

Lesson Content

Career Planning and Development

Lesson 1: Guiding Principles

Principles

DLA employee development and training practices are guided by these basic principles:

- Employee development is an investment by the organization in its performance and mission accomplishment. The complexity and variety of our mission require continual upgrading of knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform more effectively today and to retain fully competent employees to meet future performance and mission requirements.
- Training and development programs must focus on specific, identified needs and be results-oriented. DLA relies on supervisors to measure the gaps between the requirements of jobs and the capabilities of the people who perform the work. Training and development programs are targeted at those gaps.
- Funding for development of the workforce must be addressed and supported at all levels of the Agency. DLA organizations at all levels must establish procedures for budgeting and programming adequate financial and staff resources to meet immediate priority training and long-range developmental needs.
- Solid financial stewardship is an essential element in DLA's training and development strategy.
- Development is a lifelong process. DLA expects supervisors and employees to work in partnership to ensure skills and knowledge are continuously evaluated and upgraded in support of agency objectives. In addition, DLA encourages employees at all levels to pursue advancement and self-development.
- Training and development programs must be consistent with equal opportunity and merit system principles. Identification and selection of employees for training and development opportunities must be done fairly and equitably, without regard to factors unrelated to the need for training.

Lesson Content

Lesson 2: The DLA Training Center

Training headquarters

Agency headquarters for training and development is located at the DLA Training Center (DTC) in Columbus, OH. DTC provides Agency-wide policy and administers training programs with universal applicability.

Forward Presence

DTC provides Forward Presence staff at major Field Activities. Forward Presence personnel provide both direct support to the mission and training administration for a given command or location. Although they are located with their serviced population, their line of supervision is to DTC.

Training Coordinators

Training Coordinators are designated within major staff elements and at Field Activities to serve as primary contact points for administrative matters related to training. Depending on the size of the employee population served, these duties may be either full time or collateral. In general, training coordinator responsibilities include maintaining various records relating to training needs and accomplishments, preparing or consolidating training data, and coordinating training actions with DTC.

Lesson 3: Learning Management System

Purpose

Beginning in 2005, DTC implemented a Learning Management System (LMS) within the Agency. Access to the LMS is through eWorkplace and does not require an additional user identification (ID) or password. The LMS and its competency assessment tool support all aspects of learning management, including the following:

- Scheduling
- Maintaining records
- Issuing automated notices
- Creating automated individual development plans
- Recommending training solutions
- Planning for future training requirements
- Identifying skill gaps

Lesson Content

Use

The Enterprise Business System (EBS) liaisons (formerly Business Systems Modernization (BSM)) at Defense Supply Center Richmond (DSCR) were the first to make full use of the system to

- assign required instructor-led and online BSM/EBS training
- notify students and supervisors of training requirements
- manage classrooms and instructors
- record training completions and certifications, and
- run associated training reports.

Lesson 4: Responsibilities for Employee Development

DLA Strategic Plan

Employee development is ingrained in DLA's values, goals, and strategic planning. Because training and development plays such a critical role in DLA's mission and transformation, it is fully integrated into the Agency's strategic planning processes. Our success depends on our people, and we have a tremendous team of professionals working at DLA.

Supervisor responsibilities

As a supervisor, you are responsible for the following training-related functions:

- Being familiar with training and development policies and requirements
- Developing an understanding and appreciation among employees of the significance of continual growth in job competence and professional advancement
- Assessing the training needs of the organization and each individual employee, and reporting those needs on training needs assessments when requested
- Incorporating training needs into your own organization's strategic plan
- Ensuring new employees are oriented, both formally and informally, into the organization
- Counseling/mentoring employees on career development
- Meeting personally with each individual employee to develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Lesson Content

