, takes my ideas and uses them to better her own status, taking full dept credit
- usually accepts suggestions on needs to change work situations and implementation of such change

- he is helpful and gives guidance when needed. He is very thoughtful and considerate.
- my supervisor will ask me to assist him in duties not directly connected to my job
- will help in anyway he can
- he helps us decide what to (do) with our patients
- tells me what he expects
- explains expectations and goals
- any goals you try and set she is always willing and tries her best to help you meet your goals
- he works with us
- I discuss any potential problem that may result from either my management style or decisions I have made within the operational requirements of my Department. Budget discussions and employee discipline
- he is helping me in any way he can so I can perform my duties better
- gives me a fair degree of independence

Female Support Staff

- we work as a team
- if I have a problem with some duties we discuss it together and get the help and information that is needed
- give ideas and guidelines. If difficulties or problems come up helps to solve. Shows moral support and gives

helping hands when needed.

- feedback; explanations; cheerfulness; never puts one down.
- she encourages me to learn any new jobs that are available in order to further my career & better my knowledge of our office
- asks if you have any problems concerning food service and asks if all machinery (dishwasher) etc are running well
- keeps me advised of any changes in division & department
- gives extra work to enhance my skills & prepare me for a possible higher position
- provides suggestions in handling crisis, intervention. Allows use of my own intelligence. Willingly listens to suggestions and ideas from myself.
- we discuss any new projects
- by advising us
- is receptive to ideas & will discuss alternatives. Allows me to take responsibility & initiative as far as my own job duties.
- Upon request, some feedback with daily happenings. Gives support in dealing with issues pertaining to decision making with support staff.
- the supervisor is always available to discuss any problem areas I have, and encourages me to the fullest
- supervisor is always available and makes time to see me whenever the need arises

- advise ways to provide job better
- if necessary, she would advise
- thinks of and suggests alternate ways of completing assignments
- is supportive at all times
- is willing to listen to my ideas and gives me the freedom to try them
- gives "advice and suggestions"
- upon request, some feedback with daily happening
- gives support in dealing with issues, pertaining to decision making, with support staff
- my supervisor is extremely busy and I try to cope with my area of the program as best as I can without too much direction from supervisor
- provides feedback informally
- gives credit where due
- always concerned on how things are
- sit down and talk what would be the best thing to do when the problem would arise
- state goals clearly, provide feedback, encourages assuming additional responsibilities, communicates very well generally
- my supervisor does not need to be around, but when you need her we talk about the problems and she advices me what should be done

- is willing to listen to my ideas and gives me the freedom to try them
- my supervisor is a fantastic person to work for. She lets you work on your own, and yet she is always there for help. If you do something wrong she does not reprimand you in public she advises you of the situation and that is that. She advises you of all changes when they happen not after the fact.

Male Professional Staff

- advises (me) of changing procedures
- accept (that) numbers can not always be achieved and allows for quality inspections
- informal discussions
- support request for courses or advises on courses to be taken
- he allows me to plan my work and is willing to assist me in anyway possible
- takes active interest and makes some suggestions when requested or when he feels they would be of assistance
- allows me to do my own thing
- provides good support
- sometimes gives broader picture of the Department
- gives suggestions and encourages participation in appropriate staff development

- advocates to other levels of system, provides feedback and encouragement
- (provides) evaluation, audit and feedback
- she is supportive, listens to my suggestions
- she allows me to meet my goals my way. Also she will spontaneously express herself (i.e let you know where you stand)
- staff meetings and open discussions
- suggestions and feedback
- nothing - what a sad statement! Unless you want me to categorize assistance as: a) I ask him to do managerial duties I may not like or have time to do, b) he assists in doing some chore jobs
- not much at all
- priorities work, gives suggestions on how to accomplish some tasks
- assist in the preparation of reports
- advises me on qualifications or development areas
- supports the perception that "clients" are the primary priority. Avails himself on at least a weekly basis for scheduled case management reviews. Shares as much as he is given
- offers good feedback as to performance. Provides positive incentives. Utilizes members of the treatment team to tap resources

