Establishing a Process Utilizing Community Leaders as Mentors to Undergraduate Students

C. Mitchell Adrian

College of Business

McNeese State University

Box 92232, Lake Charles, LA,

USA 70609

Abstract

Mentoring has long been a method for passing experience from one generation to the next. This report outlines the creation, development, and application of a mentoring program linking undergraduate business students with community professionals. The goal of the program is to enhance career opportunities of students and to garner community support for the university. In addition, with the increased need from accrediting bodies to show impact of the educational processes, mentoring may be a useful tool for assessment of program impact as well as a tool for enhancing alumni and community relations and financial support.

Keywords: Student mentoring; Community involvement; Program impact; Student success

1. Importance of Mentoring

Mentor[1] (def.) someone who teaches or gives help and advice to a less experienced and often younger person. A trusted counselor or guide. Tutor, coach.

For hundreds, if not thousands of years, the concept of a mentor training an apprentice was the common method for helping younger, less experienced individuals learn from more experienced seniors (Blass & Ferris, 2007; Bozionelos & Wang, 2006; Kram & Isabella, 1985; Levenson, Van der Stede, & Cohen, 2006; Tonidandel, Avery & Phillips, 2007). Mentoring, and its role in professional development, has long been a topic of consideration in both academic research and in practice (Chandler, Kram, & Yip, 2011; Mc-Dowall-Long, 2004). The importance of mentoring is recognized in today's business world, as many employers attempt to create some type of formal mentoring relationship for new employees (Brashear, T. G., Bellenger, Boles, & Barksdale Jr, 2006). Mentoring is intended to enhance the development of the protégé and rapidly transition that protégé into a more experienced organizational participant (Templeton & Tremont 2014). Priest & Donley (2014) report three inter-connected components of mentoring: 1) a personal, reciprocal relationship between mentor and protégé, 2) an activity by which the mentor shares

---

[1] Merriam-Webster. www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mentor 3/2/2015.

wisdom, support and assistance in personal, professional, or career development; and 3) a developmental process of protégé growth and/or accomplishment.

The long-term effects of mentoring and the mentor-protégé relationship have been well recognized. For example, mentoring relationships are associated with higher protégé salaries (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004; Johnston et al 2014), leadership development (Johnston et al 2014; Lester, Hannah, Harms, Vogelgesang, & Avolio, 2011; Poteat, Shockley, & Allen, 2009), increased frequency and speed of promotions (Gong & Chen 2014), and career satisfaction (Johnston et al 2014; Murphy, 2011; Peluchette & Jeanquart, 2000). In general, mentoring is considered an effective tool for career development (Drew 2014; Gong & Chen 2014). Research also suggest that mentoring relationships are not just beneficial to the protégé. In the majority of successful mentoring relationships, the person serving as mentor has reported significant levels of learning and satisfaction (Pullins, Fine, & Warren, 1996; Rollins, Rutherford, & Nickell, 2014).

1.1 Mentoring in Higher Education
Some research exists regarding mentoring in higher education (Crisp & Cruz, 2009; Jacobi, 1991; Liang, Tracy, Taylor, & Williams, 2002) as well as leadership education and development (Inzer & Crawford, 2005; Kunich & Lester, 1999; McCauley & Douglas, 2004). While a number of studies focus on senior faculty mentoring junior faculty, some literature describes the possibility of developing mentoring relationships with students (Crisp & Cruz, 2009; Jacobi, 1991; Priest & Donley, 2014). Despite the known benefits of mentoring, application of a mentoring program for undergraduate students is probably still under-developed and under- researched (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006; Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2007; Eby & Lockwood, 2005; Parise & Forret, 2008).

Student Need for Mentors and Professional Networks
In higher education, perceptions of potential career success tend to influences potential student choice when selecting which university to attend (Lopez 2014). However, many, if not most, students entering higher education have little knowledge or understanding of their career opportunities and expectations after graduation (Karp & Bork 2012). While universities tend to seek ways to help with the success of their alumni, it is likely that most universities struggle with this concept.

Mentoring can serve as an inexpensive way to make a long-term investment in people. "Mentoring is different. It is a shared role that requires delicate and caring intervention and feedback. It is a slow process built on mutual trust and self-respect. It only works when both parties, the mentor and the protégé, clearly understand the areas that need improvement and how the mentor can be useful" (Fibkins, 2011: 2). But the development of this type of relationship is exactly what new graduates need when starting on their career path. According to Drew (2014), benefits of mentoring in the corporate world that may transfer to the student/academic setting can include:
- Encouraging retention.

