Practical Mentorship

Westcoast Women in Engineering, Science & Technology

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Whitehorse, Yukon
Introductions

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Our mission is to advance engineering and science as welcoming careers that serve our world through holistic understanding and creative, appropriate and sustainable solutions.

www.wwest.ca
• Washrooms
• Emergency Exit
• Fire Procedure
• Confidentiality & safe space
Values

Think  Pair  Share

• Record

When did a mentor make a difference for you?

When could you have used the support of the mentor?
Mentoring Continuum

Instrumental
- Career / promotion
- Knowledge transfer
- Institutional need
- “Sage on Stage”

Developmental
- Broader development
- Guiding / supporting
- Mentee need
- “Guide on the Side”

Figure adapted from “Mentoring for Change” prepared for UAEW by Dr. Jennifer de Vries
Six Facilitative Conditions

- Myrick (1987) has asserted that six conditions must be met to create a relationship in which a person feels comfortable to self-disclose.
- In developmental mentorship, this relationship is reciprocal.

- Caring
- Understanding
- Acceptance
- Respect
- Friendliness
- Trustworthiness
Caring

Value them as a person

Personal commitment to process

Personally care about their well-being

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Understanding

Empathy

Perceive and acknowledge their experiences
Acceptance

Respect the personal worth and dignity of a person

Accept who they are

* Does not require you agree with their ideas
Respect

Right to express their own ideas and feelings

Right to shape their own lives
Friendliness

- Genuine warmth
- Sharing mutual interests
- Genuine sense of comfort and support
Confidentiality and security in relationship

Trustworthiness

Honesty
Facilitative Responses

• How you respond affects how they respond
• Choosing a response is context and relationship (facilitative conditions) dependent
• Wittmer & Myrick (1980) ranked the responses:
  - Reflecting and Understanding Feelings
  - Clarifying and Summarizing
  - Questioning
  - Reassuring and Supporting
  - Analyzing and Interpreting
  - Advising and Evaluating

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• Advising = what you should do or feel
• Evaluating = judges what you do or feel
Facilitative Responses

- Trying to explain behaviours or feelings
- Responses may imply what they should think or do
• Intent is to indicate a belief in their ability to solve the problem
• May dismiss the client’s feelings (negative)
• Imposteritis
Facilitative Responses

• Seeks information and furthers discussion

Person-centred questions
Open questions

*Why questions (be careful to not make it intimidating)

Questions that completely change the focus
Binding questions – not really questions
Questions that solicit agreement
Forced choice questions
“No good answer” questions
Yes/No questions

Reflecting and Understanding Feelings
Clarifying and Summarizing
Questioning
Reassuring and Supporting
Analyzing and Interpreting
Advising and Evaluating

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Facilitative Responses

- Clarifying indicates a desire to be accurate in communication
- Summarizing helps focus the discussion and indicates you have accurately heard and understood
Facilitative Responses

- Conveys you have heard and understood their emotional experience
What was your most frustrating mentoring experience?
Barrett Horne
BREAK
Types of Mentoring Relationships

- Formal or Informal
- Individual or Group
- Short or Long Term

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## Formal and Informal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Formal</strong></th>
<th><strong>Informal</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Often arranged by a workplace or organization</td>
<td>• Often arranged by individuals</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Has pre-articulated expectations for mentors and mentees</td>
<td>• Expectations may or may not be pre-determined; often casual or focused on a specific need</td>
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<td>• Often has events such as launches, wrap-ups, or socials to normalize expectations</td>
<td>• Expectations need to be set by the mentor and mentee</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lower “threat” barrier to become involved</td>
<td>• Lower “threat” barrier of time commitment (flexible) and visibility of involvement (can avoid others knowing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Higher “threat” barrier of time commitment and visibility of involvement</td>
<td>• Higher “threat” barrier to become involved (difficulty of establishing connection)</td>
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### Short or Long Term

#### Short Term
- Project- or experience-specific mentors
- Speed-mentoring
- Shadowing
- Group activity “buddies” or event mentors
- Transition mentors
- Some mentoring programs

#### Long Term
- Ongoing mentoring with regular meetings
- Ongoing mentoring “as needed”
- Context-dependent “as needed” mentor
- Peer mentor
- Most mentoring programs

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Online mentoring
Individual and Group Traditional 1:1

Team (multiple mentors with many mentees)

Triads (Senior, Intermediate, Junior)

Group (1 mentor with many mentees)

Peer (2-way mentorship)

Peer Group

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Why?
Why Mentor
Why Mentor?

I am a leader because... I help fellow students and provide advice to those who need it.

I am a leader because... I will finish what I've started. — Angela

I am a leader because... I have confidence in my skills and in the people who choose to follow me. — Kathleen O.

I am a leader when... I step out of my comfort zone. — Jan L

I am a leader because... I encourage others to do so. — Ana

I am a leader when... I overcome my fears in order to help others. — Ana
Tri-Mentoring offers an education beyond traditional university engineering curriculum

Donna Dykeman, Erin Young, Elizabeth Croft
University of British Columbia
Sustaining Advantage: students return as mentors after at least 1 year of working experience

**Senior Student**
- Year 4-5, Graduate Student
- Mentors Junior Student
- Arranges Meetings

**Junior Student**
- Year 1-3
  - Class/study advice from Senior Student
  - Early view of engineering careers

**Mentor**
- Industry/Academic


• 10 hours of volunteer time (Oct. – Mar.)
  – 3 Face-to-face meetings with mentor
  – Orientation
  – Kickoff Event
  – Closing Dinner

• Students
  – Additional information session
  – More involved orientation
  – Future Mapping with Career Services
Organizer “Pro tip” – Invite your bosses’ boss and make sure you take his/her picture!
Successful mentoring is a values based activity

It starts from WHY.
Why is mentoring important to your organization?
Value of Mentoring for You

Think  Pair  Share

How does mentoring reflect your values?