- gives timely advice
- keeps out of my way
- frequent conversations with good flow of information
- gives me general freedom to work from a professional perspective. Advices or discusses issues but gives decision making responsibility to me. Usually avoids directives. Supports individual initiatives. Sensitive to providing personal support and feedback
- helps to structure work, provides support in key areas
- helps to proof read, re-write and correct, improves and perfects material before allowing it to go any further up the line or to file. Does not accepts incomplete or shabby work

Female Professional Staff

- everything possible short of doing the task himself.
- he is a great source of information
- my supervisor is always avail
- my supervisor is always available to discuss all issues or concerns regarding my duties. He is supportive at all times
- accepts recommendations
- allows freedom to carry out expected duties. Supports me in my requests for training. Treats me and my ideas with respect. Is available to assist me when I request it

- encouraging and interested
- allows me to go to training programs within the government restrictions
- offers personal assistance with resident care when required in emergency situations
- offers confidence in my capabilities to handle situations within my job description, thus encouraging to perform my duties with self confidence and satisfaction of accomplishment
- provides constructive feedback and positive reinforcement
- once or twice monthly meeting to discuss job related issues
- is available by phone contact when necessary
- discussions
- complies with most suggestions for change
- encourages staff development, offers feedback, available for consultation
- listens, but can do little to help with the work load. It causes the supervisor a lot of stress when "complaints" are made re. work load. In essence the staff are only trying to alleviate the stress with valid suggestions
- she is very helpful
- allows freedom to do the job in own manner, specifies task and results wanted but doesn't limit the way to complete these

- provides feedback
- structures time for me
- listens to my ideas and give approval or disapproval
- gives positive feedback on regular basis, when work is done well
- I care about performing in a better way
- a good deal of autonomy and a great deal of trust
- provides support and help when needed
- he advises on ways to perform my job better
- she takes the time to clarify expectations when required
- my supervisor works with me to accomplish realistic goals in my work. I am treated as a capable competent person who can work out difficulties with support and setting limits
- gives me freedom to try new techniques
- gives good feedback both praise and constructive criticism. Gives technical advice
- constructive comments, I am free to express ideas
- free open communication. Instant feedback, whether good or bad
- he has made valuable recommendations on courses I should be taking, especially in the technical aspect, and always has an open door policy as far as problems or information needs are concerned

Male Managers

- regular feedback subsequent to project completion, honest reflection on my methods; written pats on the back; direct intervention to assist; treats me with respect.
- meets with me once a week for two main purposes: 1. to keep up to date on developments as related to my program, and 2. to provide an opportunity for me to raise any problems, issues, etc which he may be able to assist me with.
- highly supportive, protective of our staff, job expectations are clarified. Expects highest realistic performance standards. Excellent P/R person with COHSEC
- be available when I need him.
- evaluates my performance regularly, identifies good & bad performance immediately
- allows a substantial flexibility in managing my operation.
- willing to discuss problems
- explains, keeps me informed and up to date. He delegates in all areas affecting my day to day delivery of service to my target population. Very supportive.
- give more work
- gives me a lot of room to do my job; gives support to my ideas; assists in getting me back on track when I stray from the path
- extremely approachable

- provide advice, support, recognition of past achievements.
- allow freedom to act on my own initiative.
- helps with brainstorming; usually comes up with another (and sometimes better) approach.
- assists when requested.
- provides feedback on senior management meetings and discussions; provides support and assistance when requested; provides high level direction; provides independence, delegates responsibility and authority
- provides timely feedback and then leaves me alone to get on with the job
- provides support and freedom necessary to be innovative.
- creates a very positive environment. Is an honest and direct boss.
- he allows me the necessary freedom to make key decisions about my program without his direct on-going approval. He has expressed interest in new ideas and is by and large receptive to same.
- expectations explained, approaches explored
- advice and feedback on potentially high profile or political issues. Discussion of alterations within the division which may effect function of the branch
- gives me a lot of independence to get the job done
- is very aware of variety of roles needed to perform duties. Tries to make best of Divisions inconsistencies