- Budgeting funds and/or other resources to meet identified training needs
- Giving all eligible employees reasonable opportunity for consideration in selections for training which may result in promotion
- Planning, developing, conducting, or otherwise making available on-the-job training opportunities that will best serve the needs of the organization and the vocational interests and objectives of the individual
- Ensuring mandatory training requirements are met
- Giving supervisory approval to training requests
- Ensuring that, once scheduled for training, an employee is released from regular duties to attend (e.g., adjusting workloads and schedules to accommodate the training).
- Evaluating the effectiveness of training and development efforts in terms of increased job competency and efficiency of operations
- Ensuring the skills and knowledge acquired in off-the-job training are put to use when the employee returns to the job
- Monitoring training Continued Service Agreements (CSA) (service obligations) and ensuring no obligated service is outstanding when an employee separates from the organization

Employee responsibilities

Employees are responsible for the following training-related functions:

- Helping to define mission-oriented training needs in relation to current and future job requirements
- Fulfilling obligations in the execution of career plans
- Notifying supervisors and/or training consultant in advance of any special accommodation (e.g., interpreters, adaptive equipment, parking) needed for successful completion of a training activity
- Successfully completing assigned training efforts

Lesson Content

- Applying the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired through training to the work situation and passing on the knowledge, skills, and abilities to other employees needing such information
- Fulfilling any agreements to continue in service
- Pursuing a program of self-development
- Keeping a record of their own training accomplishments to verify the correctness of LMS data

Lesson 5: Purpose of Training

Mission-related training

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that approved training is mission-related. A training occurrence meets the definition of "mission-related" if it satisfies any of the following criteria:

- Enhances and/or improves employee performance of current duties.
- Provides a means for systematically developing employee skills to meet current and future manpower needs.
- Provides opportunities for development of high-potential employees.
- Provides employees with the necessary competencies to meet changes in organizational policy, mission, technology, structure, or equipment.
- Maintains "state-of-the-art" specialized proficiencies.
- Assists with the planned upward mobility of lower-level employees.

Lesson 6: Approving Training

Authority

By law, the authority to authorize requests for training is vested in the head of the Agency. The DLA Director has delegated Authorizing Official status to heads of DLA Field Activities and J-codes. The authority to authorize short-term training may be redelegated, in writing, to the lowest practical level to ensure program integrity. Although many supervisors screen and approve training for their

Lesson Content

workers, the Authorizing Official is often a higher level manager in the organization. Authorizing Officials depend on first-line supervisors to propose training that it is needed, appropriate, available, and cost effective.

Timeliness

Employees must be granted approval for attending training prior to the course start date. This approval includes much more than your approval as supervisor. Official approval to attend training includes signatures (either on a training request or electronically) by both an Authorizing Official (as described above) and a designated Training Officer. Training requests received after employees have enrolled or begun the training should be disapproved. Employees who enroll in training without completing the entire approval process are held personally responsible for the total cost of the training.

Approval of personal training requests

Since self-review/approval constitutes a conflict of interest, supervisors must submit their own requests for training up the supervisory chain to the next higher level.

Lesson 7: Defining and Prioritizing Training Needs

Assessing needs

In today's environment, multi-skilled and flexible employees are a valuable asset to high performing organizations. The process of planning for employee development begins when training requirements are assessed and validated during the training needs assessment process. Most training needs of DLA civilian employees can be met by short-term, low-cost training programs.

Training methodologies

As a supervisor, your training and development "toolbox" contains many performance-based solutions in addition to traditional classroom training. Good development programs include other common methodologies such as

- coaching
- counseling and mentoring
- on-the-job training
- developmental job assignments
- opportunities to work on process improvement or study teams
- job aids
- Internet-based help systems, and
- independent study.

Lesson Content

Supervisor's assessment

Supervisors at all levels assess the current and anticipated training needs of the individuals for whom they are responsible. This comprehensive assessment includes consideration of organizational, occupational, and individual training requirements.



- Organizational training needs are determined or prescribed by law, Executive Orders, Federal regulations, Department of Defense (DOD) policy, DLA policy, and Field Activity-unique missions. Organizational training needs are determined at the highest levels of organizations and are often initiatives with long-term return on training investment.
- Occupational training needs often are determined or prescribed by functional community managers and documented in plans for career programs and career fields.
- Individual training needs are identified by employees and supervisors. They are assessed within the context of the organization's strategic goals in order to ensure employees' effective performance in assigned or planned duties.

Lesson Content

This type of training generally produces an immediate or short-term return on training investment.

Considering needs and methods

The following questions might help when considering training needs and methods.

- Are new systems, programs, or procedures being installed or slated for application in the near future?
- Is the “state-of-the-art” experiencing significant changes?
- Are noteworthy changes in staff levels programmed (for example, major reorganizations)?
- Have inspection, evaluation, or audit reports highlighted conditions that may point to needed training?
- Has or will automation change the occupation or skill mix of the workforce?
- Is the organization projecting loss of skills through retirements, reduction-in-force, or reorganization?
- Can a review of the work tasks for performance compliance eliminate the need for training?
- Would improved communications address the performance issues?
- Can on-the-job training (OJT) satisfy the need?
- Would a temporary assignment or informal development experience satisfy the training need or is formal training the only answer?
- How can training be structured to ensure that new skills directly transfer to the work situation?

Lesson 8: Individual Development Plans

Preparation

Through joint planning between supervisor and employee, IDP are prepared annually for each permanent DLA employee using the format and/or automated system prescribed by DTC. IDPs may include short-term (current year) goals,

Lesson Content

long-term (out-year) goals, competencies to be developed, developmental activities, new skills to be learned, training/education plans, and the like.

Skill gaps and developmental activities cited on IDPs are consolidated and serve as the primary data source for both organizational and DLA-wide training plans. DTC reviews these consolidated plans to identify what training can most economically and efficiently be delivered on an agency-wide or regional basis.

Training options

As described in 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 410.204, DLA “may use a full range of options to meet mission-related organizational and employee development needs, such as classroom training, on-the-job training, technology-based training, satellite training, employees' self-development activities, coaching, mentoring, career development counseling, details, rotational assignments, cross training, and developmental activities at retreats and conferences.”

For each developmental initiative, DTC and supervisors weigh delivery options to determine the most effective yet fiscally responsible method. While transfer of training to job performance is the primary goal, economic factors are also considered.

Prioritizing needs

Experience shows that training requirements (needs) usually exceed the availability of training funds. A priority system has been established to assist in making determinations that will ensure available funds are distributed fairly and equitably and that critical aspects of an organization's mission serve as a key determining factor. This system is consistent with regulation and serves the needs of the DLA LMS.

- Priority 1—Mission Essential: The training is essential to immediate job performance.
- Priority 2—Enhancement: Development is needed for effective performance and/or to improve the quality of mission. The training is needed within a specified time period, and the omission of the training might impact adversely on mission accomplishment during the next few years.
- Priority 3—Optional: Training is career broadening and intended to support an employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities. The training might be helpful in enhancing the overall performance levels of employees already considered to be competent.

Lesson Content

- Priority E—Enterprise Mandate: Training identified as mandatory for DLA employees
- Priority L—Local Mandate: Training that is mandatory for a given locale, occupation, or demographic.

Lesson 9: Mandatory Training

Training mandatory for all DLA employees

By regulation or law, some training is mandated for all DLA employees. Other training is mandatory for certain segments of the population (e.g., travel card holders and supervisors). The following table provides some examples of activities that are mandatory for every DLA employee. Note that many of the subjects for all employees are initially covered in DLA’s New Employee Orientation program; however, some have requirements for periodic refreshers.

Title/Subject	Audience	Training Requirements/Frequency
Ethics	All new civilian employees and military personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 90 days of entrance on duty. One hour of duty time must be provided for this training. • Annual refresher training required for employees who must submit an annual financial disclosure.
Privacy Act	All employees and military personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial training for new employees and military members, on assignment. • Refresher training annually or more frequently, if conditions warrant.
Records Management	All civilian employees, military personnel, and contractors	Annual class or orientation.
Safety and Occupational Health	All civilian employees and military personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial training on assignment. • Periodic training and/or information at the frequency needed to control risk. • Specialized job safety training appropriate to duties.

Career Planning and Development [printable version]

Lesson Content

Security Awareness	All civilian employees and military personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initial briefing upon entry.• Annual refresher as required by duties of position.
Information Assurance	All DLA computer system users	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initial Information Assurance (IA) orientation prior to being granted computer network access.• Annual refresher training.• Privileged users and IA managers must be qualified and certified based on published guidance.
Antiterrorism Awareness	All employees, military personnel, and contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level I Antiterrorism Awareness training as soon as possible after entry on duty.• Annual training thereafter.

Note: This is only a sampling of mandatory training programs. Further information is available from your local Training Coordinator or DTC Forward Presence.

Lesson 10: Prohibited Training

Prohibited use of appropriated funds

Public Law 106–58, Section 625(a), FY 2000 Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, prohibits the use of appropriated funds for inappropriate employee training. Congress defined inappropriate training as that which is offensive to Federal employees and unnecessary in the execution of their official duties. Clarifying information is available at <http://www.opm.gov/hrd/lead/Policy/pl106-58.asp>.

Specifically prohibited training

Specifically prohibited is training that

- does not meet identified needs for knowledge, skills, and abilities bearing directly upon the performance of official duties
- contains elements likely to induce high levels of emotional or psychological stress in some participants

Lesson Content

- does not notify employees prior to training of the content and methods to be used
- does not have required written course evaluations
- contains methods or content associated with religious, quasi-religious belief systems, or "new age" belief systems (see EEOC Notice N-915.022, <http://www.opm.gov/hrd/lead/Policy/eec915.asp>), or
- is offensive to or designed to change an employee's personal values or lifestyle outside the workplace.

Note: Notwithstanding the provisions above, Section 625(b) reiterates that nothing in this regulation "shall prohibit, restrict, or otherwise preclude an agency from conducting training bearing directly upon the performance of official duties."

Additional prohibitions

In addition, mandatory acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) training is prohibited for Federal employees and military members, except as necessary to protect the health and safety of the employee and the individuals served by the employee. (See Ryan White CARE Amendments, Public Law 104-146, <http://www.opm.gov/hrd/lead/Policy/ryan.asp>.)

Additional DLA prohibitions

DLA has defined several other prohibitions that supervisors should keep in mind:

- Security requirements—No DLA employee will be assigned training for which the employee does not possess the appropriate security clearance.
- Anti-American facilities—No DLA employee will be assigned training in a facility teaching or advocating the overthrow of the Government by force or violence.
- Anti-American faculty—No DLA employee will be assigned to a course that is taught or managed by a person about whom a proper Government administrative or investigatory authority has determined that there is a reasonable doubt of loyalty to the United States.
- Propaganda or political campaign activity—No DLA employee will be assigned training to a non-Government organization whose activity is carrying

Lesson Content

- on propaganda, attempting to influence legislation, and/or participating or intervening in political campaigns on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- Diploma mills—No DLA employee will be assigned to post-secondary courses at an institution that is identified as (or under suspicion of being) a diploma mill. Appropriated funds will, in no case, be expended on diploma mill training or education. Credentials from diploma mills cannot be used for any purpose in DLA or the Federal sector.
 - Other prohibitions for individual programs—For example, civilian academic degree training will not be authorized at a college that prevents Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) units or student ROTC participation.

Lesson 11: Training for Different Occupations, Higher Level-Positions, or Degrees

Merit promotion procedures

Merit promotion procedures must be followed in selecting employees for training that enables them to qualify for different occupational series or higher grade levels. For example, merit promotion procedures apply to training that

- prepares an employee for a promotion, or
- is required for assignment to a different position with higher promotion potential.