How does this affect your mentoring relationships?
Challenges for Mentoring

- New relationships
- Diverse people and perspectives
- Culture clashes
- Preconceptions
- STEM Culture
Mentoring Bridges

- Implicit Bias
- Imposter Syndrome
• Who do you mentor? Who are your protégés?
  – Organizations are typically self-replicating.
  – We choose ourselves.

• Implicit Bias
  – *Unconscious* bias, that intrinsically affects our everyday decision making processes.
To be seen as equally “competent” by reviewers, female researchers need to publish:

3 more articles in *Nature* or *Science*  
OR  
20 more articles in specialist journals

than male applicants when applying for a medical fellowship.\(^5\)
Women are 50% more likely to advance in an orchestra audition if they can’t be seen.
Unconscious (Implicit) Bias

“We would have to see her job talk”

“I would need to see evidence that she had gotten these grants and publications on her own”

Psychology professors reviewing identical CVs were 4x more likely to write cautionary comments for female applicants.
A 2012 study sent out one of two resumes to science faculty in the US, and asked them to evaluate the candidate for a lab manager position. One resume was for a candidate with a traditionally female name, and one for a candidate with a traditionally male name.

Their evaluations said that the male-name candidate was:

- Significantly more competent and hireable
- More desirable as a mentee
- Worthy of a higher starting salary

When compared to the female-name candidate.

The real catch?

Other than the name, the resumes were identical.

Same resume, woman’s name

Same resume, man’s name
• Take the Implicit Association Test. Know your own biases. We all have them.
• Be open to un-alike Mentors and Mentees.
• Do not assume the capabilities or preferences of others. This limits opportunities for learning.
Where have you seen challenges in Mentoring?

How did you overcome them?
Reflection in the Learning Cycle

Kolb Cycle or “Experiential Learning Cycle”

Concrete Experience

Active Experimentation

Reflective Observation

Abstraction / Conceptualization
Reflective Conversations

What?  So What?  Now What?

What?  What?  Now What?
Spiraling Up

• Reflective learning is a spiral process
• Revisiting experiences at a later date and re‐reflecting leads to deeper learning
• It's not a ladder, it’s a ramp
• Everyone has to go up the ramp at their own rate
Avoid Negativity

• Negativity is not a value
• It pulls people down
• There is no upside
• Where appropriate, bring in the professionals.
• Mentoring is professional development – this is good for your CV
• Encourage others to mentor – and be mentored
• Make mentoring flexible
  – Formal/informal
  – Peer, Small Group, Event based
• Make it open to others
Some Self Mentoring Strategies

- Be strategic - put your commitments where your values are
- Include time for mentoring in your “professional development plan” at work.
- Take personal time to re-energize. You can help best when you are strong.
- When you mentor, make it work for you.
- Always expect the best (but have a plan B).
BREAK
Institutional Supports

Brainstorm as a group

Write one idea per post-it note

Use big, legible letters

What could your organization do to make it more difficult for people to pursue mentoring?
Share your thoughts
Put your post-its on the wall and tell us about them
What themes emerge?
Flip it on it’s head

How can you plan around, mitigate, circumvent, & otherwise avoid these barriers?

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Pawa Haiyupis
Tools for Mentoring

- As a mentor OR a mentee, decide what you want to get from this experience
- Determine what you can give (time, knowledge) and what you can’t (things you won’t discuss)
- Know your own values
- Review the facilitative responses
- Decide on three questions you want to ask
Tools for Mentoring

- Communicate what each of you wishes to gain from the experience
- Set expectations on the number, type, and lengths of meetings, and other forms of contact
- Set expectations on responses to contact outside the agreed structure, and talk about preferred communication formats
- Discuss any limitations, caveats, etc. to the mentoring relationship
- Discuss confidentiality
- Discuss what to do if one person wants to end the mentoring arrangement
- Write these items into a simple agreement, and ensure everyone has a copy
- Formalized organization mentoring often predefines these items
Tools for Mentoring

• Discuss your personal and professional interests, and find common ground
• Use open questions and positive body language
• Many mentoring groups find it helpful to leave the workplace – go for a walk, or to coffee
• Talk about why you became involved in mentoring and why you value it
• Talk about a valuable mentoring relationship you had in the past, and why you found it helpful
• Formalized mentoring programs often have launches to assist in this
Tools for Mentoring

- Choose a specific topic to focus on for the individual session, discussing either the mentee’s present situation or a situation the mentor faced, e.g.:
  - Navigating a career obstacle
  - Making a difficult decision
  - Finding balance in a specific situation
  - Navigating politics in the workplace

- Have the mentee create a pie chart of what is important in their life. After, create a pie chart of what they spend their time on. Compare & discuss. Alternatively, create a pie chart of what their life is and what they would like their life to be.

- When considering options, draw out the possible scenarios. What do they look and feel like? What is good and bad?

- Adapt PEST analysis to look at an issue. Political – what does it mean at work? Economic – how does it affect your lifestyle? Social – how does it affect your family and friends? Technology – can you leverage technology to improve things?
• At the end of a meeting, review the highlights of the discussions. Note what was most impactful.
• At home, take fifteen minutes for reflective writing. What did you learn? What was helpful? What surprised you? What do you want to discuss next time?
  – What?
  – So What?
  – Now What?
• At the end of the mentoring relationship, or yearly, reflect further on how the experience has contributed to your growth and development
• Formal mentoring programs may have wrap up events or banquets to facilitate this
QUESTIONS