- Improving knowledge transfer
- Bidirectional information exchange. Mentors gain insight from the protégé that can aid the mentor's professional and personal development.
- Satisfaction of sharing expertise with others.
- Sharper focus on what is needed to grow professionally.
- Learning specific skills and knowledge relevant to personal goals.
- Larger professional networks.

I have been involved in higher education for over 20 years. Always interested in ways to enhance student learning, many of my early efforts in classroom teaching involved having students provide input into the design of the learning process. Through these efforts it became clear to me that most undergraduate students have little comprehension about what they need to know and learn in order to be successful. Given this limited knowledge of their future, most students refer back to the processes of learning and study that they found successful in high school, namely memorization of facts and course content. However, as most employers know, a university degree is synergistic degree. It is more than the sum of its parts, meaning it is more than just the facts and content that you learn in each class. Earning a bachelor's degree requires more than basic knowledge, it also requires that the student develops appropriate critical thinking skills, the ability to integrate concepts from various curriculum, the ability to communicate this knowledge and information with others, and a sense of life-long learning and development.

From this experience, it is my opinion that undergraduate students need guidance regarding their career and their post-graduation future. They need to develop a network of professionals with whom they can turn to for advice and information. They also need to develop this network as early as possible, preferably prior to graduation, in preparation for their future career. In many cases, having a network of professionals prior to graduation would increase employment opportunities after graduation and would likely shorten the amount of time it takes for the new graduate to find their first career directed employment. Through mentoring, student protégés can receive career guidance and potentially develop lasting professional relationships (Drew 2014).

1.2 University and College Level Need for Community Mentoring

An active and successful mentoring program can also benefit the university. A recent report of the Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF 2013) notes the importance of working with companies, higher education institutions, private philanthropies, professional societies, government agencies, and other stakeholders to develop long-term partnerships to improve student engagement and degree attainment. Among the specific suggestions made by the BHEF report, the use of multiple mentors is stated but the suggestion is limited to on-campus faculty and student-peer mentors. It is argued here that such partnership efforts should not only focus on degree attainment, but also on post-graduation career success. By improving completion rates and post-graduation success, the university improves its own credibility and level of perceived quality.

For AACSB accredited programs in business, Standard 4 (AACSB 2016) covers: Policies and procedures for student admissions, as well as those that ensure academic progression toward degree completion, and supporting career development are clear, effective, consistently applied, and aligned with the school's mission, expected outcomes, and strategies. AACSB is also broadening the focus of student learning and participation beyond simple engagement and into what is termed as "impact." According to AACSB's statement about program impact:

> In an environment of increasing accountability, it is important that AACSB accreditation focus on appropriate high-quality inputs (human, financial, physical, etc.) and the outcomes of those inputs within the context of the business school's mission and supporting strategies. That is, in the accreditation process, business schools must document how they are making a difference and having impact. This means that AACSB will continue to emphasize that business schools integrate assurance of learning into their curriculum management processes and produce intellectual contributions that make a positive impact on business theory, teaching, or practice.
>
> Impact also has a broader meaning in that the business school, through the articulation and execution of its mission, should make a difference in business and society as well as in the global community of business schools and management educators (AACSB 2016: 3).

While it is appropriate to assume that most instructors and programs make a positive impact by virtue of educating students, it difficult to document such activities in a way that proves beneficial to society. Experiences gained through mentoring, comments and experiences of mentors, and documentation of student success post-graduation can be a simple and effective way of providing examples of program success.

A third justification for considering some type of mentoring program is the attention being directed toward higher education from the federal government. Current efforts from the Department of Education are attempting to create a universal college rating system they claim will "…give parents and students the kind of clear, concise information you need to shop around for a school with the best value for you..." (Stratford 2015). While politically charged and not likely to receive immediate funding, this proposal may be an indication of future federal oversight into educational outcomes.

2. Our Attempt at a Mentoring Program

In an effort to enhance student learning through a mentoring process, we were able to develop and apply a program that continued though several courses and over several years. The idea of student mentoring began when two community leaders, interested in working with students to help them prosper after graduation, contacted me to discuss ideas for involvement. Over the course of several weeks we held multiple conversations but the single idea that seemed both plausible and impactful was that of student mentoring.

2.1 Establishing a Process

Prior to introducing the idea to students, I discussed the process of mentoring with the two volunteers and we attempted to establish goals and operational parameters for the program. It was determined the program would be based on the following expectations:

1. Students would be assigned a mentor.
2. It would be the student's responsibility to contact the mentor.
3. The mentor and student could meet at a time and location deemed suitable to both parties.
4. The mentor and student should meet at least twice in the semester and more than two meetings would be encouraged.
5. Each mentor would be willing to introduce their student protégé to other community leaders as appropriate.
6. Mentors would be willing to maintain the relationship after the semester ended.

