

# Mentoring Skills for Faculty

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*The really great make you feel that you, too, can become great....Mark Twain*

## A. What is mentorship?

1. Origins in Ancient Greece. Odysseus left his son in the care of the wise Mentor when leaving for the Trojan War.
2. Strong similarities to parenting. A mentor nurtures and protects. Protégé comes from the French word to "protect".
3. Classically it is an intense, mutually beneficial personal relationship between a person older, wiser, more experienced and powerful with someone younger, less experienced and generally powerless that develops over time.
4. A Mentor sees in the protégé things the protégé does not see in himself and actively works to create success from this potential.
5. Academicians who have been mentored have greater career success and satisfaction.

## B. Stages of Development in Mentoring Relationships

1. Novice – beginning in one's career, one primarily needs a mentor who is a teacher to provide information on tasks and the organization.
2. Apprentice – Teaching is still important but less so. Mentor offers encouragement and motivation.
3. Journeyman – Protégé is skilled and competent. Mentor offers encouragement and champion's efforts.
4. Master – Mastery of skills has been accomplished but needs final career path doors opened in organization for advancement.
5. Mentor – Protégé becomes mentor and helps others.

## C. What new people in an organization need to know

1. unique politics
2. acceptable methods for gaining visibility
3. characteristic stumbling blocks
4. skills and competencies needed for success
5. norms, standards, values, and history of heroes and heroines in the organization

## D. Establishing a mentoring relationship

It is a mutual process, protégé's are not chosen.

1. begins with trust
2. mutual respect is the cornerstone
3. know your goals
4. identify a successful person consistent with your goals
5. arrange a meeting, ask for advice first. If the relationship is comfortable, it will develop into mentoring.
6. complementary skills and interests likely provide initial attraction
7. be willing to set aside arrogance and superficial ego to receive both constructive criticism and positive feedback in order to grow
8. can occur over distances (email, national meetings)
9. look for someone in your chosen area whose personality enhances your own

#### **E. Benefits to the Protégé**

1. improved technical knowledge
2. better performance and increased productivity
3. greater sense of mission and purpose
4. greater organizational understanding
5. increased self-confidence
6. improved chances of success and career advancement
7. improved personal growth and development

#### **F. Benefits to the Mentor**

1. perpetuates ideas
2. helps generational transition
3. synergistic advantages
4. benefits both careers (mentor from work ethic of recent training and protégé from experience)
5. sense of pride in protégé's accomplishments
6. personal satisfaction that comes from being needed
7. new knowledge about interpersonal skills, cultural diversity, and personal development

#### **G. Choosing a Mentor**

##### Qualities to look for:

- Competence
- Political acceptance
- Respected
- Power and influence
- Teaching skills
- Security
- Availability
- Approachability

#### **H. Qualities of a good mentor**

- Keeps promises
- Treats everyone with respect
- Encourages positive behaviors
- Has realistic expectations
- Non-judgemental
- Accepts personal differences
- Enjoys watching protégé develop
- Exhibits high professional and moral character
- Maintains confidentiality
- Demonstrates sensitivity to protégé's needs
- Holds protégé to high but reachable standards

#### **I. What good mentors provide**

- Advice
- Teaching/ information source
- Coaching/ encouragement
- Open, honest feedback
- Reduce frustration
- Identifies resources
- Provides opportunities and opens doors
- Role-modeling
- Inspiration
- Eliminates barriers to effective performance and career success

Good mentors give their protégé's the edge by the 3 "P" 's:

1. Process – how to strategies
2. Permission – it's okay to try new ideas
3. Protection – shield from outside attacks

**J. Mentoring across gender and cultural issues**

1. most organizations do not have enough experiences mentor to develop relationships based on gender or race.
2. goals of diversity is to recognize unique talents and attributes of all
3. take into account the atmosphere and culture of the organization and demeanor and motives of the mentor
4. women's issues – women traditionally are taught that it is unbecoming to be aggressive, think of their own needs, or go after what they want, while men are taught just the opposite. Women must find a way to combine work identities with identity as women. Although this is easier with a female mentor, powerful successful women are rare and frequently over-extended. Therefore women must seek male mentors and reject those qualities that re inconsistent with self-image. Women then seek a secondary female mentor who posses the traits most admired and lacking in the male counterpart.

**K. Evolving mentoring relationships**

1. One may have many mentors throughout one's career.
2. Mentoring relationships are characterized by intense feelings similar to other human relationships such as love. This includes admiration, respect, and gratitude.
3. Bad relationships can engender feelings of envy, bitterness, rancor, and abandonment ultimately leading to liberation and rejuvenation.
4. Protégé's can be selective in what they learn and absorb from a mentor, emulating some and rejecting other behaviors.
5. Remember to follow through on tasks and provide follow-up
6. Show appreciation to the mentor and thanks for help
7. Protégé is ultimately responsible for success and failure – not the mentor

**L. Pitfalls in mentoring relationships**

1. Over-identification (difficulty in letting go of relationship for further growth)
2. Reliance or enmeshment ( mentor is adopted to exclusion of all other secondary relationships. This may be demanded by mentor)
3. Exploitation (Protégé is used for mentor's advancement)
4. Boundary violations  
(\* Look at previous track record of mentor and other personal relationships)

*You can impress people at a distance, but you can impact them only up close – Howard Hendricks*

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