WHAT IS IT TO BE A GOOD MENTOR OR MENTEE?

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THREE QUESTIONS

• What is it to be a good mentor?
• What is it to be a good mentee?
• How to maintain a good mentor-mentee relationship?

OUR ROLES AS A PHYSICIST

• What roles do you have at work?
  • Manager? Dealing with or controlling things or people, making decisions, etc.
  • Leader? Leading a group of people or an organization
  • What about a Mentor?

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), mentors have two main functions: work-related coaching and development and/or serving as role models and supporters.

Coaching Career development Support

WORK ENVIRONMENT

• We, medical physicists, deal with people at work.
  • Chair and the administrative team
  • Physician team
  • Physicist team: Physicists, Physics Assistants, Dosimetrists
  • Clinical teams: Therapists, Nurses, Technologists
  • Technological team: Engineer/Technician,

PHYSICISTS’ ROLES IN CLINIC

• Mentors’ roles:
  • Coaching: therapists, dosimetrists, residents, students, even doctors
  • Supporting: helping each other out, trouble shoot, emotional support, providing advice
  • Sponsorship: providing LOAs for students, residents, colleagues

• Mentees’ roles:
  • Getting information and knowledge from others: senior physicists, dosimetrists, nurses, physicists, etc.
  • Getting support and sponsorship from others: departmental chair, peer physicists, recommendation, etc.

Element #1: Desire

Building mentor-mentee relationship improves interpersonal skills at work

• Human beings are driven by desires. “Desire” to eat, sleep, be successful, etc.
• How about the “desire” of becoming a good mentor?
• Benefits of becoming a good mentor: two-way learning, build good relationship with coworkers, improves reputation, grows leadership skills, advancement in academic or clinical service ladder, build connections
HOW TO BE A GOOD MENTEE

- Mentee definition: someone to learn from a mentor

The desire to learn

- The “Desire” that drive people to be a good mentee
  - Learn knowledge, explore and willing to challenge themselves
  - Be supported in the work environment, career development
  - Be sponsored and recommended
  - Building connection

THREE PRIMARY MOTIVATORS

McClelland’s Human Motivation Theory:

- Achievement: meeting or exceeding a standard of excellence and/or comparing one’s performance, desire to succeed
- Affiliation: maintaining or avoiding disruption of close, desire for interpersonal relationships
- Power/Influence: having an influence or making an impact on others

In social life, all three motivators are present in each person, but one dominates

MENTORING STYLES BASED ON MOTIVATOR

- Affiliation: to establish and maintain close relationship, to build social bonding
- Mentoring styles: “Lending a hand”, “Friendship”

- Achievement: to meet or exceed a self-imposed standard of high achievement, or to outperform others
- Mentoring styles: “Face setting”, “Competitive”

- Power/Influence: to advise, help and support others, to gain control and have influence on others, or to have superiority in strength, position or social status.
- Mentoring Styles: “Advisory”, “Prescriptive”

SELF-REFLECTION EXERCISE:

- If you are a mentor, what drives your behavior? What are your mentoring styles? Are they working?
- Affiliation, Achievement, or Power/Influence

- If you are a mentee, what are your primary motivator? What mentoring styles would work for you?
  - Build trust and connection
  - Self-motivated
  - Need direction and be pushed forward

Element #2: mentoring styles/strategies

CONNECT

- Building trust and Affiliative feeling: Create a harmonious environment, emotional bonds
  - show your care, ask about family and life, offer help: “How can I help you on this project?” “What goals do you want to achieve and how can I help?”

- Being Friendly and Active Listening: start conversations, be available and approachable

MOTIVATE

- Pace-setting: show your competence and achievement; Expect mentee to self-motivate and improve
  - But... “my mentor is not meeting my expectations” “not responding to my email” “not a self-motivated person”

- Did you try different styles? Maybe you are too far ahead?

- Collaborative: form a team, peer-pressure, give credit to those who exceed your expectations
  - “Tom improved our annual QA excel sheet”, “Amber designed a better way for our monthly imaging QA”
  - Let mentor model instructs your junior mentor to (fulfill their desire of being recognized, teaching motivates them to expand their knowledge)
**CAREER DEVELOPMENT**
- Be clear on career goals: Academic centers, community or private hospitals, industry, etc.
- Define a career path: Master or PhD; certification and residency; Act as an advocate, setting up connections and collaborations
- Provide advice and sponsorship
  - “Advisory” and “Prescribing” styles
  - “I’ve tried all different strategies, but still not working” Why?

**EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
Element #3: Align expectations and understand responsibilities for both sides

**FORM A MENTOR/MENTEE AGREEMENT**
- Basic agreement
  - What topic/area to be addressed
  - Time commitment, meeting frequency
  - Keep conversations confidential
  - Be honest, direct and respectful to each other
- Defining responsibilities and aligning expectations
  - Establish responsibilities and expectations for both mentor and mentee
  - Frequent meetings to check status

**INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**
- IEP Contents
  - Long-term goals (5-10 years)
  - Short-term goals (1 year)
  - Areas of focus
  - Specific goals in focus area
  - Optimal distribution of effort
- Mentor’s Review Process
  - Provide feedback, help review
  - Provide assistance, help achieve goals
  - Routine meetings to discuss progress and challenges

**MANAGING DILEMMAS AND CONFLICTS**
- As a mentor, there may be conflicts between you and your mentee, or within your mentee, or your mentees with others
- Strategies:
  - Be facilitative: Learn to engage with the mentee and try to identify issues:
    - Family issues, Childhood issues, Language barriers, Religious observance, clinical duties, etc.
  - Be empathetic: Think from a different perspective
  - Be emotionally intelligent: Proactively apply different mentoring styles
- Q: What if it just doesn’t work out with my mentee no matter how hard I tried?
  - A: Just end the mentoring relationship and move on.

**THREE QUESTIONS**
- What is it to be a good mentor?
  - The “desire” to teach, support, sponsor others
- What is it to be a good mentee?
  - The “desire” to learn, be successful, build good connections
- How to maintain a good mentor-mentee relationship?
  - Adjust your mentoring style based on your mentee’s motivator
  - Align expectations and responsibilities
  - Just like any other relationship: trust and respect, commitment, ongoing and effective communication
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION