

May 23, 2016.

Entering Mentoring Workshop Introduction:

Welcome! By honing your mentorship skills, you will not only improve your interpersonal relations with research group members, but you will also meet the expectations for tenure, promotion, and grant funding by major federal agencies. Our curriculum particularly focuses on culturally sensitive mentorship and your participation documents your commitment to diversity, inclusion, and broader impact. We will adapt Entering Mentoring, an established curriculum. The goal of the workshop is to accelerate the process of learning to be a mentor.

Learning goals:

1. Design and communicate clear goals for mentee projects.
2. Clearly communicate expectations for mentoring relationship.
3. Align mentee and mentor expectations.
4. Engage in open dialogue on balancing the competing demands, needs, and interests of mentors and mentees.
5. Provide constructive feedback and engage in actively listening.
6. Recognize the impact of conscious and unconscious assumptions, preconceptions, biases, and prejudices on the mentor-mentee relationships.
7. Identify reasons for lack of understanding, including expert-novice differences.
8. Consider strategies to build mentee's confidence, establish trust, and foster independence.

When you complete the workshop, you will also have an opportunity to reflect on your mentee-mentor relationships, and articulate an approach for working with mentees in the future. Remember: your team of mentorship facilitators will continue be a resource beyond this workshop.

The resources discussed today can be found at:
<http://www.rebeccajordan.org/entering-mentoring.html>

AGENDA

9:30- Introduction

9:45- Case 1

10:00- Aligning Expectations

10:45- Break

11:00- Communication

11:45- Diversity and Inclusion

12:30-1:30- Wrap-up, Lunch, and Discussion

Preface

Mentoring: Learned, Not Taught

Mentoring principles, not practices, are universal

Effective mentoring can be learned, but not taught. Most faculty learn to mentor by experimenting and analyzing success and failure, and many say that the process of developing an effective method of mentoring takes years, which is a reflection of the unique qualities, needs, and challenges presented by each mentee. A skilled mentor is guided by a reflective philosophy that directs examination of the mentee's changing needs and how best to address them, creating fluidity in the relationship. No book can prescribe a single 'right' approach, but systematic analysis and discussion of mentoring generates a method for tackling the knotty challenges inherent in the job.

The goal of the curriculum outlined in this book is to accelerate the process of becoming an effective research mentor. The approach described provides mentors with an intellectual framework, an opportunity to experiment with various methods, and a forum in which to solve mentoring dilemmas with the help of their peers. The mentor training process expands each mentor's knowledge through secondhand exposure to the experiences of the entire group, enabling participants to engage with as many mentoring experiences as each of them would typically handle in a decade. This process in turn enhances their readiness to work with diverse mentees and anticipate new situations. At the completion of the training, mentors will have articulated their own approach to mentoring and have a toolbox of strategies to draw upon when confronted with mentoring challenges.

Although no one can provide formulas, practices, or behaviors that will work in every mentoring situation, certain principles guide good mentoring. The principles that shape this curriculum are founded on research that has revealed how people learn and has identified the essential elements of environments shown to be most conducive to learning, productivity, and creativity.

Mentoring diversity, not sameness, is essential

An individual's performance in any endeavor is the product of a complex interaction involving innate ability, experience, confidence, education, and the nature of the performance environment. Professional mentors can directly influence their mentees' performance by creating an environment that is conducive to achieving excellence and that fosters confidence, even in stressful situations. Setbacks are a source of stress that everyone experiences, and the mentee's response can be modulated by a mentor's intervention. A mentor's goal is to promote a mentee's growth and achievement. People build resilience and self-reliance through positive reinforcement coupled with the expectation of excellence. The most important message a mentor can send is faith in the mentee, a willingness to embrace diversity, and an eagerness to continually improve as a mentor. A theme implicit in this book's curriculum is that mentors may facilitate growth best when they work collaboratively with their mentees to continually reexamine and adjust to their individual needs. This process, followed by the mentee producing high-quality research, will generate self-sustaining confidence for both.

Another aspect of creating an environment that is conducive to learning is being open to other ways of doing research and seeing the world, including the world of academia. The next generation of researchers will be more diverse than the last. Working with people who are different from ourselves can at times be frustrating and baffling, though also enlightening and deeply rewarding as we learn from one another. When given the opportunity to work with mentees from different backgrounds and with distinct perspectives, who may not share the characteristics we value most in ourselves, we may struggle to imagine them fitting the academic mold. We are often surprised by the success of those who don't immediately fit in, and find that they may be the very people that bring a key new perspective or insight. Being a good mentor requires accommodating styles that differ from our own, thereby enhancing the diversity and the vibrancy of the scientific community.

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