

Mentoring in Extension

December 2012

THE EXTENSION MENTOR

The goal of Mentoring in Extension is to provide a professional, educational and personal support system for new employees of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service or the Cooperative Extension Program at Prairie View A&M. Each new employee and certain newly promoted employees will benefit from the guidance of an appointed “mentor”.

According to Chip R. Bell in his article, “Mentoring as Partnership”, a mentor is simply someone who helps someone else learn something that he or she would have learned less well, more slowly, or not at all if left alone. This results in a power-free relationship. Mentors are not power figures. Mentors are learning coaches—sensitive, trusted advisors. The relationship between mentor and mentee is based on support because the managerial supremacy does not exist.

The role of a mentor should be perceived as a coach who has strong respect and concern for the mentee. The major contribution made by the mentor is his/her willingness to devote time and energy on behalf of the mentee. Every mentor has a specific body of professional knowledge and skills to share. The knowledge that the mentor has must be transformed into a relationship that will meet the mentee’s maturity and experience level.

There are several support groups that will help the new employee get a successful start in his/her Extension career. This partnership includes the immediate supervisor, the Regional Program Directors, the co-workers, and the appointed mentor.

The immediate supervisor will help the new employee become acquainted with the basic Extension policies, procedures and employee guidelines that all Extension employees must follow. Extension philosophy and overview of program planning, implementation, evaluation, reporting and interpretation will also be addressed by the supervisor. The supervisor and employee together, with input from others, will set forth a professional development plan to aid the new employees in their continued success.

Regional Program Directors will assist the employee in becoming familiar with the program development in Extension including current programming efforts and initiatives. They will be the new employee’s key resource for programming contacts and resources. They will also provide input to the supervisor on the employee’s professional development plan.

Co-workers will assist the new employee in becoming acquainted with the office, working relationships and job responsibilities. Other topics will be covered to help the new employee become acquainted with the Extension programs and initiatives.

The mentor will support the new employee with advice, feedback, focus and support in learning new job responsibilities and getting acquainted with the organization. The mentor will provide an opportunity for the mentee to ask questions, test ideas, and talk about challenges and solutions.

Through positive support and experiences, new employees will build their knowledge, skills and abilities that will facilitate them becoming an integral part of Extension.

Table of Contents

<i>MISSION STATEMENT</i>	4
<i>PHILOSOPHY</i>	4
<i>GOALS AND OBJECTIVES</i>	4
<i>MENTORING: WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?</i>	5
<i>NEW EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING</i>	6
<i>MENTORING PROCESS GUIDELINES AND CONSIDERATIONS</i>	8
<i>QUALIFICATIONS OF MENTORS</i>	9
<i>DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF MENTORS</i>	9
<i>MENTOR SELECTION PROCEDURE</i>	9
<i>MENTOR TRAINING</i>	10
<i>MATCHING PROCESS</i>	10
<i>MENTOR GUIDELINES</i>	10
<i>SUGGESTIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING VISIT</i>	11
<i>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MENTOR</i>	11
<i>RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MENTEE</i>	12
<i>RECOGNITION OF MENTORS</i>	13
<i>RECOGNITION OF MENTEE</i>	13
<i>EVALUATION OF MENTORING IN EXTENSION</i>	13

MISSION STATEMENT

Beneficial knowledge and organizational values are communicated to new employees and/or educators through caring professional partnerships. This helps them become productive Extension faculty who will enhance Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service or Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension Program to improve the quality of life for citizens of Texas.

PHILOSOPHY

The five statements listed below communicate the philosophical foundation of the mentoring in Extension:

- *Mentoring is a partnership.*
- *Mentoring is a nurturing, professional relationship.*
- *Mentoring is communicating with each other.*
- *Mentoring enhances development of the mentee*
- *Mentoring benefits the mentee, the mentor and the organization.*

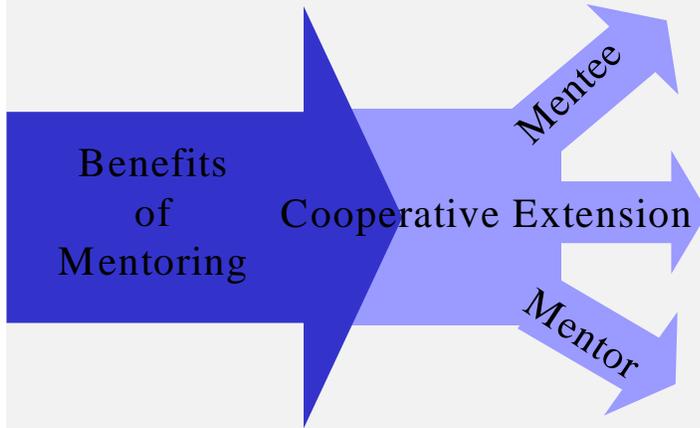
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of mentoring in Extension is to provide a professional, educational and personal support system for the new employee called the “mentee.” Achieving this goal will enhance the mentee’s job performance by:

