How to Create a Rewarding and Beneficial Mentoring Program

Mary Croughan, Ph.D.
Professor
Departments of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences,
and Epidemiology and Biostatistics
University of California, San Francisco

Successful Mentoring

Successful mentoring is a dynamic process that evolves through a series of stages, whereby each participant learns to respect and trust the other's commitment, expertise, and individuality.

Successful Mentoring

Mentoring is focused on the success of the mentee

The Value of Mentoring

- **Most successful faculty have been mentored**
- **Mentoring has been shown to:**
  - ☐ **Increase career satisfaction**
  - ☐ **Improve career advancement**
  - ☐ **Increase recruitment and retention**

Characteristics of a
Good Mentoring Relationship

- **Mutual trust and respect**
- **The expectation of hard work and dedication on the part of the mentee**
- **Commitment to furthering the success of the mentee on the part of the mentor**
- **Mentor and mentee have been trained**

Characteristics of a Good Mentor

- **Encourages and demonstrates confidence in mentee**
- **Develops a genuine interest in mentee and their success**
- **Recognizes mentee as an individual with a private life and values her/him as a person**
- **Ensures a positive and supportive professional environment**
- **Does not deny own ignorance**

Characteristics of a Good Mentor

- **Is liberal with constructive feedback**
- **Has good communication skills**
- **Encourages independent behavior, but willing to invest time**
- **Provides exposure and networking opportunities within professional circles**
- **Allows mentee to assist with projects, papers, and research; mentor is generous with credit**

Characteristics of a Good Mentor

- **Is available and responsive**
- **Is willing to share personal stories or experiences**
  - ☐ **"Learn from my mistakes"**
  - ☐ **Illustrate best practices**
  - ☐ **Create trust**

Characteristics of a Good Mentee

- **Stays in touch and keeps appts.**
- **Respects confidentiality**
- **Willing to ask for help when needed**
- **Communicates openly and honestly**
- **Develops trust**
- **Expresses gratitude and appreciation**
- **Prepares in advance for meetings**
- **Clearly communicates needs**

Characteristics of a Good Mentee

- **Is receptive to feedback**
- **Follows through on suggestions**
- **Provides sufficient time for mentor to review grants and manuscripts**
- **Maintains and re-evaluates expectations for mentoring relationship**
- **Maintains documentation of goals**

Characteristics of a Good Mentee

- **Takes responsibility for own growth and success**
- **Stays informed on criteria for advancement**
- **Takes advantage of opportunities for faculty development (workshops)**
- **Repays mentor by helping others**

How to Develop Good Mentors and Good Mentees

- **Some are born great….others need training**
- **Formal training workshop for everyone using best practices examples**
- **Written guidelines in bulleted form**
- **Materials and resources available on the Web**
- **Monitor satisfaction with program and make changes accordingly**

Formal Training Program Workshop

- **Attended by both mentors and mentees so information and expectations are identical**

- **Provide advice and training on how to create a mutually beneficial relationship**

- **Role-playing can be helpful**

Formal Training Program Workshop Information

- **Official guidelines for promotion and career advancement within the School and the University**

- **Practical guidelines for promotion and career advancement (i.e., how to establish independence, appropriate levels of service, etc.)**

- **Similarities and differences in the review process within individual Schools and within the University**

Formal Training Program Workshop Information

- **Available resources for enhancing skills in teaching, grant writing, manuscript writing, research methods, and data analysis**

- **University policies affecting faculty (e.g., family friendly policies, retirement, part-time status, etc.).**

Mentoring Handbook Information

- **Practical advice on how to create a rewarding relationship**
- **What to do if problems arise and where to go for help**
- **CV template to be used by all faculty at the time of promotion (including guidelines on the format and content of the personal statement)**
- **Redacted samples of CVs and personal statements**

The Need for Multiple Mentors

■ **Need to address multiple areas and few mentors can provide everything**

    ☐ **scientific expertise**

    ☐ **political expertise**

    ☐ **academic culture**

    ☐ **career advice**

    ☐ **personal issues**

The Need for Multiple Mentors

Department chair or division chief may provide excellent advice regarding advancement, but may have a conflict of interest when discussing activities or competing interests

Multiple Mentors

Area of Expertise	Where to Find Them
Subject area	Look for the best inside and outside of institution
Academic culture	Within division or department
Work-life balance	People with similar characteristics

How to Find Good Mentors

- **Formal matching program done by Mentoring Facilitators**

- **Do a literature search for colleagues with subject matter expertise**

- **Network at department seminars and professional meetings**

- **Network through University committee service**

How to Find Good Mentors

- **Talk with colleagues and friends**
- **Talk with current and past mentees to find out about a given mentor**
  - ☐ **Availability**
  - ☐ **Helpfulness**
- **Mentee can set up introductory meetings with potential mentors**

Getting Started

- **Think about what the mentee needs or wants from this mentoring relationship:**
  - ☐ **Career advice**
  - ☐ **Scientific advice (lit review)**
  - ☐ **Work-life balance advice**
  - ☐ **Other**

