

# MENTORING PROGRAM

## In Brief | Mentoring Resources. Issue 3

This is the third in a series of *Mentoring Resources* which will provide you with links to material that may be of interest to you between mentoring sessions. We hope you find them useful!



The third Speaker Event in our 2019 Mentoring series was a candid and engaging presentation from the Australian Statistician, David W. Kalisch. David has been Agency Head of the Australian Bureau of Statistics since December 2014 and, as such, has presided over both the 2016 Census and the Same Sex Marriage Survey.

David began his remarks by admitting that he has never had a formal mentor in his career but that he tended to seek out interesting people with strong leadership characteristics. Even if he only knew them for a short time, he valued the learnings from these interactions. The idea of the accidental mentor is discussed in [this article](#) in Forbes magazine. It notes that mentoring is an organic process and you can be mentored without even knowing it.



As the 15<sup>th</sup> Australian Statistician David was constantly reminded of the stewardship of his role as a senior public servant – particularly each time he walked past the pictures of the previous 14 Statisticians! Public service stewards see their role as working for a higher purpose with responsibility for the outcomes of the broader community rather than for personal reward.

This goes hand in hand with honesty and integrity in leadership and bolstering the role of public servants as stewards is a [priority](#) of the Independent Review of the APS. David spoke about the tensions between some political decisions and public sector integrity and that the nature of public service is how to get the best possible outcomes from such decisions.

Although mentor-mentee relationships are valuable, David reminded us that peer networks - networks of people with similar experiences or interests - should be important to us as we move through our careers.

- Common Endeavor
- Meet Regularly
- Share Stories
- Get Better Together

Peer networks, communities of interest and communities of practice can facilitate connects and share experiences. For example, the Digital Transformation Agency's [Communities of Practice](#) page focuses on “helping people in government share ideas and work more closely together”. It is through the process of sharing information and experiences that members of a network learn from each other and have an opportunity to develop themselves personally and professionally.



As would be expected from David, who is still dealing with the hard lessons learned from the 2016 Census, he spoke about the “tough times” that everyone has both at work and at home. He urged us to reach out to our colleagues and to look after our own physical and emotional health.

For people to develop and grow in their career, it is not enough for them to learn new techniques and do some reflective thinking. They also need to gain insights about themselves. Emotional intelligence (EI) is an important attribute of leadership. According to [Daniel Goleman](#), EI has five key elements: self-awareness; self-regulation; motivation; empathy; and social skills. It has been found that, in mentors, there is a positive relationship between EI and the degree of confidence that a mentee has in them.



EI also helps us to learn how to operate in different ways for different contexts and to take personal learnings from a crisis. See [this article](#) from the Mandarin that reports on David’s speech to an IPAA ACT event in December 2016 lessons on learned from the Census. You can see the resources from that event [here](#).