- *Identifying resources and resource persons for the mentee.*
- *Educating the mentee in all organizational philosophy, goals, policies, and values.*
- *Sharing skills and knowledge of one or more experienced and successful Extension professional to meet the needs of the mentee.*
- *Strengthening the mentee’s leadership skills and self-confidence.*
- *Fostering open communication and dialogue.*

By accomplishing these objectives, mentees will experience an easier transition into Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service or the Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program, thus accelerating the productivity of the mentee and enhancing the effectiveness of Extension.

Mentoring: What's in it for Me?



- Supportive atmosphere
- Information-technical and process skills
- Non-evaluative feedback
- Organizational values and norms
- Sense of competence and worth
- Opportunity to be successful
- Importance of taking responsibility for requirements of the position

- New employees become competent sooner
- Continuity of organizational culture
- Less job turnover (\$\$)
- Increased teamwork
- Increased productivity

- Develop positive and secure self-image
- Give something back to the organization
- Pass on knowledge and ideas to next generation of staff
- Sense of accomplishments through mentee's success
- Help organization's goal

NEW EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING

The process of developing a new employee is one of extreme importance. The process is influenced by the selected mentor, but involves more than just the mentor. It includes others such as District Extension Administrators, County Extension Directors, Regional Program Directors, Associate Department Heads and Program Leaders, State Program Leaders, co-workers, other selected colleagues, specialists, district office support staff and many others.

The development process consists of several components beginning on the first day of employment. Summarized below are the various components of the process which will support the new employee:

First Day - Arranged by Supervisor

- *Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Bag*
- *Organizational Chart*
- *Pin, Name Tag, Desk Plate*
- *Business Card Instructions and Website*
- *Calendar and Personnel Directory*
- *List of Important Web Resources*
- *Welcome and History of Extension*
- *Supervisor Letter containing:*
 - *Date and Time of Initial Meeting for Supervisor Orientation*
 - *Expectations/Challenges*
 - *Mentor Contact Information*
 - *Upcoming Events*
- *Letter from Mentor if already assigned*

First Step – Coordinated by Supervisor

- *Introduction to key concepts, practices and principles within Extension*
- *Observe and experience day-to-day operations of a county Extension office*
- *Involvement with experienced Extension Agents*

Local Office Orientation - Coordinated by Co-workers

- *Introduction to Office Faculty and Staff*
- *Tour of Work Area and Building*
- *Overview of Day to Day Workings*
- *Introduction to Key Leaders*
- *Review of Issues and Programs*

Supervisor Orientation - Arranged by Supervisor

- *Orientation and Expectations Conference/Meeting with Supervisor*
- *Forms and Paperwork*
- *Resources Available from Supervisor's Office*
- *Reporting Expectations/Due Dates*
- *Meeting Regional Program Directors/Specialists/Researchers/Staff*

Self-Directed Learning Modules – Coordinated by Organizational Development

- *Access via <http://campus.extension.org>*

Extension Foundations in College Station

- *New employees will attend a 4 day face to face orientation in College Station within 6 months of employment. Extension Foundations is offered twice yearly in College Station, once in the spring and once in the fall.*

Program Excellence Academy I and Program Excellence Academy II

- *New employees will attend two 4 day face to face trainings in College Station within 12-18 months of employment. Program Excellence Academy I & Program Excellence Academy II are offered twice yearly in College Station, once in the spring and once in the fall.*

Ongoing Professional Development

- *In addition to these professional development efforts, the Regional Leadership Team (with input from others) will work with the new employee to organize a professional development plan for the next 1 to 3 years.*
- *The organization is committed to Professional Development being an integral part of all employees' position responsibilities and as such approximately 10 percent of the employees time will be dedicated toward continuous learning through professional development.*
- *Professional development is recognized as those activities that help build capacity in an employee such that they can be successful. It can include workshops and seminars offered both face to face and at a distance; participation in association conferences and meetings; self-directed learning including both printed, electronic and work based; as well as coaching and mentoring opportunities with and from other professionals.*

MENTORING PROCESS GUIDELINES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The following general guidelines will apply to each mentoring relationship and should be understood by both the mentor and mentee.