If in doubt about whether a particular training opportunity should be competed (i.e., announced so candidates can apply), contact DTC for advice.

Academic degrees

In general, DLA does not fund college course work unless the content is mission-related. As a result, full academic degrees are rarely completed without the employee providing tuition for required core courses that are not related to job performance or mission requirements.

Lesson Content



Representatives from 23 universities and colleges talk with Defense Supply Center (DSCP) employees during a college fair.

Payment for academic degrees may not be for the sole purpose of obtaining an academic degree except for two circumstances:

- Shortage positions specifically identified in the CFR.
- Academic programs that are part of a planned, systematic, and coordinated program of professional development and have been announced and competed according to merit system principles. This exception is commonly referred to as “Civilian Academic Degree Training.”

Lesson 12: Continued Service Agreements and Obligations

Policy

By law, employees must sign a Continued Service Agreement (CSA) when assigned to long-term or high-cost training. In general, DLA follows the policy delineated by DOD on the Standard Form (SF) 182, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training. The policy requires employees who are selected for non-Government training in excess of 80 hours to complete a CSA before beginning the training.

Employee agreements

The employee agrees to

- continue in the service of the agency at least three times the length of the training period, and
- pay back expenses if he or she voluntarily separates from the agency prior to completion of this service obligation period.

Lesson Content

DLA program-specific agreements

Several DLA training initiatives use program-specific CSA agreements. If no other format is prescribed, the CSA wording on pages 4 and 5 of the SF 182 is appropriate, http://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/SF182.pdf.

Tracking continued service obligations

Although the DLA LMS has some CSA tracking functionality, the supervisor or management official who approved the training is ultimately responsible for tracking successful fulfillment of the terms of the CSA. This involves retaining a copy of each signed agreement and monitoring the obligation period. When a training approval seems to require a CSA, consulting with your training representative is recommended.

Failure to fulfill a service obligation

Supervisors at all levels are charged to protect the Government's interests. If an employee fails to successfully fulfill his or her signed training agreement by failing to complete either the assigned training event or the continued service obligation period, supervisors should contact DTC immediately. Together, DTC and the supervisor will review the status and circumstances of the unexpired agreement to decide whether to transfer, waive, or require repayment of expenses incurred.

Lesson 13: Training Attendance

Supervisor's responsibility

When an enrollment is approved, it is critical that the supervisor accept responsibility for guaranteeing that the employee is available and will attend class. Substitutions or cancellations should only occur in emergency situations. Once the employee is confirmed in a class, other duties and activities should be scheduled around the employee's attendance at training—not vice versa.

When unavoidable, cancellations or substitutions should only be made in accordance with the terms of the training source. For example, if an employee cannot attend a course but cancellation will still obligate the Government to pay the tuition amount, the supervisor must contact DTC immediately to arrange a possible substitution.

Lesson Content

Reimbursement liability

An employee who enrolls in a course of instruction (including correspondence courses) may have to reimburse DLA for the costs paid if the employee withdraws or fails to satisfactorily complete the course. The table below provides the general rules regarding repayment liability.

If . . .	And . . .	Then . . .
A CSA is in effect	The employee fails to satisfactorily complete the course.	Requirements of the CSA are enforced as stated.
A CSA is in effect	The failure to complete training is for reasons beyond the employee's control.	Circumstances are evaluated. Usually no action is required.
No CSA is involved	The failure to complete training is due to the employee's negligence or willful misconduct.	The employee will repay training expenses other than salary costs. If appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken.

Enforcement

Enforcement of discipline and/or reimbursements from employees failing to complete training satisfactorily is the responsibility of the approving official and the employee's chain of command.

Reevaluation

After a training opportunity is missed or not satisfactorily completed, the supervisor must determine whether the assigned training is still a viable need for the employee. If so, rescheduling is appropriate. If not, the supervisor will either take action to remove the employee from the request list or consult with personnel specialists to assign the employee to duties where these competencies are not required for successful performance.

