One Size Does Not Fit All: Mentoring for Career Success

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Agenda

- Welcome
- Why is mentoring important?
- What do we mean by mentoring?
- In what ways is mentoring different in higher education?
- What are some best practices for mentors and protégés?
- Closing words
- Q&A
Welcome

- Everything that happens to you is your teacher. The secret is to learn to sit at the feet of your own life and be taught by it. When we do not take the time to sit at the feet of our own experience, we bypass significant opportunities for learning.

  (Lois Zachary, 2000)
Why Talk About Mentoring?

- Linked to important outcomes
- Turbulent environment
- Combat myths
- Investment in most valuable asset
Definition of Mentoring

- Mentoring is a dynamic, reciprocal, personal relationship between a more experienced person (mentor) and a less experienced person (protégé) aimed at promoting the development and fulfillment of both.

(Healy, 1997; Johnson & Ridley, 2004)
Mentoring Functions

- Career
- Psychosocial
Career Functions

- Those aspects of the mentoring relationship that enhance learning the ropes and preparing the individual for advancement within an organization. A heavy emphasis is placed on helping the protégé learn the organization’s culture.

- These functions include the following:
  - Sponsorship
  - Exposure & Visibility
  - Coaching
  - Protection
  - Challenging Assignments
Psychosocial Functions

- Those aspects of the relationship that enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity and effectiveness in a professional role.

- These functions include:
  - Role Modeling
  - Acceptance & Confirmation
  - Counseling
  - Friendship
Phases of the Mentoring Relationship

- **Initiation**
  - Relationship becomes important to each individual.

- **Cultivation**
  - Maximum range of career & psychosocial functions offered.

- **Separation**
  - Significant change in the relationship takes place.

- **Redefinition**
  - Relationship ends or significantly changes.
Mentors are guides. They lead us along the journey of our lives. We trust them because they have been there before. They embody our hopes, cast light on the way ahead, interpret arcane signs, warn us of lurking dangers, and point out unexpected delights along the way.

(Daloz, 1986)
"Of course, your recent winning of the Nobel will not influence your position here at the university."
They said he had to post his office hours, but they didn't say where.
Gee, I guess publishing a best-selling novel has made me a better teacher.
"You reek of recent tenure."
“I'm looking for a secure position in a less competitive academic environment.”
Differential Provision of Mentoring Functions

- Focus on career functions of mentoring

- Mentoring differs from other developmental relationships because both career and psychosocial functions are offered

- There is no “correct” configuration of career and psychosocial functions

- Identify gaps and take action to address them
Dueling Dual Roles of Evaluator and Developer

- Inherent nature of tenure process places mentors in dual roles
- These roles can conflict with one another
- Navigating
  - Being clear in relation to expectations
  - Managing visibility
Additional Phases of Mentoring

- **Orientation**  
  - Period of negotiating parameters of relationship in formal mentoring programs.

- **Initiation**  
  - Relationship becomes important to each individual.

- **Cultivation**  
  - Maximum range of career & psychosocial functions offered.

- **Separation**  
  - Significant change in the relationship takes place.

- **Redefinition**  
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Challenges of Mentoring Across Dimensions of Diversity

- Tokenism
- Developmental Dilemma
- Stereotypes
- Identification
- Protective Hesitation
Mentoring Best Practices

- Clear and realistic expectations
- Shared responsibility
- Active listening
- Self-disclosure
- Providing feedback
- Scheduled time for reflection
- Risk-taking and proactive behavior
Personal Board of Directors

- Friend
- Peer
- Sponsor
- Family
- Peer
- Friend
- Dean
- Advocate
- Peer
- Mentor
- Administrator
When you come to the edge of all the light that you have,
And you make that decision to step out into the darkness of
the unknown,
You must believe that one of two things will happen --
That either there will be something absolutely solid there for
you to stand on,
or
You will learn to fly.