- Mentors are chosen by the County Programs office based on recommendations made by supervisor(s).
- Commitment to the formal mentoring relationship is one year.
- The mentor should contact the new mentee within the first week after the relationship has been determined.
- A minimum of three face-to-face visits should occur between the mentor and mentee within the year. The first visit should be during the first month after the pairing is announced. The remaining two visits/meetings should be during the next nine months.
- Mentors and mentees should correspond frequently either by phone, e-mail, in person, etc. It is the responsibility of both participants to make sure that this communication occurs.
- "NO FAULT" Arrangement: Throughout a professional career, all employees face various challenges and changing circumstances which are often unexpected and may make it difficult to continue being a mentor. This program operates with a NO FAULT philosophy that allows mentors and mentees to request changes or reassignments without fear of repercussions. The mentor or mentee may request a change or release from the assignment by contacting the appropriate supervisor(s).
- The mentor may recommend that the mentee work with other professionals with the approval of appropriate supervisor(s).
- The mentor and appropriate supervisor(s) will communicate on the progress of the mentee throughout the process.
- The mentor will become familiar with the following suggested topics of discussion so that he/she will have a thorough understanding of the division of responsibility regarding the overall orientation of the mentee:
 - Suggested Discussion Topics for Mentor
 - Suggested Discussion Topics for Co-Workers
 - Suggested Discussion Topics for Supervisor(see attachments for the above discussion topics)

QUALIFICATIONS OF MENTORS

Because of the strong influence the mentor has on a mentee and ultimately, the impact on the system, it is essential that all mentors possess the following:

- *Commitment to the mission of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service or the Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension Program.*
- *Effective skills in program development, marketing and interpretation of Extension programs to diverse audiences.*
- *Appropriate subject matter expertise.*
- *Knowledge of policies and procedures of The Texas A&M University System and of the rules and procedures of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service or the Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension Program.*
- *A minimum of three years of Extension experience, and currently serve in a similar position.*

DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF MENTORS

In the mentor selection process, preference and priority will be given to individuals who possess the following characteristics (listed below in no particular order):

- *Team player.*
- *Trustworthy, ethical, professional behavior.*
- *Positive attitude and a sense of humor.*
- *Respected by peers; shows respect for others.*
- *Listens and communicates effectively.*
- *Recognizes and encourages excellence.*
- *Self-confident.*
- *Patient, encouraging, caring and sympathetic.*
- *Appreciates and encourages diversity.*
- *Flexible/adaptable, receptive to new ideas.*

MENTOR SELECTION PROCEDURE

- *County Extension Directors, District Extension Administrators, Regional Program Directors, and State Program Leaders will nominate and make recommendations for new mentors to the County Programs Office.*
- *Final selection of mentors will be made by the administrative leadership team.*

MENTOR TRAINING

Mentors are selected based upon a set of characteristics and criteria that are deemed critical. Upon selection, mentors will attend a workshop that will cover information important to the success of the mentoring relationship. There will be an initial comprehensive training workshop to address the policies and procedures and provide experiential learning to assist in the development of coaching skills. Update trainings will also be held periodically for mentors. Administrators, District Extension Administrators, County Extension Directors, Regional Program Directors, State Program Leaders, staff development specialists, university faculty and others will be involved in conducting the workshops.

MATCHING PROCESS

The appropriate supervisor(s), with input from the county staff, will determine the Mentor/Mentee match. Consideration for matching the mentor and mentee will include (where possible) similar programmatic responsibilities and geographic proximity. Copies of all mentoring information will be collected and maintained at the state level. This information will be used to evaluate the mentoring program.

MENTOR GUIDELINES

Research shows that the most successful mentoring relationships are those, which are initiated as early as possible in the mentee's employment. In addition, a mutual commitment to meet regularly is important since success is related to time spent together.

The following suggestions should help the mentor begin the mentoring relationship:

- *Write a letter of commitment to the assigned mentee (Attachment 1).*
- *Send the mentee a copy of your completed Mentor/Mentee Biographical Sketch (Attachment 7) and encourage him/her to send you a copy of his/her completed biographical sketch as well.*
- *Send copies of the letter and biographical sketches to the appropriate supervisor(s).*
- *Call the mentee to initiate the relationship.*
- *Get started early. Set up the first meeting within one month (or as soon as possible) of the mentor and mentee pairing announcement.*
- *Upon completion of the formal mentoring process, the mentor should complete the Mentoring Program Evaluation (Attachment 8) and submit it to the mentee's supervisor.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING VISIT

Face-to-face visits will result in effective communication between the mentor and mentee. The visits will be in addition to phone/email contacts aimed at building rapport and open communication.

