WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MENTORING

Camille Anne Martina, MS, PhD

Department of Public Health Sciences and Environmental Medicine

OBJECTIVES

➤ What mentoring <u>is</u> and <u>is not</u>

➤ Different types of mentors and mentoring goals

➤ Framework and guides for successful mentoring

BEING AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR AND MENTEE

1. Wanting the mentee to succeed and facilitating the mentee's success

2. Promoting the mentee's career, independent of your own

3. Providing a broad spectrum of advice – including career and technical advice

4. Bolstering the mentee's capacity

5. Encouraging risk and self-exploration

6. Focusing the relationship on the mentee – in a way that is beneficial to the mentee and in their best interest

BEING AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR AND MENTEE

7. Making contacts available:
   ❖ Facilitating introductions within your professional network,
   ❖ Connecting to resources

8. Facilitating the evolution of a positive relationship
   ❖ Engaging in a personal context
   ❖ Being friendly, not necessarily being friends

TWO TYPES OF MENTORS: TECHNICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL
WHICH ONE ARE YOU? ONE OR BOTH?

A technical mentor is an expert in a particular area and has the skills the mentee wants/needs to acquire for success.

This type of mentor focuses primarily on helping the mentee succeed and acquire those skills.

Technical mentors must have the skill set necessary and be accomplished in this area to help their mentees develop the desired skill.

TWO TYPES OF MENTORS: TECHNICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL
WHICH ONE ARE YOU? ONE OR BOTH?

A [developmental mentor may not be an expert](#) in a particular area or skill.

Rather, this type of mentor focuses primarily on [developing their professional identity and career](#).

CONFLICTS IN ROLES

➤A conflict in roles as supervisor – advisor – mentor are inherent, so be aware of them to avoid potential conflicts and discuss way to minimize them.

➤*Boundaries are important between mentoring, being friends, and directing (supervising).*

CONFLICTS IN ROLES

➢Can/should a mentor be a friend?

➢Sometimes a mentoring relationship may evolve and grow into a friendship.

➢To minimize possible complications, a mentor may <u>need to clarify</u> when they are acting in the role of mentor vs. friend.
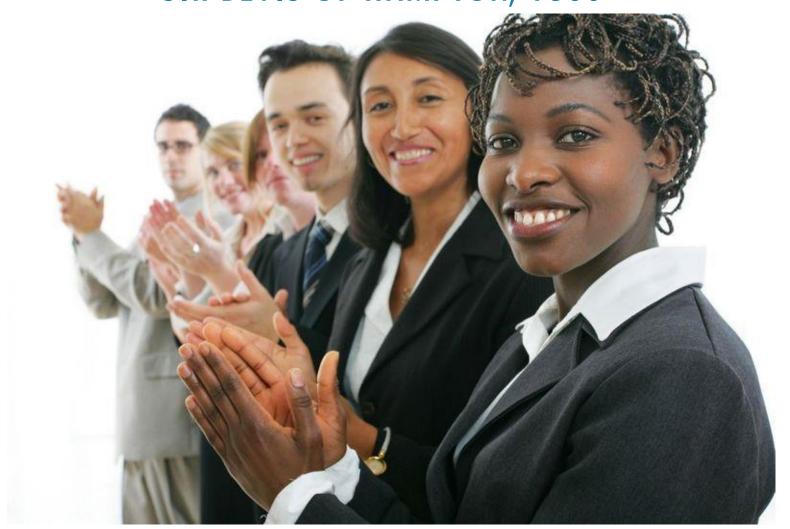
CONFLICTS IN ROLES

Is the mentoring relationship defined by expertise or by hierarchy?

A supervisor is generally a (technical) mentor, but a mentor need not be a supervisor.

CONFLICTS IN ROLES

A mentee should have multiple mentors within a network who can help with different issues.

✓ Technical and developmental mentoring may require different mentors and/or multiple relationships.

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK
SIR BEVIS OF HAMPTON, 1300

CONFLICTS IN ROLES

A mentee should have constellation of mentors within a network who can help with different issues.

- ✓ Be aware that having multiple mentors can lead to conflicting advice and the possibility of a mentee playing one mentor off against another.

- ✓ In such cases, it is helpful for the mentors to talk to each other.

CLARIFY THE FOLLOWING TO BUILD THE "FRAME" OF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP:

✓ Roles– <u>what the relationship is</u>, and <u>what it is not</u> and the responsibilities of the mentor and mentee to each other.

✓ What each person expects to happen in the mentoring relationship: general advice, specific technical advice, sponsorship in academic institutions and organizations, guidance about career options, etc.

CLARIFY THE FOLLOWING TO BUILD THE "FRAME" OF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP:

✓ Mentoring is not, i.e., therapy, friendship, formal teaching, or formal clinical or research supervision.

✓ Establish parameters and timelines for expectations (e.g., we will work together for # of months and then re-evaluate.)

CAN A "BOSS" ALSO BE A SUPERVISEE'S DEVELOPMENTAL MENTOR?

The "boss" is ultimately responsible for the outcome of the mentee's work and directly responsible for the service and academic "productivity" of their unit/lab/research study coordination.

✓ Can the supervisor, who can require their supervisees to meet certain productivity standards, also be the developmental mentor for one of their supervisees and give first priority to their mentee's career or acquisition of a particular skill?

CAN A BOSS ALSO BE A SUPERVISEE'S DEVELOPMENTAL MENTOR?

A distinction must be made between "*the boss*" (who can require a person to do things) and a *mentor* (who facilitates a person's development and/or acquisition of a skill set).

✓ If the same person is going to try to be both the boss and a mentor, it should be clear to both the mentor and mentee what "hat" this person is wearing at all times. This is difficult to do—but possible— as long as everyone is aware of the potential conflicts.

❖ Some people see mentoring as an intrusion into their autonomy and therefore fend it off. Unfortunately, people who most need a mentor are often those who don't want one.

❖ A person cannot be forced or required to have a mentor if they are knowledgeable and productive in their job.

GETTING STARTED: DIALOGUE

❖Mentor/mentee need to introduce themselves to each other, <u>including their professional and personal identities</u>.

❖**The mentor should model this, leading off by telling something about their professional** career: what they does now, and how they got to their current position, including school, training, career path, and faculty roles leading up to the present.

❖ **The mentor should also tell a limited amount about how their** career fits in with the rest of their life, e.g., marriage/partner, children, and other interests. This helps the mentee know whom they are dealing with.

❖**Next, the mentor should ask the mentee to tell about their professional career to date, career aspirations, and briefly about the other parts of their life.**

STRUCTURE EXPECTATIONS

➢HAVE A CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN THAT MATCHES THE COMPETENCIES YOU WILL NEED FOR YOUR EMPLOYMENT/CAREER POSITION. https://hr.nih.gov/working-nih/competencies/competencies-dictionary

The competencies are divided into four sections:

➢Non-Technical: These are foundational competencies such as "Communication" and "Leveraging Technology" which can be applied across health research administrative positions.

➢Technical: These competencies represent the skill sets required for specific functional areas.

➢Leadership & Management: Represent the essential competencies necessary to be a successful leader or manager in health research.

➢Executive Proficiencies: These proficiencies are designed to identify the skill sets of the top levels of management and can be used as a guide for individuals aspiring to reach these positions.

STRUCTURE EXPECTATIONS

As a mentor:

- Discuss/provide mentee with a template of what he needs to do to succeed and walk them through it. This is the Individual Development Plan (IDP)

- "Let go," i.e., delegate specific tasks to the mentee, as appropriate, to foster his independence.

- Before meetings: Ask the mentee to plan out the issues that need to be discussed at each meeting, analyzing the pros and cons.

- The practical details of the relationship: frequency, time, agenda, and format of meetings (in person, email, or phone).

- What each person expects the other to prepare before each meeting.

- What each person wants to get out of the mentoring relationship.