- gives clear direction and explanation of his expectations.
- supports innovative ideas. Open to discussion.
- good humour, sets the standard of comfortability. Models determination, and other positive skills. Gives me the freedom to try innovative projects. He looks for those qualities/assets that can be re-enforced. Spends little time discussing my screw-up.
- will help when workload is heavy and offers encouragement. Does not expect a lot of extra-hours to be worked
- doesn't interfere when I am doing a job
- provides me with feedback and advice on all matters
- increases resources - makes suggestions
- acknowledges importance of new initiatives, supports worthwhile projects
- very supportive
- provide independent working condition and appropriate monitoring of performance being provided
- meets monthly to discuss issues
- assigns work
- is available for special consultation
- clarifies expectations
- doesn't interfere and is result oriented
- very little, rarely asked for
- gives suggestions, ideas, or approves of my plans and proposals

- he is supportive and logical in his approach
- facilitates open straight forward communication promoting an interchange of information both for planning and problem-solving. Assists me to make decisions in areas when I feel I need advice
- explains what is expected of me
- provides direction and support

Female Managers

- provide info in personnel, finance areas; also joined in areas of sensitive negotiation; allows a great deal of authority; prevents extraneous intervention into unit. He is model of diplomacy, tact, and responsiveness, also good with personnel issues & management of such.
- constructively criticizes projects, assignments etc.
- allows me to use as much initiative and creativity as I want.
- provides encouragement to continue to perform independently. Thoroughly reviews written materials including dockets and position papers. Includes me in meetings and presentations which enhance my knowledge of the issues I'm addressing.
- expects me to be competent
- my supervisor is extremely supportive and positive not only about my ideas and performance but also about my role

within the organization and potential. He allows me much freedom and does not reneg on my decisions regardless of his view of them. He is a good supervisor. I have little doubt that my supervisor is the main reason I have chosen to stay within this organization.

- he gives me support and helps me problem solve if I identify an issue or problem area. He allows me a great deal of independence and flexibility to try new things and take on responsibilities.
- upon request for guidance takes the time to think thru his response, & has provided useful feedback. On day to day operation, is supportive of my needs & decisions.
- he gives me a job to do and lets me go ahead. He allows me the right to make my own decisions. He is there if I need help. He listens.
- my supervisor is available when I need him, returns my calls etc. He knows the system & communicates this clearly. We have frequent meetings.
- does her tasks efficiently
- easy to approach, has excellent knowledge and is willing to advise
- he is supportive in all areas. He also allows me the autonomy to run my unit keeping within the guidelines of the Department, Division and Region, and meeting the goals set by same

- I can discuss any issue with him and he will make appropriate suggestions

Question #3 : "Which activities would you wish your supervisor to perform, to either enhance your performance and/or to enrich your duties?"

Male Support Staff

- talk to co-worker about his problems to get help of some sort, or give him a different job so I can do mine properly
- send me to more courses and seminars to enhance my performance.
- I would like to see more feedback and/or gratitude for the work done as to see what work habits can be improved or deleted.
- none that I can think of at this point in time
- he should try to keep me more informed as to what is going on, example; upcoming courses, policy changes, menu ordering, etc.
- he actively encourages & facilitates further education.
- I feel the unit I work on is a great honor because the supervisor dedicates herself to all responsibilities and duties I have to do. She does not do my work nor does she carry my workload. However, she definitely shares valuable opinions and advice to me when I request it from her.

- set better example to all staff
- to be positive in attitudes, to have open-mind, to be appreciative, to be approachable and not rude, bureaucratic or biased.
- more activity on work "floor" rather than involvement of duties "behind the desk"!!
- I feel the program my supervisor has going is a good one and I would like it to continue the same, with new ideas as they come along.
- we seem to have done mostly everything in performance, until new ideas come about
- often it is difficult to complete a certain task due to the nature of the job. This doesn't necessarily reflect on hindrance from the supervisor - often a "thank you" would enhance performance
- given credit for extra work done would be appreciated
- provide more frequent information on the remaining balance in each budget relocation and monthly cost information
- promotion to an SO 1 level of management since I perform this function but do not receive pay for the responsibility
- he could give me more responsibility and prepare me so I could in his absence act in his position with more success
- more matrix activities