The following suggestions will help assure a productive and successful visit with the mentee:

- *Schedule adequate time with minimal interruptions to foster a positive mentoring relationship.*
- *Provide directions to meeting location(s).*
- *Be ready and accessible for mentoring visit(s).*
- *Know what you want to accomplish to enhance the mentoring visit.*
- *Have information readily available for sharing.*
- *Allow time for an office tour and introduction of county staff wherever the meeting is being held. (Either the mentee's or the mentor's office.)*

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MENTOR

Mentors should be prepared to devote time and energy to the relationship. The most important factor in mentoring is the mentor's willingness to give time and attention to the mentee. You accept great responsibility in this close, trusting relationship. Pitfalls can be averted by honest, open communication that establishes ground rules and clarifies the concerns of the new mentee. Upon completion of the formal mentoring process, the mentor should complete the mentoring program evaluation and submit it to the mentee's supervisor.

*The following are some things the mentor should **DO** in the mentoring relationship:*

- *Review the Mentee Biographical Sketch to learn more about his/her interests and background.*
- *Take responsibility to initiate the relationship.*
- *Foster creativity and independence.*
- *Set aside time for the mentoring process and keep all appointments.*
- *Display professional behavior and dress.*
- *Schedule meetings and feedback sessions with planned topics.*
- *Be positive, enthusiastic and supportive.*
- *Be a good listener.*
- *Establish open and honest communication and a forum for idea exchange.*
- *Maintain confidentiality! If something concerning the mentor or mentee needs to be discussed with others, it should first be discussed within the mentoring relationship.*
- *Be flexible on meeting times and places.*
- *Offer to share resources, expertise and experiences.*
- *Confer as needed with DEA or the appropriate supervisor.*
- *Provide opportunities for the mentee to talk about concerns and ask questions.*
- *Invite the mentee to meetings or activities, as appropriate.*

- *Arrange further frequent contacts through telephone, e-mail, fax, face-to-face, etc., as appropriate.*

*The following are some things mentors should **AVOID** in the mentoring relationship:*

- *Criticize.*
- *Try to solve all their problems.*
- *Try to give advice on everything.*
- *Encourage mentee to be totally dependent upon you.*
- *Complain about your own problems.*
- *Be too busy when the mentee needs your friendship or your support.*
- *Take responsibility for the mentee's programs or duties.*

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MENTEE

Remember, a mentor is a supportive friend with a strong respect and concern for the professional development and success of their mentee. Plan to devote time and energy to build this relationship. Upon completion of the formal mentoring process, you should complete the Mentoring Program Evaluation and mail to your supervisor.

*The following are some things the mentee should **DO** in the mentoring relationship:*

- *Review your Mentor's Biographical Sketch to learn more about his/her interests and background.*
- *Establish open and honest communication and a forum for idea exchange. Maintaining confidentiality between the mentor and mentee is essential! If something concerning the mentor or mentee needs to be discussed with others, it should be discussed first within the mentoring relationship.*
- *Understand what you want from the mentoring relationship and communicate your goals and aspirations to your mentor. Balance a personal and professional relationship with your mentor.*
- *Understand that you have to give as well as receive from the relationship.*
- *Act on your mentor's advice when you feel it is applicable to your situation. Follow up with resources/references that your mentor gives you to find answers to questions or needed information.*
- *Keep all scheduled appointments with your mentor and display professional behavior and dress, as appropriate.*
- *Be aware that as an Extension employee you are a professional – 24 hours a day, seven days a week.*
- *Arrange frequent contacts with your mentor through telephone, e-mail, fax, face-to-face, etc.*
- *Be flexible on meeting times and places.*
- *Be realistic, maintain a positive attitude.*
- *Be ambitious and enthusiastic.*

The following are some things mentees should **AVOID** in the mentoring relationship:

- Ask for advice on everything. Have a purpose in each request.
- Ask your mentor to act in your place or tell you precisely what to do.
- Rely on your mentor to give or seek answers to all of your questions/requests.
- Complain about other people or missed opportunities in an unprofessional manner.
- Commit yourself to obligations you cannot keep.
- Cancel meetings/visits with your mentor at the last minute.

RECOGNITION OF MENTORS

Upon completion of the formal mentor training, each mentor will be recognized as an “Extension Mentor”. Mentors will be recognized during annual performance appraisal conferences and at the time individuals are being considered for promotion in their respective Career Ladder Systems. Mentors will also be publicly recognized as appropriate at other regional, district and state meetings.

RECOGNITION OF MENTEE

The mentee will be recognized in a variety of ways including positive reinforcement by the supervisor and mentor during Mentoring Program Exit Conference. They will also be recognized through letters of congratulations for mentee’s by the supervisor, mentor and County Programs Office Faculty. The mentee will also be recognized by staff in their county and recognized as appropriate at county and district events.