Lesson Content

Lesson 14: Pay Issues Related to Training

Duty hours

An employee assigned to training during normal duty hours is considered on duty for the period of the training and no charge is made to leave. Even when the employee pays for the training, no charge is made to leave if the training is authorized to meet a performance improvement need. Employees may pay for their own training because training law allows agencies and employees to share the costs of authorized training.

Pay and entitlements

With few exceptions, no Government funds may be used for the payment of premium pay to an employee engaged in training. As a general rule, employees may receive neither overtime pay nor compensatory time off for time spent in training. A comprehensive overview of employee pay and entitlements related to training, with legal citations, is available on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Web site, <http://www.opm.gov/hrd/lead/pubs/handbook/lrbsa11.asp>. An overview of nonpay expenses related to training, with legal citations, is also available from OPM, <http://www.opm.gov/hrd/lead/pubs/handbook/lrbsa8.asp>.

Consistent with Article 10 of the DLA–AFGE Council 169 Master Labor Agreement (http://www.hr.dla.mil/downloads/CurrentAFGE_MLA.pdf), employer-directed training is normally scheduled within regular hours of duty. Employees must adjust alternative or flexible work schedules so that they are available for the entire event. If necessary, an employee's shift may be adjusted to encompass the hours of training. If your employees are covered by other bargaining unit agreements, please check for specific language therein.

Special rules apply to firefighters and other employees with unusual work schedules. Supervisors of these special categories soon become familiar with the unique requirements. Check with your DHRC Employee Relations or Labor Relations practitioners for guidance.

Lesson Content

Lesson 15: Evaluating Training and Development

Process

The evaluation process completes the training and development cycle. It provides supervisors, employees, and DTC with information to determine how well a specific training course or program has met the stated objectives. In addition, evaluation is a required component in justifying the expenditure of training funds.

Evaluation stages

Training is usually evaluated in the three stages described below:

1. Students complete end-of-course evaluations on the presentation of training, effectiveness of the instructor, and overall accomplishments of training objectives. Different procedures may apply depending upon the method used to request and document the training event. For example, a course launched through the DLA LMS may have an online evaluation.
2. DLA employees are responsible for notifying their supervisors when training is complete. After each developmental activity, the student and supervisor are expected to discuss the training outcomes. At this level, training evaluation addresses the usefulness of training to one's job and mission requirements and whether or not the training successfully met the identified need.
3. DTC evaluates the overall training program in concert with management. This overall evaluation provides information needed to analyze training program effectiveness and make future determinations concerning the selection, application, and cost/benefits of training to improve employee and organizational productivity.

Without question, the most important part of the evaluation strategy is determining whether the knowledge and skills from training were effectively transferred to improve or enhance employee performance (stage 2 above). DLA supervisors are on the front line in making this determination and are, therefore, a valued source of information.

Lesson Content

Lesson 16: Formal Training Programs

Introduction

DLA has a variety of ongoing, formal training programs in support of the Agency's strategic goals and objectives. Three of the programs are highlighted below.

DLA Corporate Intern Program

The Corporate Intern Program (CIP) is a 2-year, developmental training program designed to infuse DLA with new talent and ideas while preparing entry-level employees for success in critical DLA occupations. Through this aggressively managed program, interns are provided with a corporatwide perspective of logistics support. Interns enter the program at the GS-7 level or pay band 1 under the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), and they are targeted to GS-11 or NSPS pay band 2 positions.

As of September 2009, nearly 800 CIP interns filled positions at sites throughout the Enterprise. They served in a variety of jobs including:

- Environmental Protection (0028)
- Contracting (1102)
- Property Disposal (1104)
- Quality Assurance (1910)
- General Supply and Inventory Management (2001/2003/2010)
- Information Technology (2210)



June 2005—Information Technology interns during a site visit to Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS) and Defense Logistics and Information Service (DLIS) in Battle Creek.

