Peer Mentoring in Academic Settings

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Peer Mentoring
What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a relationship where a more experienced person assists in developing a protégé’s personal and professional growth.
Mentoring Terminology

• Mentor - Is generally a more experienced individual who provides guidance and support
• Mentee or protégé - Is a person receiving guidance and support from a mentor.
Why Invest in Peer Mentoring Programs?

• What does research tell us?
  – Career development benefits (Beck, 1989).
  – Professional productivity within academic setting (Cronan-Hillix et al., 1986)
  – Reduces stress and anxiety (Sprengel et al., 2004)
  – Boosts confidence, self-esteem and instills sense of competence among mentors (Sprengel et al., 2004; Kram, 1985)
Factors that Determine the Success or Failure of Peer Mentoring Programs

- The extent to which mentors deliver career related and psychosocial support
- Availability of mentor
- Quality of the mentoring relationship
- Circle of life: protégés who are satisfied with current mentoring relationship are willing to be mentors in the future

Source: Allen et al., 1997
What Can You Do to Make a Formal Peer Mentoring Program a Success?

• Extent of preparation matters!
  • Both beginning and upper level students should be privy to the expectations and objectives of the program
  • Encourage qualities that can foster a positive learning experience among protégés (e.g. being receptive to the mentor’s input, being willing to ask for help).
  • Promote awareness among mentors regarding qualities that make them a good mentor (e.g. being genuine, self-confident)

Source: Sprengel et al., 2004
What Can You Do to Make a Formal Peer Mentoring Program a Success?

- Offer hands-on learning opportunities
  - Shadowing mentors: observe the mentor’s role while performing his/her role
- Promote a safe learning environment
  - Provide opportunities like skill labs
  - Instill a sense of collegiality among protégés.
  - Provide them with reassurance of other sources of help e.g. faculty members, other assistants e.g. graduate assistants
- Evaluate your program
  - Evaluate the extent to which mentors delivered career related and psychosocial mentoring
  - Were the protégés satisfied with the mentoring program?
  - What did they like the most and what would they like to change?

Source: Sprengel et al., 2004
Few More things...

• Mentoring needs vary across groups
  • Challenges faced by minority members maybe different
  • Women and members of ethnic minorities may experience stereotype threat, lack of role models with similar backgrounds etc.
  • Members of LGBT may have their own challenges such as e.g. worrying about homophobia, not yet ready to reveal their sexual orientation to others etc.
  • Challenges faced by disabled individuals are varied such as deciding whether to disclose hidden or invisible disabilities, not wanting to be the object of curiosity etc.

Source: Sprengel et al., 2004
Activities To Foster Mentoring

**Mentor Self-Assessment**

Answer each question below.

I am very knowledgeable about:

My greatest skills include:

I would describe myself (my attributes) as:

My previous professional experience includes:

My current professional responsibilities are:

The ways in which I'd like to help and think I'd be good at helping another professional are:

I am not really interested in or don't think I would be good at doing the following as a mentor:

On a personal level, my interests and passions include (things I enjoy doing outside of work):

My primary interests for mentoring.

Based on this quick assessment, the two primary things I would like to help another professional accomplish or do through mentoring are:

**Primary contributions as a Mentor**

The main things about myself (skills, knowledge, attributes, experience) I'd like to share or contribute through mentoring are:
### Protege Self-Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Define Protégé Wants &amp; Needs - Answer each question below.</th>
<th>Define Mentor's Role - The ways I would like a mentor to help me with this are:</th>
<th>Define Desirable Mentor Traits - To help me with this, my mentor may need these characteristics (include skills, knowledge, contacts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My immediate professional goal is:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What I need to learn right now to succeed at work is:</td>
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<tr>
<td>What I want to do at work right now is:</td>
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<tr>
<td>My long term career interest or aspiration is:</td>
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<tr>
<td>What I need to pursue this longer term career interest/goal is:</td>
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Questions?

IT'S A QUESTION PARTY!

MY FAVORITE!