EVALUATION OF MENTORING IN EXTENSION

A mentoring process exit conference should be conducted by the supervisor at the conclusion of the one-year formal mentoring process and should include the supervisor, mentor and mentee. The Mentoring Relationship Evaluation (Attachment 9) should be completed by the supervisor and submitted to the County Programs Office. Copies of the Mentoring Program Evaluations completed by the mentor and mentee should also be attached to the Mentoring Relationship Evaluation.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1

Sample Letter

The following letter is a sample that a mentor might send to the new employee as a way of initiating the relationship.

First Name, Last Name

Extension Office Address

Some Town, TX 00000

Dear _____ (Mentee),

Congratulations on your new job! I am pleased that we have been matched as mentor and mentee. This is an exciting opportunity for us to form a working relationship that will provide a positive professional, educational, and personal support system for you.

During our time together, we'll examine the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service's philosophy, goals and values; identify resources and resource persons; and share skills, knowledge and ideas pertaining to your career in Extension. We'll also have time to discuss any concerns or questions you may have. We should plan at least three face-to-face visits throughout the year, and keeping in regular contact by phone, fax and e-mail.

I would like to meet with you sometime this month (first month after pairing is announced). Here are some days that I have available: _____

Please check your calendar and let me know a date that is convenient for you. I look forward to working with you this year.

Sincerely,

Mentor

cc: Supervisor(s)

Extension Onboarding

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION
Your two-year strategy for success!

← Online Modules, Meetings with Supervisors, and Informational articles are completed throughout the year. →

First Step

- New Agents “shadow” colleagues in a neighboring county during their first month on the job
- Develop a basic understanding of key Extension concepts principles and practices
- Experience day-to-day operations of a typical county Extension office
- Complete the First Step Journal (<http://extensiononboarding.tamu.edu> under “Agent Resources”)

New Agent Study Guide

- A tool to be completed within six months of employment
- An organized plan of observation and learning of important Extension information

DEA/CED, RPDs, Specialists and Mentors

- These colleagues will guide you in purposeful discussions of Extension topics
- Notes pages and Mentoring Guidelines are available at <http://extensiononboarding.tamu.edu>

Extension Fundamentals: Articles and Online Trainings

Articles expected to be read by new agents as well as the timing of when to read them*:

- First Step month - Our Legacy, Dr. Seaman Knapp
- Home County Month One - Extension Program Development
- Months 2-5 - Adult Learning Theory, Learning Styles and Rate of Adoption
- Months 6-12 - Levels of Client Change and Intended Outcomes, Putting Evaluation in Context Taking Evaluation Further, Interpretation – Analyzing Results and Telling the Story

**These articles may be accessed Online at <http://od.tamu.edu> by clicking on the “Agent Onboarding, Onboarding Articles” option.*

Online trainings that you will complete during your onboarding experience*:

- First Step Month; Texas AgriLife Extension: Our History and Roots, Professionalism in Texas Extension
- Home County Month One - Introduction to Program Development in Texas Extension and Extension Volunteerism.
- Months 2-5; Emergency Management: EM-101 Preparedness and Mitigation, Roles and Responsibilities of CEAs & EM-102 Response and Recovery Plans, Resources, Roles and Responsibilities of CEAs (Central Courses)
- Months 6-12; Writing Impact Statements

**To find these courses, follow the instructions about logging in under the “First Time Here?” section at <http://campus.extension.org/>.*

<h3>Foundations & 4-H 101 Courses</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “4-H Livestock & Horse 101,” “FCS 101” and “Specialist 101” are programs conducted as part of the Extension onboarding experience.	<h3>Program Excellence Academy</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two-week advanced training program in College Station• Begins within 6 months after hire date.
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For questions and assistance with the onboarding process contact Jeff Ripley in the Extension Organizational Development Unit at (979) 845-7280, or by e-mail at j-ripley@tamu.edu.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR MENTOR

Based on the mentee's needs assessment, the following are suggestions on how to address the specific needs of the mentee. You may want to plan to address some of these at your initial meeting.