Functional training and certification programs

DTC is the home of DLA's functional training "schoolhouse," which offers critical, time-sensitive training and certification programs for DLA employees. DTC manages the development and delivery of training in support of formal DOD and DLA training and certification programs in the following fields:

Career Planning and Development [printable version]

Lesson Content



- Acquisition and Contract Management
- Environmental Protection and Hazardous Materials
- Logistics Support
- Property Disposal
- Quality Assurance and Technical Functions
- Safety

DTC has developed and delivers more than 70 courses using delivery methods that include traditional instructor-led classroom training, self-study, Web-based training, and instructor-led satellite or Web-enabled training.

EBS training

DTC is also the source for EBS training, developed and delivered to thousands of system users worldwide. The training is a key component in developing the next generation of DLA workers. The Agency's goal for EBS training is to assure that each EBS end-user has the knowledge, skills, and tools to better collaborate across the organization, as well as with customers and suppliers.

Enterprise Leader Development Program (ELDP)

Because all DLA employees are encouraged to develop their leadership abilities, the Agency has dedicated significant resources to leadership programs. As part of the Enterprise Leader Development Program, DLA has published guides that outline diverse self-developmental activities. The ELDP is divided into tiers:

- Tier 1A—Nonsupervisors
- Tier 1B—Team Leaders
- Tier 2—New Supervisors
- Tier 3—Supervisors (all direct reports are nonsupervisors)
- Tier 4—Managers (direct reports include one or more supervisors)
- Tier 5—Critical supervisory and managerial positions identified by DLA senior leadership



Lesson Content

New Supervisor Certification Program

At Tier 2, the ELDP includes the New Supervisor Certification Program, which is mandatory for all new supervisors appointed after April 1, 2004. The program focuses on supervisory and leadership competencies and provides additional support to help individuals successfully transition into formal leadership roles. For access to more ELDP program information and components, see <http://www.hr.dla.mil/resources/workforce/eldp/leadership.html>

Lesson 17: Self-Development and Informal Training

Introduction

DLA is more likely to have employees capable of meeting change if the employees themselves have expectations of lifelong learning and take responsibility for their own professional growth and self-development. Supervisors can directly impact the growth and motivation of employees by encouraging participation in continuing education and personal development—both inside and outside the workplace.

Self-development process

Self-development is a continuous process that stretches and broadens the individual beyond the job or training. Although initial self-development may be narrow in scope, the focus broadens as individuals learn their strengths and weaknesses, determine needs, and become more independent.

Self-development activities

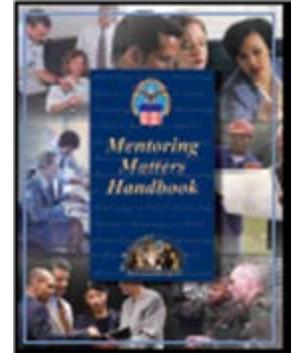
Self-development activities may include self-study, reading programs, advanced schooling, or community leadership positions that support development goals. Depending on the nature and purpose of the study, these efforts may be funded by the individual, DLA, or a combination. In general, self-development efforts are initiated by the employee and are completed during non-duty hours. With management concurrence, they may, however, be full- or part-time, on- or off-duty, day or evening, or any combination of these. DLA sanctions and supports several programs for employees who seek self-development activities. Three of the most popular are highlighted here.

Lesson Content

Mentoring

Mentoring is a mutually rewarding relationship in which one individual (mentor) offers support, knowledge, insight, and perspective in response to the goals of a protégé (fellow employee). A mentor can help someone learn skills, attitudes, and values. As part of the ELDP, DLA has published the comprehensive guide “Mentoring Matters” to help employees, through their own initiatives, establish productive mentoring relationships. The DLA Mentoring Program is open to DLA employees at all levels. A copy of the guide can be found at

<http://www.hr.dla.mil/downloads/ELDP/MentoringMattersHandbook.pdf>.