- **Mentee should set up an initial meeting and not give up if mentor doesn't respond immediately to requests**

Getting Started

- **Written Documentation from Mentee**
  - ☐ **Write down activities and the %FTE for each (20% = 8 hrs)**
  - ☐ **Place activities in categories:**
    - **Research**
    - **Teaching**
    - **Service**
    - **Administration**
    - **Clinical or other duties**
- **Write down goals for the next 3-5 years**

At the First Meeting

- **Discuss CV, list of activities, list of goals, and needs**

- **Discuss reasonable expectations and goals for mentoring relationship**

- **Get to know each other**

At the First Meeting

- **Agree upon the duration, frequency, format, and length of future meetings**

  - ☐ **Monthly contact is ideal; at least meet every 6 months**
  - ☐ **In-person, phone, email**

- **Exchange contact information**

At Subsequent Meetings

- **Discuss current activities**

- **Discuss issues of concern and competing priorities**

- **Assess activities and goals at least yearly; set priorities and review last year's form**

- **Re-assess expectations and goals for mentoring relationship at least yearly**

Potential Activities between Mentor and Mentee

- **Career advice**

- **Research collaborations**

- **Grant and manuscript review**

- **Examples of good practice**

- **Networking with colleagues**

- **Advice on negotiation, conflict management, and decision-making strategies**

Career Advice

- **How to navigate the University**
- **Priorities and commitments**
  - ☐ **Research:**
    - **Grants and collaborators**
    - **Manuscripts and journals**
    - **Other publications (books, chapters, etc.)**
  - ☐ **Teaching:**
    - **Amount and type**
    - **Teaching evaluations**
    - **How to improve**

Career Advice

- **Priorities and commitments**
  - ☐ **Professional service (e.g., clinical duties)**
  - ☐ **University service:**
    - ■ **How much**
    - ■ **What to do and what not to do**

Team Mentoring

- **Team is comprised of formal and informal mentors from within and outside of department**

- **Competing interests and priorities can be negotiated between interested parties**

- **Meet less often than one-on-one mentor meetings**

Peer Mentors

- **Can provide:**
  - □ support and a place to "vent"
  - □ other perspectives on how to navigate the University
  - □ networking and collaborations
- **Can be focused on:**
  - □ deadlines for manuscripts and grants
  - □ research collaborations
  - □ other areas

Potential Pitfalls in Mentoring

- **Limited time**
- **Lack of knowledge or skills**
- **Over-dependence**
- **Competition or rivalry**
- **Mismatch between mentor and mentee**
- **Fear of failure**
- **Not allowing the relationship to evolve**

Ethical Dilemmas

- **Conflict of interest for reviewers**
- **Conflict of interest for mentors**
- **Department or division needs as compared to mentee's needs**
- **Are mentors partially responsible for success or failure of mentees?**

Overcoming Ethical Dilemmas

- **Recuse reviewers with conflict of interest**

- **Team mentoring when any mentor has conflict of interest**

- **Negotiating on behalf of mentee**

- **Documentation of corrective action or recommendations**

The Evolving Relationship

- **What to do if the fit isn't right:**

    - ☐ **Talk about your expectations and provide opportunity for improvement**

    - ☐ **Discuss other potential mentors**

    - ☐ **End the relationship with respect**

The Evolving Relationship

- **You may need to move on to other mentors as your needs change**

- **Your relationship may evolve from mentee to peer**

- **Try to stay in touch with past mentors and express appreciation for their help and guidance**

Rewards for Good Mentoring

- **Use as criteria for promotion and advancement**

- **Consider mentoring activities in the same vein as teaching activities; faculty should document their mentoring activities on their curriculum vitas**

- **Stewardship reviews for leaders should evaluate mentoring activities for department or school**

- **Establish mentoring awards**

Mentoring Program Evaluation

- **See handout for specific details**
- **Need baseline data**
- **Perform quantitative and qualitative reviews:**
  - ☐ **recruitment and retention**
  - ☐ **promotion of junior faculty**
  - ☐ **career satisfaction**
- **Quality and satisfaction surveys done annually for both mentors and mentees**
- **Exit interviews**

Resources on Mentoring

- **How to find a mentor and how to be a good mentee** http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/1066246125811MentorBook.pdf

- **UCSD Faculty Mentoring Program: advice for new faculty members** http://academicaffairs.ucsd.edu/faculty/programs/fmp/default.htm

- **USC Faculty Mentee's role** http://www.usc.edu/programs/cet/private/pdfs/mentor/protegepaper.pdf

- **HHMI Guide - chapter on Mentoring (for postdocs and new faculty)** http://www.hhmi.org/grants/pdf/labmgmt/ch5.pdf

- **Johns Hopkins, Dept of Medicine junior faculty mentoring program** http://deptmed.med.som.jhmi.edu/faculty/body7.html