Centering on Mentoring

A Training Program For Mentors And Mentees
Mentorship

A mentor is an individual with expertise who can help develop the career of a mentee. The mentor guides, trains, advises, and promotes the career development of the mentee.

Two types of mentoring functions:

- Career
- Psychosocial
Mentoring Functions

Career Functions: Help the mentee learn the ropes and prepare for career advancement.

- Coaching
- Challenging assignments
- Exposure and visibility
- Protection
Mentoring Functions

- Psychosocial Functions: Help the mentee develop a sense of competence and clarity of identity.
  - Role-Modeling
  - Acceptance and confirmation
  - Counseling
  - Friendship
Stages of Mentoring

- Initiation Stage
- Cultivation Stage
- Separation Stage
- Redefinition Stage

- Not all stages are beneficial to the mentor or to the mentee.
Advantages of Mentoring

_advantages for the mentee:
- Career advancement
- Salary
- Organizational/professional identification

_advantages for the mentor:
- Career enhancement
- “Passing the torch to a new generation”
- Learning from mentee – new technologies, new developments, important features of next generation
Disadvantages of Mentoring

 SND Disadvantages for the mentee:
- Overdependence on the mentor
- Micro-management from the mentor
- Negative halo from mentor who fails

 SND Disadvantages for the mentor:
- Mentee dependence on mentor
- Time, energy commitment to mentee
- Negative halo from mentee who fails
Problems With Cross-Gender Mentoring

Most common form of business mentoring: male mentor and male mentee.

Other forms:
- Male mentor and female mentee (most common)
- Female mentor and male mentee
- Female mentor and female mentee (rare)
Advice for Same-Gender and Cross-Gender Mentoring

- Keep relationship professional
- Be sensitive to other people’s reactions and potential rumors
- Avoid perception of personal relationship
  - Meet in public venues
  - Transparency of relationship
Mentoring

Dysfunctional mentoring: When the relationship does not work for one or more parties.

- Linda Tripp/Monica Lewinsky
- Problems develop when:
  - Interests of the parties change
  - Differences in judgment between parties
  - Intrusion/over-involvement in another’s personal problems
  - Triangulation problem with others (mentor/mentee/supervisor)
  - Destructive tone of relationship (e.g., envy/jealousy; dependency/suffocation; support/exploitation)
## Four Potential Dysfunctions in Mentoring Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Psychosocial</th>
<th>Career-related</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bad intent</td>
<td>Negative Relations (bullies, enemies)</td>
<td>Sabotage (revenge, silent treatment, career damage)</td>
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<tr>
<td>toward other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good intent</td>
<td>Difficulty (conflict, binds)</td>
<td>Spoiling (betrayal, regret, mentor off fast track)</td>
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<td>toward other</td>
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Formal Mentoring Programs

- Program length is specified (12 months)
- Purpose of program is to help early career psychologists establish and develop their careers
- Program participation is voluntary
- Matching of mentors and mentees uses input from participants
  - Interest areas in psychology
  - Demographics
  - Experiences
Formal Mentoring Programs

- Advocate developmental networks
- Monitoring program: Relationships should end as soon as they become dysfunctional
- Evaluation of program
- Little research on formal mentoring programs. Available research supports informal mentoring as a stronger relationship with better outcomes. No current research examining quality of formal mentoring programs and their outcomes.

(Wanberg, Welsh, & Hezlett, 2003)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Matrix of Types of Developers and Development Functions in Organizational Socialization</strong></th>
<th>Developer is org. superior to the mentee</th>
<th>Developer is org. peer to the mentee</th>
<th>Developer is org. subordinae to the mentee</th>
<th>Demographic match</th>
<th>Professional/Interest area match</th>
<th>Geographical location match</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career-related: Coaching mentee with strategies for meeting job expectations</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career-related: Challenging mentee with stretch assignments/goals</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career-related: Enhancing the mentee’s exposure and visibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career-related: Protection of mentee from potentially negative contacts with other org. members.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career-related: Sponsorship of mentee’s career development</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychosocial: Role Modeling</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychosocial: Counseling with work relationships</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychosocial: Counseling on developing work/career-related competencies</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychosocial: Counseling with work-family balance</td>
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<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychosocial: General acceptance and confirmation</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Chao, in press)

“+” = likely function for this type of developer, “0” = possible function for this type of developer, “-” = unlikely function for this type of developer
Advice to Potential Mentees

- Get mentors! Internal mentors help with current organizational issues. External mentors help with larger career issues and future organizational moves.
- One mentor is unlikely to fulfill all developmental needs
- Be proactive
- Adopt a learning orientation
- Set SMART developmental goals
  - Specific
  - Measurable
  - Attainable
  - Relevant
  - Time-bound
Role of Mentees

- Seek counsel and advice, not a supervisor who directs actions.
- Be aware of potential pitfalls: Overbearing mentor, mentor exploitation of mentee’s work. Be sensitive to the difference between asking for help/advice from your mentor and demanding favors from your mentor.
- Synthesize lessons learned from all mentors – become your own person.
- Recognize dynamics of relationship.
Advice to Potential Mentors

- Recognize that mentee may be uncomfortable asking for help – break ice by sharing some of your career experiences
- Stay in your zone of expertise/experience
- Be clear that mentee sets pace of relationship
- Advise, do not manage
- Extend mentee’s developmental network – suggest additional mentors to address unique needs
Role of Mentors

- Offer advice that helps mentee develop – role is NOT to make decisions for mentee or micromanage.
- Train to be efficient. Guidance and advice for one mentee may also be appropriate for another.
- Be aware of potential pitfalls: overdependence of mentee, mentee exploitation of mentor’s influence. Be sensitive to difference between developing a mentee and using a mentee.
- Be aware of dynamics of relationship: Developmental needs may change.
Distance Mentoring

How to use e-mail

- Use e-mail to set up meetings (face-to-face or phone), clarify plans/goals, pose non-time urgent questions, review plans, maintain contact.
- Don’t use e-mail to give critical or complex feedback, provide impressions of other’s behavior, provide impressions of third parties, exchange sensitive information.

Communication Challenges

- Listen for nonverbal cues (e.g., pregnant pauses, voice tone, tempo, volume)
- Push for specific information, clarify meanings
- Summarize agreements
After the Program Ends

- Many relationships come to a natural end when a mentee learns enough to be independent from specific mentors.
- New mentoring relationships with others may be more beneficial than continuing an exhausted relationship.
- Program end may not mean the end of the relationship – informal mentoring can continue if both parties agree.
- Pilot program will assess how mentoring met needs of both mentees and mentors.