In addition to these expectations, a few basic questions were established by the mentors to ask of their student protégé's as a way to start conversation and learn more about student career plans. However, mentors later found that the conversations tended to flow unpredictably and that prepared questions were not typically necessary.

To introduce this concept to students, a single course was chosen and the mentoring program was discussed in a class presentation. The two community members who helped initiate the idea recruited a third mentor (who was an HR professional) and the three individuals spoke with the class regarding the benefits of mentoring. After this initial meeting, students were repeatedly encouraged to participate in the program and participation was voluntary. This occurred in an elective course titled "Current Issues in Management," so that the mentoring process blended easily with the course topic coverage. Of a class of 32 students, only five chose to participate. Those who participated provided a brief resume and paragraph of their career intentions to me for review. Based on their past experience and career plans, I assigned them each to one of our three mentors. Our mentors included one CPA who also was general manager of the CPA firm, one owner/manager of a large construction company, and one HR manager for a regional bank. Afterwards I periodically questioned both students and mentors as to their progress and their satisfaction with the mentoring effort. While it was only a small percentage of students who participated, it was an opportunity for the mentors to learn and develop processes on their end that would prove useful to future mentoring efforts. It was also an opportunity for me to learn more about monitoring the process and helped me to develop ideas for formalizing the mentoring process and linking it with the academic and learning requirements of the course. By the end of the semester, both students and mentors expressed their satisfaction with the outcomes and the mentors were looking forward to program growth.

2.3 Recruiting and Selecting Mentors

Based on our initial success and with the expectation of program growth, we began the process of recruiting additional mentors. The original mentor volunteers began by suggesting a number of potential mentors. I also knew of community members who might also contribute and in some cases potential mentors were contacted simply because of their professional background (cold call). In general, volunteer mentors were

easy to find. There were a few cases where volunteers later dropped out due to time conflicts, but this was very rare. Most volunteers were excited about the opportunity to serve and did their best to help. As reported by Drew (2014), mentors often gain from their mentoring activities as well. "When you teach something, it helps you have a better understanding of what you are trying to teach." By end of the second semester we had approximately 16 active mentors and we were ready to move into the next phase of the process. By the end of the second semester a total of eleven students had participated in the program and of those 11, four had been employed as a direct result of either their meetings with a mentor or via an introduction provided by a mentor. Based on these results we decided we would try to take the program "main stream" and make it a required component for the course. Given that participation would be 100%, additional mentors were recruited. The goal was to match the student with a mentor whose background could augment the student's goals and to have each mentor work with a maximum of two or three students. With class sizes around 30, it was not difficult to find enough mentors, but in some cases it was difficult to match student ambitions with mentor experiences.

2.4 Graded activities

When it was decided to make the mentoring activity a requirement for the course, I knew there would have to be both incentive and accountability for the student. Since students focus more on grades than on voluntary activities, it was recognized that the program should impact student grades if we wanted to improve student involvement. I recognized that evaluation of our mentoring program would be needed (Inzer & Crawford, 2005) to improve mentor relations, protégé readiness, and success of the overall program in the long-run (Priest & Donley 2014). The course was still "Current Issues in Management" and grading of the mentoring activities was solely the responsibility of me and not of the mentors. Student protégé's were required to complete a report by the end of the semester. This report outlined their career goals, information learned from the mentoring process, and how they would apply what they learned as they ventured through their career. As an upper level elective, all of the students were management majors and thus it was easy to require a paper interweaving current issues in management with current issues in the student's career progress. In total, the mentoring activities accounted for 15% of the course grade and the mentoring grade was determined by:

1. Student's submitting a resume and paragraph regarding their career ambitions.
2. Student's completing a minimum of two meetings with their mentor.
3. The mentoring report submitted at the end of the semester.

The mentoring report was graded for writing quality, content, student ability to articulate a career path, and student ability to link mentor advice and suggestions to their career path.

2.5 Matching students with mentors

For the mentor/protégé relationship to be successful, both sides must share information openly (Templeton & Tremont 2014). In order to have both sides communicate openly, there must be trust and respect between the two individuals (Templeton & Tremont 2014). Thus, success of a mentoring relationship is dependent upon the proper matching of mentor to protégé (Allen, 2004; Gong & Chen 2014; Richard, Ismail, Bhuian,

& Taylor, 2009). To match mentors and students in our program, mentors were first asked to provide a brief biography. Students were also asked to provide a resume and a narrative describing their career ambitions. From these two documents, as well as from my personal experience with the mentors, attempts were made to match student protégés to an appropriate mentor. By the second week of class, students submitted their information to me and I would begin the process of matching students with mentors. I would contact students via e-mail with information about their mentor and instructions regarding how to contact their mentor. To verify student meetings, mentors were asked to contact me via e-mail when they met with a protégé.