Female Support Staff

- try & resolve problems, try and behave like an equal co-worker or a supervisor with a little tact, share information regarding office procedure, treat me like an adult (not someone who has to be watched and checked upon.) After 13 years with the govt & many supervisors I have never had the problems on the treatment that I am now receiving. I have been looking for alternate employment.
- give a little more freedom in our areas worked and enable us to use our own heads and being a bit more independent
- I like my supervisor the way she is. I wouldn't change a thing.
- give more timely feedbacks. Advise and give more career development opportunities
- to enrich our duties
- verbally tell me what to do
- I think if an employee shows that they can easily handle the responsibility of their job & are keen to learn, that a supervisor should recognize that an employee that has that ability will become easily bored if new tasks to further allow the employee to grow are not added into the job. These new duties or tasks do not necessarily have to relate to the job the person is doing now but may allow for the employee to increase their skills and effectiveness, and could allow for growth to a higher

level position.

- more feedback on a regular basis whether it be positive or negative. More support to lean on
- I really wish that my supervisor would consider us all as equal and not single out one person.
- I don't appreciate hearing information through the grapevine
- I wish she would give credit where credit is due
- listen less to our minor complaints
- come to my work area to see how my programming is going so that I may get more feedback re. improvements
- more feedback on regular basis whether it be positive or negative, more support to lead on
- get organized
- I would like a definite time set aside so that we could meet on a regular basis. More often than not when we have a meeting scheduled the meeting is cancelled or we may only have a 5 to 10 minute meeting
- every thing is running smoothly and OK
- give me feedback on paper-flow within the branch so I can set priorities for my staff. Be willing to sit down and talk on a person to person basis about office matters
- come to my work area to see how my performance is going so I get more feedback re: improvement

Male Professional Staff

- I have no issues with my supervisor. However the rest of local management needs to address itself to the policies it passes that hinder performance of professional duties.
- to get involved more with my department activities. To advise and suggest problem solving, and back up my decision making process.
- be more concerned with accountability at all levels plus "team development"
- what he does presently; gives me guidance & is very supportive
- job rotation and work evaluation
- to get more involved with my department activities, to advise and suggest problem solving, and back up my decision making process
- all the things that have been previously stated as he does not do (them)
- share more about managerial decisions. I understand the Department is going through changes and as a result rumors run rampant. Information sharing would curb this.
- clear precise mandate
- allow us to get on with the job
- supervisor is unable to travel with me on field duties enough. Head office procedures and meaningless paperwork along with useless meetings keep him too occupied to do

his job as effectively as he could

- supervisors are seriously shackled by Senior Management who insist on procedures and not results. Numbers look better for politicians
- listen more and talk less
- that he have a better idea of what I am doing
- he provides all possible assistance. Any gaps are usually the results of other bureaucratic decisions or indecisions. unfortunately the service providers are not the decision makers
- use verbal and stick on notes instead of memorandums
- being very new to his job and very young he should seek advice from his staff before "blindly going where no man should go"
- strive to be less of a boss and more of a leader. Will not listen
- continue to provide opportunity outside the regular sphere of my activities
- focus on providing more back up by relieving staff of some administrative chores
- provide more direction, access and support
- spend more time in field inspection

Female Professional Staff

- give me additional challenging tasks

- at times a more directive role in response to specific questions would be nice. Tends to take the route of guiding or having you always come up with the answer. At times all I want is a specific answer not another learning experience
- open meeting at least once a month
  my performance and enrich my duties.
- to be more verbal regarding performance. I am usually left in the dark. Performance appraisals are always positive but VERY BRIEF! I would like more ongoing feedback as opposed to once a year.
- wish my supervisor could get back and recruit to vacant positions lost. This would alleviate the HEAVY load we all bear, and allow us time to perform our duties better and enhance these duties
- in past, allowed me the opportunity to speak directly to the Director of the service - both at the Baker Sanatorium & TB Services Edmonton when we changed from Baker to the Foothills Hospital
- send me on more job related training courses.
- all clinical supervision
- build-in regular supervision time with someone qualified to do so; ie in group psychotherapy
- make herself more available, make more explicit decisions and stick to them! Come to RN meetings.

