

## Insights for New Directors: Mernell King

[Opening credits]

[Title card: "What do you wish you had done differently as a new director?"]

Mernell King: I wish I had taken the opportunity to make connections earlier, because I think a supportive system surrounding you--it makes it even better. Just another director to talk to. Just to bounce things off of. Even to vent. Even to say, hey, this didn't work. Can you make this work? Is it really going to work? That kind of thing is just not given to you by anybody. You do not have a mentor, somebody to speak to, somebody to give you encouragement, and I think I should have asked for that.

[Title card: "What is your greatest source of support?"]

Even though this job is very, very hard to do and very comprehensive and very complex, nobody did it well the first day they did it. And nobody did it well the first year they did it, and we get better at things from practice. And if we're just going to the perfect people, I don't even think Head Start's where they need to be. Because I think you need to believe in people. I think you need to know where people come from. I think if we had all the answers walking in the door, they don't need anybody but me and that's not true. We need everybody; we need their parents, their children, all of the staff, all of the managers. It's just everybody links to everybody else, and we need to reach out more to each other and outside our little cocoons.

[Title card: "What motivates you?"]

My motivation comes from others who are in the same shoes. Because I'm impressed with them. They encourage me and I see things that they're doing. And I think, hm, I could really do that. The other motivations comes from a little note that some little teacher gave me in the hallway and it said I really thank you for everything you're doing for me. Or a parent says something to me at a policy council meeting. That, oh, I really like the way you manage things. Thank you so much. Or a child in a classroom comes up to me and just gives me a big hug. It's about the people stuff that you get to have, and that's encouraging to me.

[Closing credits]