Prior to the start of each semester, a meeting was held with all available mentors assembling to discuss the upcoming semester and to share past experiences. A set of basic instructions were reinforced with mentors outlining expectations, mentoring suggestions, and my contact information in case there were questions. Mentors were encouraged to utilize their own professional networks as they learned more about their protégée and the career ambitions of their protégée. Mentors were encouraged to set up meetings between their student protégés and additional mentors on an as-needed basis (Templeton & Tremont 2014). This reduced some of the pressure on mentors who felt a disparity between their personal experiences and student career ambitions. With practice, a seasoned mentor would often set several meetings throughout the semester to introduce their student protégée to many of local community leaders. The pre-semester meetings were typically held in the conference room of a local bank. The bank president was one of our mentors and gladly donated the space and light refreshments for the meeting.

2.6 Growth and Expansion

The original course used in this experiment was an upper level management elective. The benefit of having an upper-level elective was the increased interest in a single discipline. The weakness of a single upper-level elective was that only students in that single discipline were allowed the opportunity to participate. In the third year of development, my course load was changed and provided a new opportunity for the mentoring program. The new course load included several sections of our strategic management course. This course was considered the capstone course for the program, so it was required by all business majors. Implications for the mentoring program were 1) more mentors needed to be recruited to cover a larger number of total students and 2) a greater variety of mentor skills, backgrounds, and professions had to be recruited to cover the all discipline areas of the College of Business (Accounting, Finance, General Business, Management, and Marketing).

We continued to recruit additional mentors but found that this was not a difficult task. By this time there had been some community discussion about the program and I would occasionally receive calls from business leaders asking if they could volunteer to participate in the program. By the time of the writing of this paper, there were over 60 volunteer mentors to cover classes that seldom numbered more than 70 students total.

To make the graded portion of the program both useful to the student and applicable to the course content, students were given the task of creating a detailed plan for their personal career development after graduation. This was basically to be a strategic plan for the first ten years of their career and it was expected that the report include both information gained through the mentoring process as well as information gained about strategic planning through course instruction.

Throughout the program, students were expected to meet with their mentor a minimum of two meetings during the semester. It was hoped that a good mentoring relationship would lead to more than the minimum required meetings and that the relationship would continue post-graduation. Similar to the study by Priest & Donley (2014), it was recommended to mentors that during their first meeting they learn a little about their student protégé and that they begin discussing goals and expectations of the relationship. In many cases, mentors and protégé's developed a connection that lasted beyond the one semester program period. One particularly interesting aspect of moving the program from the elective course to the required course was that a few of the students were able to participate in the program for two semesters. In those cases, the students were asked if they preferred a new mentor or if they preferred to continue with their previous mentor. The vast majority preferred to continue with their previous mentor.

3. What We Learned and Suggestions for Others

Over several years of program development, there were several key "take-a-ways" that we recognized as consistent with our program attempts. The most notable were:

1. Students don't always comprehend the value of mentoring, at least not yet. Students in an elective course were much more likely to embrace the mentoring concept than students in a required course. While some students were eager for an opportunity to learn from a mentor, many viewed it as just another chore to get through class. Mentors could easily see if the student was genuinely interested or if they there just there to meet minimum requirements.

2. Mentors are easy to recruit. Many people want an opportunity to share their life experiences with students. Mentors are also good at recruiting other mentors. With time and a little advertising, you will probably have volunteers contact you and request to serve as a mentor.

3. It is not always easy to recruit the right ratio of mentors to student majors. While mentors are easy to find, it is not always easy to get the right professionals to cover the required student majors. For us, this was particularly problematic in accounting. Accounting was one of our largest programs, thus we needed a good number of accounting mentors. Most available mentors were CPA's and were particularly busy during the spring semester (tax season). Thus, every spring semester we had a number of accounting students who we had difficulty placing.

4. The professor will need some assistance. As the program grows the busy-work required with collecting data, matching students with mentors, and following-up with mentor/protégé meetings can become overwhelming. Clerical support of some type quickly becomes necessary.

