GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS: BE AN ENGAGED MENTEE

Aisha R. Morris and Donna J. Charlevoix
Education and Community Engagement

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POLL QUESTION: DO YOU HAVE A MENTOR?

A. No
B. Yes
C. Yes, more than one
D. What is a mentor?
WHAT IS MENTORING?

- Definition is not consistent
- A more experienced person helps guide a less experienced person in reaching their potential
- From *Pathways to Science*: “Mentoring is about helping a mentee develop social capital in an environment where they have the resources and support to develop technical and intellectual capital”
- Mentors are genuinely interested in their mentees’ growth and success

www.pathwaystoscience.org

POLL: WHY MIGHT YOU WANT TO HAVE A MENTOR?

A. To provide career guidance
B. To advocate for you as a scientist
C. To provide personal guidance
D. To help you network
E. Other
F. All of the above
• Students who have mentoring relationships are found to:
  • Have higher GPAs
  • Have a higher likelihood of graduation
  • Be more productive in research activity & publishing
  • Be more efficient getting through graduate school
  • Have a more robust toolbox for navigating the academic environment and other situations

Johnson (2007)

• Students who have mentoring relationships are also found to:
  • Develop bigger networks
  • Increase their knowledge about balancing multiple aspects of life
  • Show enhanced professional skill development
  • Be happier in their field
  • Be more successful in finding career placements
  • Have higher income levels and promotion rates

Johnson (2007)
How do you decide where your mentoring relationship should fall on this spectrum?

- Identify your need(s)
- Think about your existing network (e.g. professors, research supervisors, peers, professional contacts, colleagues)
- Think about who might be able to fill your need
- Set up a conversation with a potential mentor
WHAT DO YOU DISCUSS?

- Goals for mentoring relationship
- Ideas for career plans
- Outline how relationship should take place
- Challenges
- Opportunities

DIFFERENT TYPES OF MENTORS

- It is challenging for one person to be everything as a mentor
- Having multiple mentors can ease the burden and focus the relationships (e.g. peer and near-peer mentors)
Peer and near-peer mentors are people at a similar level who can provide a significant level of emotional and psychological support, feedback, and personal friendship.

TIPS FOR BEING A GOOD MENTEE

- Respect your mentor’s expertise and time
- Set clear expectations (define mentoring relationship)
- Set boundaries
- Be proactive with updates - communicate
- Take responsibility for and ownership of your progress
- Thank your mentor!
ENDING THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Ideal: When the identified objectives have been met

- Other reasons
  - poor fit with the mentor
  - your needs have shifted
- Whatever the reason, be sure to transition the relationship with finesse

https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/when-over-end-mentoring-relationship-finesse-rajiv-tandon-ph-d

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TAKE THE INITIATIVE AND MAKE A PLAN

• Where do you see yourself in the future? What are your goals?
• What professional/academic area in your life is lacking expert guidance?
• Who is someone you know (or would like to know) who has successful experience in that area?
• How do you envision that person (or people) might be able to guide you?
• When will you reach out to them to initiate a conversation?

FORMAL MENTORING PROGRAMS WITH PROFessional SOciETIES

• AGU – e.g. Mentoring 365 (partnership with SEG and AWG)
  • https://education.agu.org/mentoring-programs/
• GSA – e.g. On to the Future Program
  • http://www.geosociety.org/mentors/
• ESWN – ongoing peer mentoring for women
  • https://eswnonline.org/
THANK YOU

• Aisha R. Morris; morris@unavco.org
• Donna J. Charlevoix; donnac@unavco.org

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