Tuition assistance

The Tuition Assistance Program provides funding for tuition and course-related fees for approved, mission-related courses taken through an accredited college or university. DLA’s objective is to encourage and assist employees in increasing their knowledge, skills, and abilities to better perform the duties of their current positions or strengthen their potential contributions to the overall mission of the Agency. Because procedures vary between sites, contact your DTC Forward Presence or training coordinator for details.

On-the-job training

To be most productive, on-the-job training (OJT) is planned, organized, and conducted at the work site. It can be fully structured with step-by-step plans, objectives, and timetables; or it may be more casually structured. OJT should not be confused with letting employees pick up information on their own or figure it out as they go along. OJT is training, which means that it has structure and purpose. It may be used to develop skills essential to an employee’s current position or as an opportunity to see the “big picture” through brief assignments to other work areas.

Lesson 18: Training for Others

Contractors

Contractors are selected for their expertise in a subject area. Consequently, contractors may only be trained in skills that they are not required to bring to the job. Contractors may be trained in rules, practices, procedures, and/or systems that are unique to DLA/DOD and essential to the performance of the contractor’s assigned duties, such as agency computer security procedures. Training of contractors is subject to the decision of the chief contracting official.

Lesson Content

Military personnel

Guidance on training for military personnel is under the supervision of the Military Personnel and Administration Office (J-1/DHRC-M). In general, military personnel are not covered by civilian regulations; however, they may participate in training activities intended mainly for civilians if the training relates to their present duty assignments. If this increases costs for a course, payment for military participants will be prorated. Further information is available in the DLA Instruction, "Military Education and Training."

Nonappropriated Funds employees

Nonappropriated Funds (NAF) employees are exempt from the training laws. However, DLA training facilities are made available for their training if no additional appropriated funding is required. Additional information regarding NAF training is in the Instruction, "DLA Non-appropriated Fund Personnel Management."

Lesson 19: Professional Organizations

Meetings and conferences

Meetings and conferences often provide an important opportunity for learning information relevant to improving the management of Agency programs. DLA may pay an employee's expenses for attending a meeting or conference as an authorized training expense when

- the purpose of the conference is educational
- the content is germane to improving the employee's performance
- most of the conference consists of planned, organized exchanges of information between presenters and audience, and
- the employee will derive developmental benefits through attending.

Financial considerations

Attending a conference is often a significant expenditure, particularly when travel costs are included. Regulations require that agencies serve the public interest by exercising strict fiscal responsibility when selecting conference sites and scheduling employee attendance. Supervisors must evaluate the mission-related benefits to be derived from having employees attend specific conferences in terms of the purpose and agenda of the conference, the value of the conference

Lesson Content

as a communication tool, and the qualifications of employees who will attend as official representatives of DLA.

Professional certification

DLA fully supports employee self-development, including the pursuit of professional licenses, credentials, and certifications. If funds are available, DLA may reimburse employees for certain preparatory classes and/or certification examinations based on guidance in DLA memorandum, Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Policy for Payment of Civilian Licenses, Certifications and Related Expenses, dated June 13, 2003. For further clarification, see Article 17 of the DLA–AFGE Master Labor Agreement (http://www.hr.dla.mil/downloads/CurrentAFGE_MLA.pdf).

Membership in professional organizations

Generally, using appropriated funds to pay for individual memberships is prohibited (5 USC 5946). Payment of annual dues for membership in a professional organization is a personal expense, not reimbursable to the employee, even if the Government would benefit from the employee's development as a result of the membership.

Individual membership in professional organizations is not an expense of training except to the extent that the fee is a necessary cost directly related to the training. In some instances, for example, an individual membership is included in the conference fee and the conference fee cannot be reduced by the cost of the individual membership. If DLA pays for an employee to attend the conference, the employee may accept the membership as an incidental byproduct of the meeting.

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