Communications

- *Discuss importance of evaluation forms after program delivery to see if your planned objectives were met*
- *Share newsletters with mentee*
- *Share news articles you prepared*
- *Share a radio/TV tape or invite to next taping*
- *Invite the mentee to see you conduct a program*
- *Share your perspectives on office communications, teamwork, conflict, etc.*
- *Discuss appropriate attention to phone and e-mail messages*
- *Emphasize importance of reviewing daily planning (calendars)*

Program Development

- *Invite to an advisory committee meeting*
- *Invite to attend a volunteer meeting*
- *Invite to a program of the mentee's interest*
- *Share successes and failures in programming*
- *Share program announcements with mentee*
- *Share key contacts and resource persons*
- *Support creativity and energy of mentee, particularly as they relate to programming*
- *Share programming resources*
- *Invite to attend planning meetings*
- *Discuss importance of evaluating impact of programming efforts*
- *Discuss importance of conducting interpretation events to share program success*
- *Discuss programming for reaching underserved audiences and those with special needs*
- *Explain importance of and how to network with other agencies/organizations*
- *Discuss importance of understanding local power structures and relationships*
- *Discuss importance of "sign in" attendance rosters for reporting*
- *Discuss importance of surveying audience for reaching audiences' needs*

Personal Effectiveness

- *Discuss protocol/informal rules in Extension*
- *Discuss support services at Texas A&M/Prairie View A&M*
- *Share your time management techniques*
- *Share your perspective on maintaining balance with work/family*
- *Discuss importance of community involvement*
- *Invite to upcoming in-services*
- *Identify professional associations/upcoming dates and invite to join/attend*
- *Encourage mentee to apply for awards (i.e. rookie, communications, etc.)*
- *Discuss professional image*

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR CO-WORKERS

Working with County Commissioners' Court and Other Key Officials

- *Elected officials*
- *Appointed officials*
- *County Commissioners' Courts' scheduled meeting dates/times*

Managing Resources in the Extension Office

- *Telephones*
- *Secretary*
- *Shared equipment*
- *Vehicles*
- *Meeting rooms*
- *Office hours*

Budget and Budget Process

- *Access to local funds*
- *Reimbursement of expenses*

Local Extension Program Orientation

- *Staff meetings/office conferences*
- *County Agents' roles and responsibilities*
- *County Coordinator responsibilities*
- *4-H Coordinator responsibilities*
- *County demographics and background information*
- *County organizations, collaborators and key leaders*
- *Extension Issue Identification Process (strategic plans in county's Action Plan) located at <https://eit-data.tamu.edu/IssueID/slog/index.asp>*
- *County Leadership Advisory Boards (LABs) and Program Area Committees and Youth Boards located at <https://eit-data.tamu.edu/EPC/slog/index.asp>*
- *Program Plans (in Planning/Reporting System located at <http://texas.tamu.edu/>*
- *Summary of Programs (Annual Report in Planning/Reporting System)*
- *Activity reporting (monthly reports in planning/reporting system)*
- *County annual program plan*
- *Monthly reporting system*
- *Office filing system*
- *Postal mail guidelines*
- *Working with local mass media*

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR SUPERVISOR

Extension Philosophy

- *Professional educators*
- *Grass roots, committees*
- *Mission/vision*
- *Land grant system/funding*
- *Employer/job title/probationary period*
- *Handling money*
- *Civil Rights/Affirmative Action/ADA*

Professional Relationships

- *County faculty - Ag, FCS, 4-H, CEP, IPM, HORT, BLT, ENP, Marine, etc.*
- *County coordinator - program leader*
- *4-H coordinator*
- *Office manager - support staff*
- *District Extension Administrator & RPDs*
- *County Extension Director*
- *Administrators*
- *Specialists*
- *County Commissioners' Court*
- *Elected officials*
- *Associations/organizations*
- *Organizational chart*
- *Secretarial staff*
- *Media*
- *Key leaders*
- *Agents in other counties*
- *1890 Cooperative Extension Program*
- *Military*

Roles and Responsibilities

- *Agriculture*
- *Family and Consumer Sciences*

- *4-H and Youth Development*
- *Community Development*
- *Additional Subject Matter Areas Addressed by Specialty Agents*

Ethics/Work Habits/Policies

- *Serves as a model or example*
- *Follows rules regarding age and entry deadlines (county, district, and state)*
- *Spends equal time with 4-H families*
- *Keeps informed of rules and checks Policy Handbook if necessary for accuracy*
- *Remembers that 4-H is youth development first, then winning contests*
- *Understands that we are public servants and that the public comes to us because they choose to*
- *Adheres to office hours; accepts county policy and state allocation for holidays (number of holidays may vary with each fiscal year)*
- *Understands leave policies regarding jury duty, sick leave, vacation (must work six months), and emergency leave*
- *Exhibits a professional image at district and state meetings*
- *Understands travel policies regarding travel authorization for out-of-county and out-of-state travel requests (out-of-state travel requests must be submitted 30 days in advance of trip)*
- *Understands fiscal policies and employee benefits*
- *Strives to attain a balance between work and family life; takes time to maintain health; works continually on self-improvement to maximize job effectiveness; prioritizes family and personal needs*

