*Mentoring Skills Workshop*

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*Presentation adapted from: Mentoring in Medical School, Gail L. Rose, PhD, U of Vermont*
Mentoring: Defined

MENTOR: “1. a wise, loyal advisor 2. a teacher or coach”.

According to Greek mythology, when Odysseus left for the siege of Troy, Athena, the goddess of wisdom, appeared as Mentor, a trusted friend who became responsible for raising Odysseus’ son, Telemachus, during his absence. Mentor was not just a teacher, but a transitional figure who assisted in his growth and development from child to young adult. Mentor guided Telemachus on his own journey to independence.

Modern Definition of Mentoring

Today, a modern definition of the mentoring relationship is “a dynamic, reciprocal relationship in a work environment between an advanced career incumbent (mentor) and a beginner (protégé*) aimed at promoting the career development of both.”

At its best, mentorship is both a personal and professional interaction based on mutual respect, trust, understanding and empathy.

Reflective Exercise

- Identify a mentoring relationship you have been involved in when you were the mentee.
  - Specify characteristics of this relationship
  - What worked in this relationship?
  - What did not work in the relationship?
- How might your experience affect the way in which you mentor?
Mentor Roles
Proactive and Reactive

• Provide general advice – refer when necessary
• Provide learning advice – refer when necessary
• Monitor, discuss and report academic difficulties
• Monitor, discuss and report fitness to practice issues
• Record student encounters and information on a filing system
Mentors who are selected: They should be:

- Accessible
- Have time to provide mentorship
- Interest in being involved in student’s life over time
- Role Models
- Understand pipeline program mission, goals & objectives
Mentor vs Role Models

- **Differences:**
  - Role Model: Observed and imitated
  - May not know their audience/mentee

- **Similarities:**
  - Knowledge and skill acquisition facilitated by another person
  - Both are important to medical education
Mentor Characteristics and Tasks

- Experienced
- Respectful
- Communicates openly, clearly, effectively
- Treats mentee like an adult
- Ethical, integrity
- Reliable: follows through with a commitment
- Provides honest feedback
- Assists with academic activities
- Available to discuss academic challenges
- Sees mentee potential
- Empowers mentee
- Socializes, shares
Steps to Successful Mentoring

- **STEP 1.** Self-reflection and self-assessment (mentor and mentee) to determine mentee’s goals
- **STEP 2.** Identify mentee’s stage of educational development: Beginner vs Advanced
- **STEP 3:** Identify unique attributes and challenges and reevaluate, as the mentee will change
Mentee Stage of Educational Development

- **Focus** (skills/practical vs conceptual)
- **Time frame** (short vs long term planning)
- **Role** (feedback vs consultant)
- **Source of Direction** (mentor vs mentee)
- **Tailoring Approach** (dependent vs independent)
Mentoring Relationships

- Informal
  - Personal values and interests

- Formal
  - Focused on specific goals
  - Task oriented
  - Over time builds trust
  - Contracting
Dr. A. is an outgoing 50 year-old pediatrician, who has a fair amount of experience in informal mentoring of medical students during outpatient assignments in his practice. Dr. A has been assigned a high school student as a mentee in pipeline program. During their first meeting, at a kick-off lunch, the student was exceedingly quiet and difficult to draw out, though she did say she was glad to be matched with a mentor.

What issues might influence this student’s reticence?
How might Dr. A. approach her after this first interaction?
How could he learn more about her goals and background?
How might their interactions be influenced if they are from the same cultural background? If different? If he is white and she is African-American? How might gender or age influence the relationship?
Dr. B. is a family physician who works in a local primary care clinic. She has been assigned to a pipeline student who has career aspirations for medical school after College. Initially, this student, a solid student from a working class family, seemed to enjoy the mentoring activities. Recently, however, he has been out of touch. He missed a meeting, sending a belated e-mail to apologize. When Dr. B. ran into him at a SOM event, he seemed a disconnected and avoided answering her question about his recent academic studies. Dr. B. is concerned about him.

What kinds of problems may be playing a role in the student’s change of affect and availability?
Would it be all right for Dr. B. to approach him to find out what is going on? How?
If you were Dr. B, what else would you like to know to assist you in mentoring this student?
What is an approach to re-connect with the student after this SOM event?
Dr. C. is a thirty-five year old general internist who loves her work, which is spent in clinical care, teaching in the inpatient and outpatient setting and participating in an asthma research project. She has three school age children, who are busy with homework and after-school activities.

She and her pipeline mentee formed a strong connection. She has been generous with her time, meeting with her mentee monthly. Lately she finds that the mentee is making more and more requests for time to talk in person and on the phone. He sometimes pages her during busy evenings at home, just to ask a question.

How can Dr. C. support her mentee’s enthusiasm while setting appropriate limits to her availability. How do you set up communication guidelines with mentees?
Logistics

- Meeting Dates/times/Location
  - Lunch every Friday (12:00noon-1:00pm): 7/13, 7/20, 7/27 and 8/2
  - Closing Reception (6:30pm-8:30pm): Thursday, 8/2/12

- How to contact students/use of technology
  - Phone (call or text), Email, Facebook, Twitter
How to Maintain a Relationship

- Be available
- Convey respect and confidence
- Maintain focus on mentee
- Ask questions and limit advice
- Track progress of mentee
- Identify strengths
- Give feedback
- Re-assess relationship
Summary

- Know yourself
- Know your mentee
- Know parameters of the relationship
- Maintain the relationship
- Focus on mentee’s career growth