Unknown to me while developing our mentoring program, Priest & Donley (2014) were conducted an experiment to explore the benefits of a mentoring program between students and alumni of a leadership

studies minor. It was a one-semester pilot mentoring program between students and alumni of a Leadership Studies minor program at Kansas State University. Mentoring has previously been linked to student leadership development and success in college (Dugan & Komives, 2010; Jacobi, 1991). The program by Priest and Donley (2014) illustrated a formal process for mentoring between upper-level students and alumni for the purpose of leadership development and career preparation, or post-graduation success. Priest & Donley (2014) found that the "students in the study wanted to be mentored, and that program alumni were eager to be mentors." Afterwards, participating students felt better prepared for their future career or goals, felt they had expanded their professional network, and reported making "real world" meaning of their leadership education. Mentors also reported a perception of personal growth and found satisfaction with the opportunity to "give back." (Priest & Donley 2014). Very similar to our experience, results of this program demonstrated that a mentoring relationship between students and external professionals can enhance students' development in the areas of career transition, personal growth, and application to "real-life" (Priest & Donley 2014). Information provided by Priest & Donley (2014) highlighted a few ideas that could be used to expand the mentoring concept beyond what I was able to experience. The issues I consider most concerning are that of campus demographics (commuter vs. residential campus) and the resulting ability to recruit mentors and schedule the mentoring process.

3.1 Demographics: Commuter Campus

To help put our experience into perspective, our campus is considered somewhat of a commuter campus. The student population on campus is around 7000, with approximately 900 majoring in business. Out local community includes a population of just fewer than 100,000 and a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) population of almost 300,000. Approximately 80% of the students on campus come from the local MSA and only about 10% of the student body lives on campus, meaning that the majority of our students live and interact in the community and the majority of our students already hold part-time or full-time jobs as they attend school. Given the size of the local community relative to the university, it was easy to recruit a sufficient number of mentors with a diverse array of backgrounds and professional skills. It is expected that most urban or suburban campuses whose community population is much larger than the student population will likely experience similar results and will find that recruiting local mentors will not be difficult. Given these basic parameters, it should be relatively easy to include mentoring as a required activity during the regular semester, either as part of a course or as a stand-alone activity.

3.2 Demographics: Residential Campus

For the more traditional campus, meaning a campus with a large residential student population and/or a campus population that is larger than the adjoining community population, a similar mentoring program is still possible. In these cases it is assumed that most of the student body is not employed locally and that most of the students reside on campus and return to their permanent residence during summers and holiday periods. Campus leaders in charge of the mentoring program will need to reach out to potential mentors across the regions served by the university, or even across the nation or globally. While this might sound daunting, as with the experience of Priest & Donley (2014), many alumni will likely be eager to volunteer

as mentors. This type of program may be best served as a summer or off-semester type program. Many campuses have experience working with summer internships, and a summer mentoring program could be handled administratively in much the same manner. The program could be linked to a class that would occur the following semester or it could be part of a summer program with the expectation of raising additional revenue to cover the cost of program administration.

3.3 Alumni Involvement

Alumni can be a significant source of mentors, particularly for a residential campus. Most universities will have a database of active alumni that includes career, location, and contact information. Contact with alumni to ask for help with mentoring will, in most cases, be well received (Priest & Donley 2014). Many alumni are seeking ways to help their university, but request guidance as to how they can help within their individual means. Serving as a mentor can be inspiring to younger alumni and can help foster a long-term relationship with the university. Alumni can also assist the university in locating additional mentors for the program. These additional mentors need not be connected with the university but will likely enjoy providing support to protégés in their profession.

3.4 Partnering with Campus Development

The mentoring program is a wonderful opportunity for students to build a professional network and to gain guidance regarding their career path. However, long-term this program can also provide a substantial financial benefit to the university. Improved relationships with alumni and professionals can be the foundation for harvesting future donors. Increased success of your graduates, particularly though a program in which the student can note tangible improvements in their career success, will likely improve that graduate's willingness to become a donor. By partnering with Campus Development, a Development professional can work with the mentoring program director(s) to ensure that each mentor has a positive experience and to cultivate a donor relationship.

4. Summary

In summary, the concept of student mentoring is not new, but it is seldom applied to students in higher education. However, once put into practice, the benefits of mentoring will be evident. Quotes from two of our participating mentors stated:

> *I think the mentoring that we are doing is just touching the surface for the students. Our mentoring is simply a drop of water on the seed so that it can poke its head through the dirt and then from there it can grow on their own into a tree.*

CPA and CPA Firm Senior Partner

> *I wish there was something like this when I was a student*

Commercial Loan Officer – Regional Bank

As of the writing of this report, approximately 220 students have passed through our program. Since the program started small and developed beyond what I think any of us originally envisioned, there was never an intention of using the process as part of an organized study. Despite the lack of specific records, I can report that of the students participating, at least 6 were hired directly as a result of their communication with their mentor. In these cases, reported back to me by the mentor, the student protégé left such an impression that they were offered a position after the second meeting with their mentor. While these cases are few and isolated, and despite proper documentation and study, it has become very evident that a structured mentoring program for undergraduate students will yield positive results, particularly in regards to community support and enthusiasm.