Performance Expectations/PAS System

- *Attends regular office conferences*
- *Contributes information to articles in newsletters*
- *Assists with district and state contests and events*
- *Works with county committees*
- *Develops a plan for recruitment and involvement of volunteers*
- *Assists with school curriculum enrichment efforts*
- *Is involved with district committees*
- *Conducts evaluation of program to show outcomes*
- *Markets and interprets Extension programming accomplishments*
- *Participates in Career Ladder*

Reporting Expectations

- *Submits office conference minutes with monthly reports by mail or e-mail*
- *Submits County Commissioners' Court report and monthly travel to court ASAP and to DEA by the end of the seventh working day of each month*
- *Prepares ES-237 4-H Enrollment Report (due in October)*
- *Prepares FCS Affirmative Action Report*
- *Required to submit at least two bullet/highlights a year; bullets are to be written on an entire programming effort, not an event; may reflect monthly if needed*
- *Completes New Agent Self Study Guide*
- *Reporting should be timely, accurate, descriptive and include the difference made in behavioral outcomes*
- *Be sure to meet deadlines*

Program Development (In cooperation with Regional Program Directors)

- *Program Development Process using Keys Publication as foundation (planning, implementing, evaluating and interpreting programs through involvement of local people on advisory committees and task force)*
- *Extension Program Council Executive Board, program area committees, task forces and action teams*
- *Issue ID/annual review*
- *Involvement of specialists and other resources via Regional Program Directors as Appropriate*
- *Annual Program Plan*
- *Outcome programs vs. Output programs*
- *Banner and Base Programs*
- *Delivery methods*
- *Leader training for youths and adults*
- *Evaluation*
- *Result demonstrations*
- *Performance standards*
- *Year-end conference/performance appraisal*
- *Media*

Interpretation (In Cooperation with Regional Program Directors)

- *Interprets program outcomes to co-workers - cross-selling of programs to DEA/administrators when appropriate*
- *Interprets program to County Commissioners' Court - annually, plus one or more for targeted audience(s)*
- *Interprets program to key leaders, collaborators, county agencies and organizations*
- *Interprets program to Extension volunteers and program participants*

Professionalism (In Cooperation with Regional Program Directors)

- *Follows rules in maintaining effective office hours, work habits and office appearance*
- *Follows policies and procedures regarding travel, supplies, reporting, inventory, entry deadlines, etc.*
- *Exhibits a positive professional image and code of conduct*
- *Communicates well, both orally and in writing*
- *Exhibits a positive attitude, is loyal and cooperates with supervisor, secretaries and others*

Professional Development

- *Assessment of core competencies*
- *Individual Development Plan in Cooperation with Regional Program Directors*
- *Professional Associations - maintains membership in at least one; contacts district representative for more detailed information*
- *Texas County Agricultural Agents Association (TCAAA)*
- *Texas Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (TEAFCS)*
- *Texas Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (TAFCS)*
- *Texas Association of Extension 4-H Agents (TAE4-HA)*
- *Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP) National Extension Honorary Fraternity*
- *Others*
- *District trainings*
- *Self-study*
- *Formal course work*

External Funding for Extension Programs

- *Cash Management and Partial Cost Recovery*
- *Donors*
- *Sponsorships*
- *Fiscal policy regarding handling money/accountability*

Public Relations/Marketing (In Cooperation with Regional Program Directors)

- *Works with local news media and other media outlets*
- *Networks with key leaders, collaborators, and county agencies and organizations*
- *Customer service, timely response to clientele*
- *Spends time with co-workers to do joint program planning*
- *Develops a plan for outcome program and evaluation*

Sources of Support

- *Builds relationships with mentor and other agents*
- *Goes to and observes programs conducted by mentor and other agents*
- *Takes advantage of as many professional development opportunities as possible*
- *Seeks assistance from specialists and others*
- *Self-study/reads technical journals, research publications, books, periodicals, etc.*
- *Seeks counsel from mentor, DEA, etc.*

Expectations of DEA or CED or RPD

- *Teamwork at all levels*
- *Be honest, caring, sincere, and offer suggestions*
- *Be flexible whenever possible*
- *Set meeting dates as far in advance as possible; send agendas*
- *Include Agent involvement whenever possible in decisions affecting the county/district*
- *Have a supportive role in helping agents to become successful*

Dates For Next Conference

- *Date(s) set for follow-up orientation conference(s)*
- *Date set for exit conference with mentor and mentee*

Questions and Misc.