- show some consideration of work performed and occasionally if at all give some feedback. Become actively involved to become aware of what REALISTIC things actually happen in the work we do.
- go to management with employees opinions re; more efficient use of staff. Listen to the staff - they are in close contact with the clientele and their problems - their main objective is to serve the needs of the clients
- their opinions sometimes worth listening to!
- to be less neutral, provide more positive strokes
- I would like the supervisor to give more moral support on the job
- clarify difference between our job descriptions
- I believe my supervisor would be open to discussing any areas that I would recommend which would enhance my performance or enrich my duties.
- give more spontaneous feedback at the time of the incidence
- observe some of her therapy techniques, thus this could enhance some of my approaches
- come up with new and interesting ideas re. job performance and enhancement (I work in isolation so really need this)
- I would like the supervisor to give more moral support on the job
- assign a support staff to handle the routine tasks so I

can spend more time on technical aspects

- clarify my job duties so they match my job description more closely. Would like to take on more responsibility. This has improved with current supervisor but was stifled for 4 years (i.e delegation problem). All three supervisors have had lower education qualification than I have and were therefore in a very poor position of knowledge and experience to advice me on my career development.
- my orientation (6 years ago) was designed by a peer and therefore the peer's biases and preferences distorted the nature of the job. This poor orientation set me back for at least one year initially.

Male Managers

- not much, he does well
- nothing more than he does; I'll do my own
- more support is needed in the implementation & enforcement of policies & procedures
- outline & assist in career development
- nothing, a shining, self-assured supervisor
- give me some flexibility; delegate more; encourage attendance at seminars/conferences
- to be honest, I can't think of any. My job requires a great deal of independence and that is exactly what I am

given.

- none other than what he's doing
- not only to listen to your suggestions but to act on them or try new ways
- delegate responsibilities & hold me accountable, but let me carry out my responsibilities my way with minimum guidance
- communicate, when required and requested, support for branch activities and direction; support activity expansion
- provide more feedback on an on-going basis. Express opinions about certain directions I may be taking with the program. I feel frustrated that I cannot take advantage of his invaluable experience.
- be more aware of my right to fail at a task; branch goals to be better defined & results-based. Require more accountability within the branch for achievement of goals.
- take me more into his confidence
- to communicate what prevents him from doing what he wants to do. eg. constraints which may not be obvious and which emulate from higher up
- probably would like to have a more definite area of responsibility which is commensurate with a management position eg. a program with resources
- criticize in private, help when I ask for help, support

when I am criticized by others

- screen out the "politically" motivated duties emanating from the ministers and deputy ministers office
- provide some clear statement/commitment to improving opportunities for advancement. Provide new ideas for practical applications and development of process to meet the goals and objectives of the Division and the lack of applied teamwork approach to solving problems
- more time to do both short term and long term local planning
- clarify some objectives specified by the Department
- not allow his personal feeling to influence our relationship
- give both verbal and written positive feedback (Once a year if at all is not enough)
- trust all other staff in the organization
- I feel I have an excellent work relationship with my supervisor, one which is both growth promoting and effective
- consistent consultation and feedback on my duties
- show more interest

Female Managers

- reduce distance; explore and learn about specialized programs of unit; be aware of special needs to meet objectives; reduce subjectivity; provide more support when resources are threatened; provide a more balanced ongoing review system; attempt to be more "open" in discussing issues; not present with decisions made; if he truly wishes input -be open to it otherwise it is a game to keep management busy and distracted

- I admire and respect my supervisor. He is very approachable and always takes time & presents alternatives to address my concerns.
- more of a team approach to problem solving, instead of this is what I'd do, you do what you want
- be available to act as sounding board (without giving the message that she's willing to do so, but doesn't have time). Clarify financial responsibility to myself and to senior management, and ensure budgeting is done. Clarify my status in the organization.
- sit down & talk openly about his expectations, specific performance comments; both positive & negative so I can learn faster how to perform well. Not so much the activities but the manner in which they are performed.
- my supervisor can best assist me by performing his own job duties at his full potential
- more critical evaluation instead of only telling me how well I'm doing.
- career development would be great; if there are any

opportunities out there. Create a stable, regional environment with clear long term goals.

- it would be nice if his supervisors could write meaningful objectives
- I would wish a little more optimism on his part - except that the pessimism is somewhat reality based!
- be more available for discussions
- continue the same
- set weekly meetings
- clear goals and expectations mutually derived
- review of work prior to meetings
- dealing with my agenda as well as his
- I appreciate and respect him just the way he is