4.1 Lessons Learned and Suggestions for Application

Reviewing the study by Priest & Donley (2014), I agree with most of their recommendations and would expand recommendations in a few areas.

4.1.1 Program Recommendations

Mentors and protégés should be matched based on similarity of career interests or backgrounds. The closer the match, the greater the chance the mentor and protégé will develop a professional relationship. Priest and Donley (2014) recommend the mentoring relationship last at least a year. While I think the longer relationship is better, I also believe that a semester length program is easier to manage. My experience suggests that a single semester is enough time for the mentor and protégé to decide if they want to continue the relationship long-term. In several cases, a good relationship will develop into a lifelong professional friendship.

Develop the program so that all students in your academic program can experience the benefits of having a mentor. This places a greater load on the university and program directors, but it also provides the greatest potential benefits for both the students and the college/university. When possible, start the program early. Priest & Donley (2014) suggest as early as the freshman and sophomore years and while I don't disagree, my experience suggests that students need a little more time to think through their career ambitions. My students were all in their junior or senior years. Those students who best took advantage of the program wished they had started sooner. On the other end of the spectrum, those students who were more uncertain about their future were reported by mentors as being mostly disengaged from the process. From this experience I recommend that the program be available to sophomore volunteers but required by the junior year. I also recommend that students have the opportunity to work with more than one mentor over the course of multiple semesters.

Both the mentors and students should be prepared for their first meeting. Some mentors prefer to meet at their office while others prefer to meet offsite. In either case, mentors found it helpful to have a few basic questions prepared before the meeting, even if those specific questions were never discussed. Likewise, it is particularly good to help the student prepare before the first meeting so they can better understand how to utilize the talents and skills of their mentor. I advise using a class session or lecture opportunity to help

students consider their career plans and prepare a list of questions to initiate conversation with their mentor(s).

Give considerable thought as to how you want to manage the program and who will handle the program. If using faculty as the program director, the professor will need clerical assistance. If using staff as program director, they will likely need some measure of faculty support in stressing the importance of the program and linking the mentoring program to part of the academic curriculum. Students take the process much more seriously if their activities are observed and measures as part of a course grade.

4.1.2 Recommendations for Mentors and Students

Mentors should not only be successful in their career field, but should also be open-minded, a good-listener, compassionate, and understanding (Priest & Donley 2014). During the first meeting, the mentor and protégé should establish expected outcomes for their relationship. This list of expectations can then drive their future meetings and conversations. A key recommendation the mentors provided for students was to be open and accepting of constructive feedback (Priest & Donley 2014). Students should be engaged in the process and not appear to just be meeting minimum program criteria. It is important that students understand just how much can be gained from their mentoring relationships. Students need to be serious about the process and serious about taking the first steps toward a successful career.

4.2 Benefits

The foremost benefit to students is probably that of basic career advice. Many undergraduate students have little information about their career opportunities and little information about the steps involved in career development. Modern culture has left many of our undergraduates naive about the realities of their chosen profession and many have unrealistic expectations about employment opportunities, pay levels, time to advancement, etc. A mentor can help their protégé develop a much more realistic plan for career advancement.

Mentors also serve as great coaches in helping students prepare for job interviews. Our mentors regularly spent time with students helping them develop a career plan, research the organizations that might allow the student to achieve their plan, then coached the student on interview techniques and resume writing to help them through the application process. In short, when a student develops a successful relationship they will have a lifelong career counselor they can trust and turn to for regular advice.

Just as the program can be beneficial to the students, it can also be just as beneficial to the department, college, or university. Those who serve as mentors feel a much stronger connection to the university. They develop very positive feelings about the academic programs and very positive feelings about the quality of students graduating from these programs. As these impressions continue to develop over time, the mentoring group becomes a strong advocate for the school which should ultimately lead to greater employment for new graduates as well as fertile ground for development and fundraising efforts.

Involvement of alumni as mentors can strengthen the bond between those alumni and the university and again, improve development and fundraising efforts.