ROLE & SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR REGIONAL PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Role of Regional Program Directors

- *Regional program directors provide overall vision and regional leadership for the development, implementation, evaluation, and interpretation of programs in one of four Extension regions in Texas. They work cooperatively with district administrators and the senior administrative leadership team to guide planning, implementation, evaluation, and interpretation of interdisciplinary programs for target clientele*
- *Regional program directors often serve as a key liaison between county Extension agents and Extension administrators, county Extension directors, department heads, and associate department heads/program leaders and Texas AgriLife Extension Service leadership.*
- *Regional program directors work closely with Extension specialists, associates, and assistants to provide targeted support for program development and implementation on the county, district, and regional levels.*

Suggested Topics in Cooperation (Several in Cooperation with DEA)

Extension Philosophy

- *Professional educators*
- *Grass roots, committees*
- *Mission/vision*
- *Land grant system/funding*
- *Employer/job title/probationary period*
- *Handling money*
- *Civil Rights/Affirmative Action/ADA*

Professional Relationships

- *County faculty - Ag, FCS, 4-H, CEP, IPM, Hort, BLT, ENP, Marine, etc.*
- *County coordinator - program leader*
- *4-H coordinator*
- *Office manager - support staff*
- *District Extension Administrator & RPDs*
- *County Extension Director*
- *Administrators*
- *Specialists*
- *County Commissioners' Court*
- *Elected officials*
- *Associations/organizations*
- *Organizational chart*
- *Secretarial staff*
- *Media*
- *Key leaders*
- *Agents in other counties*
- *1890 Cooperative Extension Program*
- *Military*

Program Roles and Responsibilities

- *Agriculture*
- *Family and Consumer Sciences*
- *4-H and Youth Development*
- *Community Development*
- *Additional Subject Matter Areas Addressed by Specialty Agents*

Program Development

- *Program Development Process using Keys Publication (planning, implementing, evaluating and interpreting programs through involvement of local people on advisory committees and task force)*
- *Extension Program Council Executive Board, program area committees, task forces and action teams*
- *Issue ID/annual review*
- *Involvement of specialists and other resources*
- *Annual Program Plan*
- *Outcome programs vs. Output programs*
- *Banner and Base Programs*
- *Delivery and teaching methods*
- *Leader training for youths and adults*
- *Character Education - Texans Building Character*
- *Evaluation*
- *Result demonstrations*
- *Performance standards*
- *Year-end conference/performance appraisal*
- *Media*

Interpretation

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 - *Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP) National Extension Honorary Fraternity*
 - *Others*
- *Regional trainings*
- *Self-study*
- *Formal course work*
- *Quality Subject Matter Resources (Web Site, Bookstore, Specialists, etc.)*

MENTOR/MENTEE BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Purpose: To provide basic information to facilitate the development of a positive relationship. (All personal information is voluntary.)

NAME: _____ Position Title/Rank: _____

ADDRESS: _____ Email: _____

_____ Fax: _____

PHONE: _____

My most valuable strengths are: _____

(Mentee Only) Topics I would like to discuss with my mentor include: _____

My hobbies/leisure interests: _____

About my family: _____

Community Activities: _____

The reason I am excited about a career in Extension is: _____

Please attach a copy of your current curriculum vitae or resume and send to the mentor/mentee within the first week of the relationship being announced/determined.

MENTORING PROGRAM EVALUATION

Your Name: _____ District: _____

Dates of Mentoring Relationship (mm/yy to mm/yy): _____

Check one: _____ Mentee _____ Mentor

Briefly describe your experiences in working with the mentor/mentee and the effectiveness of the relationship:

Describe three or four activities that were most helpful in developing your mentoring relationship:

Describe three or four barriers that affected the development of the mentoring relationship:

What suggestions do you have for making the program stronger?

Send to: **Mentee's Supervisor and ...** **Jeff Ripley**

Organizational Development
256 Agriculture and Life Sciences Building
2116 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-2116
Email: j-ripley@tamu.edu
Fax: 979-862-7190

MENTORING RELATIONSHIP EVALUATION

Mentee Name: _____ Mentor Name: _____

Supervisor's comments regarding Mentee's progress to date:

Supervisor's comments regarding Mentor's effectiveness:

This is to indicate that

Has completed the formal one-year mentoring relationship and has met the expectations of the Extension Mentoring Program.

Supervisor's Signature

Date

This evaluation is to be completed following the mentoring process exit conference. This form, along with a copy if the completed Mentor and Mentee Evaluations, should be sent to:

Jeff Ripley
Organizational Development
256 Agriculture and Life Sciences Building
2116 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-2116
Email: j-ripley@tamu.edu
Fax: 979-862-7190