STRUCTURE EXPECTATIONS

A mentors should be frank in their assessment of the mentee's career path, while conveying that the ultimate decisions (autonomy) about the mentee's path are their own to make.

How and when to evaluate the relationship

❖Expectations of mentor and mentee need to match, or difficulties are likely. Please note that expectations evolve over time, so they need to be reassessed regularly.

❖Set up the expectation that the mentor and mentee will discuss their relationship at defined intervals.

❖Set a mutually defined period after which the mentoring relationship will be re-evaluated.

❖Discuss power issues in this relationship and the need to feel safe enough to be direct with each other.

Other considerations

✓Agree to be direct with each other during and between the periodic evaluations of the relationship, especially if either party feels something needs to change.

✓Establish and assess milestones.

✓Discuss a "no-fault escape clause" if either feels the mentoring relationship is not a good fit and/or another person would be a better fit for the mentee.

✓A formal review can support transitions and changes.

MENTOR AND MENTEE FIT?

❖"*It is easier not to hire than to fire*," so heed warning signs and spend time thinking through the pros and cons before agreeing to a mentoring relationship.

❖Recognize when and how to "unfreeze" or end a relationship that is no longer productive, helpful for the mentee, or otherwise not meeting its goals.

❖Once you realize that a mentoring relationship <u>is not effective</u>, think carefully about when and how to end the relationship.

MENTOR AND MENTEE FIT?

One size does not fit all; if a bad fit/mismatch is identified:

1. Have a discussion of the expectations and support that can be provided.

2. Consider options for a better fit for the mentee.

3. Facilitate identification of an appropriate alternative mentor.

4. Remember that co-mentoring and peer mentoring are also viable and encouraged options.

MENTOR AND MENTEE FIT?

❖Personal relationships can complicate mentoring relationships.

❖Understand the limits of what a mentor can, should, and is both willing and able to do, for a mentee.

❖Recognize the reciprocal nature of the mentoring relationship – although most of the focus is on the mentee, the relationship cannot be detrimental to the mentor.

Benefits of Mentoring

- ❖ **Develops a diverse, high-performing workforce**
- ❖ **Builds and reinforces** a culture of learning
- ❖ **Strengthens retention and succession** planning efforts
- ❖ **Empowers employees** to manage their development
- ❖ **Increases self-confidence**
- ❖ **Improves organizational communication**
- ❖ **Reaffirms the value** of building effective relationships
- ❖ **Preserves institutional knowledge**

MENTORS

❖Ability to create positive change by sharing your wisdom, expertise, institutional knowledge and political savvy.

❖Gain new and rewarding perspectives

❖Enhance your own communication and leadership abilities

❖Achieve a sense of fulfillment by assisting another person fulfill their goals.

EXPECTATIONS OF MENTOR

1. Set relationship boundaries. Example: *Is it okay to discuss topics outside of the workplace?*

2. Meet <u>at least </u>monthly

3. Determine best communication method

4. Maintain confidentiality

5. Be an active listener

6. Advocate for networking and training opportunities

EXPECTATIONS OF MENTOR

7. Advise on challenges

8. Offer strategies to reach career destination

9. Model professional behavior and integrity

10. Share your own knowledge, experiences, and lessons learned

11. Be constructive and supportive with feedback

12. Celebrate progress

MENTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Take responsibility for your career
2. Determine best communication method
3. Be available. Meet at least monthly
4. Maintain **confidentiality**
5. Brainstorm possible assignments

MENTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

6. Establish training goals and needs

7. Maintain an Individual Developmental Plan (IDP)

8. Be honest and candid with your mentor

9. Ask for help when needed

10. Openly receive feedback

11. Be open to change

QUESTIONS?

REFERENCES

Mentoring Toolkit Brigham and Women's Hospital, Center for Faculty Development & Diversity. (2012)

National Institutes of Health: Office of Management and Human Resources:

Competencies Dictionary

https://hr.nih.gov/working-nih/competencies/competencies-dictionary

Mentoring

https://hr.nih.gov/working-nih/mentoring/nih-mentoring-program

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