Finally, don't assume that this type of program will not "fit" within the demographics of your institution. I strongly believe that mentoring for undergraduates can be applied at both small and large universities, at both residential and commuter campuses, and across any range of disciplines. It is simply a matter of organization and effort, but the rewards can be significant.

5. References

AACSB. (2016). Eligibility Procedures and Accreditation Standards for Business Accreditation. Adopted: April 8, 2013. Most Recent Update: January 31, 2016. *AACSB International – The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business*. 1-53.

Allen, T. D. (2004). Protégé selection by mentors: Contributing individual and organizational factors. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 65, 469-483.

Allen, T. D., Eby, L. T., & Lentz, E. (2006). Mentorship behaviors and mentorship quality associated with formal mentoring programs: Closing the gap between research and practice. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91, 567-578.

Allen, T. D., Poteet, M. L., & Burroughs, S. M. (1997). The mentor's perspective: A qualitative inquiry and future research agenda. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 51, 70-89.

Allen, T. D., Eby, L. T., Poteet, M. L., Lentz, E., & Lima, L. (2004). Career benefits associated with mentoring for protégés: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89(1), 127-136.

Baugh, S. G., & Fagenson-Eland, E. A. (2007). Formal mentoring programs. In B. R. Ragins & K. Kram (Eds.), *The handbook of mentoring at work: Theory, research and practice* (pp. 249-271). London, UK: Sage.

BHEF. (2013). The National Higher Education and Workforce Initiative: Forging Strategic Partnerships for Undergraduate Innovation and Workforce Development. *Business-Higher Education Forum*. 1-36.

Blass, F. R., & Ferris, G. R. (2007). Leader reputation: The role of mentoring, political skill, contextual learning, and adaptation. *Human Resource Management,* 46(1), 5-19.

Bozionelos, N., & Wang, L. (2006). The relationship of mentoring and network resources with career success in the Chinese organizational environment. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management,* 17(9), 1531-1546.

Brashear, T. G., Bellenger, D. N., Boles, J. S., & Barksdale Jr, H. C. (2006). An exploratory study of the relative effectiveness of different types of sales force mentors. *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management,* 26(1), 7-18.

Chandler, D. E., Kram, K. E., & Yip, J. (2011). An ecological systems perspective on mentoring at work: A review and future prospects. *The Academy of Management Annals*, 5(1), 519-570.

Crisp, G., & Cruz, I. (2009). Mentoring college students: A critical review of the literature between 1990 and 2007. *Research in Higher Education,* 50(6), 525-545.

Drew, J. (2014). How to Start and Run a Mentoring Program. *Journal of Accountancy*, March, 34-40.

Eby, L. T., Durley, J. R., Evans, S. C., & Ragins, B. R. (2008). Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences: Scale development and nomological validation. *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 93, 358-373.

Eby, L. T., & Lockwood, A. (2005). Protégés' and mentors' reactions to participating in formal mentoring programs: A qualitative investigation. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 67, 441-458.

Eby, L. T., & McManus, S. E. (2004). The protégé's role in negative mentoring experiences. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 65, 255-275.

Elmore, T. (2008). *Lifegiving mentors. A guide for investing your life in others.* Duluth, GA: Growing Leaders.

Fibkins, W. L. (2011). *An administrator's guide to better teacher mentoring*. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield Education.

Gong, R. & Chen, S. Y. (2014). Career Outcome of Employees: The Mediating Effect of Mentoring. *Social Behavior and personality.* 42(3), 487-502.

Gong, R., Chen, S. Y., & Lee, S. L. (2011). Does mentoring work? The mediating effect of mentoring in China. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal,* 39, 807-824.

Griffith, D. A. (1997). An Examination of Marketing Educator Training in U.S. Doctoral Programs. *Marketing Education Review,* 7(2), Summer 1997.

Hezlett, S. A., & Gibson, S. K. (2005). Mentoring and human resource development: Where we are and where we need to go. *Advances in Developing Human Resources,* 7, 446-469.

Inzer, L.D. & Crawford, C.B. (2005). A review of formal and informal mentoring: processes, problems, and design. *Journal of Leadership Education,* 4(1), 31-47.

Jacobi, M. (1991). Mentoring and undergraduate academic success: A literature review. *Review of Educational Research,* 61(4), 505–532.

Johnston, T. C., Keller, R. H., & Linnhoff, S. (2014). Mentoring in Doctoral Programs and Preparedness of Early Career Marketing Educators. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal,* 18(4), 15-22.

Johnston, T. C., Milkman, M. I., & McCoy, J. P. (2013). Doctoral training in teaching and preparedness of early career marketing educators. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal,* 17(3), 107-116.

Karp, M. M. & Bork, R. H. (2012). "They Never Told Me What to Expect, So I Didn't Know What to Do": Defining and Clarifying the Role of a Community College Student. *CCRC Working Paper No. 47*, Community College Research Center, Columbia University. 1-43.

Kram, K. E., & Isabella, L. A. (1985). Mentoring alternatives: The role of peer relationships in career development. *Academy of Management Journal,* 28(1), 110-132.

Kunich, J. C. & Lester, R. I. (1999). Leadership and the art of mentoring: Tool kit for the time machine. *Journal of Leadership Studies,* 6(17), 117-127.

Lankau, M. J., & Scandura, T. A. (2007). Mentoring as a forum for personal learning in organizations. In B. R. Ragins & Kram, K. E. (Eds.), *The handbook of mentoring at work: Theory, research and practice* (pp. 95-122). London, UK: Sage.

Lester, P. B., Hannah, S. T., Harms, P. D., Vogelgesang, G. R., & Avolio, B. J. (2011). Mentoring impact on leader efficacy development: A field experiment. *Academy of Management Learning & Education,* 10(3), 409-429.

Levenson, A. R., Van der Stede, W. A., & Cohen, S. G. (2006). Measuring the relationship between managerial competencies and performance. *Journal of Management,* 32(3), 360-380.

Liang, B., Tracy, A. J., Taylor, C. A., & Williams, L. M. (2002). Mentoring college-age women: A relational approach. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* 30(2), 271-288.

Lopez, S. (2014). A Good Job Is Hard to Find…Until Students Know What They Do Best. Wiley Online Library (wileyonlinelibrary.com), *American College Personnel Association and Wiley Periodicals, Inc.* March-April, 1-6.

Maxwell, J. C. (2008). *Mentoring 101*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

McDowall-Long, K. (2004). Mentoring relationships: Implications for practitioners and suggestions for future research. *Human Resource Development International*, 7(4), 519-534.

McLaughlin, C. (2010). Mentoring: What Is It? How Do We Do It and How Do We Get More Of It? *Health Services Research*. 45(3), 871-884.

Murphy, W. M. (2011). From e-mentoring to blended mentoring: Increasing students' developmental initiation and mentors' satisfaction. *Academy of Management Learning & Education,* 10(4), 606-622,

Pan, W., Sun, L.-Y., & Chow, I. H. S. (2011). The impact of supervisory mentoring on personal learning and career outcomes: The dual moderating effect of self-efficacy. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 78, 264-273.

Parise, M. R., & Forret, M. L. (2008). Formal mentoring programs: The relationship of program design and support to mentors' perceptions of benefits and costs. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 72, 225-240.

Peluchette, J. V. E., & Jeanquart, S. (2000). Professionals' use of different mentor sources at various career stages: Implications for career success. *The Journal of Social Psychology,* 140(5), 549-564.

Poteat, L. F., Shockley, K. M., & Allen, T. D. (2009). Mentor-protégé commitment fit and relationship satisfaction in academic mentoring. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 74, 332-337.

Priest, K. L., & Donley, S. (2014). Developing Leadership for Life: Outcomes from a Collegiate Student-Alumni Mentoring Program. *Journal of Leadership Education.* 13(2) Summer, 107-117.

Pullins, E. B., Fine, L. M., & Warren, W. L. (1996). Identifying peer mentors in the sales force: An exploratory investigation of willingness and ability. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 24(2), 125-136.

Rhodes, J. E. (2005). A model of youth mentoring. In D. L. DuBois & M. J. Karcher (Eds.), *Handbook of youth mentoring* (pp. 30-43). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Richard, O. C., Ismail, K. M., Bhuian, S. N., & Taylor, E. C. (2009). Mentoring in supervisor-subordinate dyads: Antecedents, consequences, and test of a mediation model of mentorship. *Journal of Business Research, 62,* 1110-1118.

Rollins, M., Rutherford, B., & Nickell, D. (2014). The role of mentoring on outcome based sales performance: A qualitative study from the insurance industry. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring.* 12(2), 119-132.

Stratford, M (2015). Obama's Final Two Years. *Inside Higher Ed.* January 21. From https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/01/21/obamas-higher-education-plan-end-his-term 8/30/2016.

Templeton, N. R. & Tremont, J. W. (2014). Applying Business Lessons to Education: Mentoring as Job-Embedded professional Development. *The International Journal of Organizational Innovation.* 6(4), 54-59.

Tonidandel, S., Avery, D. R., & Phillips, M. G. (2007). Maximizing returns on mentoring: Factors affecting subsequent protégé performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 28(1), 89-110.