THE STORY OF MENTOR

The story of Mentor comes from Homer’s Odyssey. When Odysseus, king of Ithaca, went to fight in the Trojan War, he entrusted the care of his household to Mentor, who served as teacher and overseer of Odysseus’s son, Telemachus.

After the war, Odysseus was condemned to wander vainly for ten years in his attempt to return home. In time, Telemachus, now grown, went in search of his father. Telemachus was accompanied on his quest by Athena, Goddess of War and patroness of the arts and industry, who assumed the form of Mentor.

Eventually, father and son were reunited and together they cast down would-be usurpers of Odysseus’s throne and of Telemachus’s birthright. In time the word Mentor became synonymous with trusted advisor, friend, teacher and wise person. History offers many examples of helpful mentoring relationships - such as Socrates and Plato, Hayden and Beethoven, Freud and Jung.

History and legend record the deeds of princes and kings, but each of us has a birthright to be all that we can be. Mentors are those special people in our lives who, through their deeds and work, help us to move toward fulfilling that potential.

MENTORING IS...

A developmental, caring, sharing and helping relationship where one person invests time, know-how and effort in enhancing another person's growth, knowledge and skills.

Responding to critical needs in the life of another person to prepare that person for greater performance, productivity or achievement in the future.

The Mentor...

Has no direct responsibility for performance, but helps the mentee clarify goals, maintain motivation and momentum, and develop and implement effective plans and strategies.

Observes performance from the sidelines, offers insight and perspective on projects, and provides feedback.

Establishes trust by looking for common ground; revealing times when you, as mentor, weren't "perfect"; asking open-ended, non-threatening questions to start conversation.

Reflects credibility; high expectations; empathy; good listening skills; an encouraging attitude; ability to teach.

Mentoring ...

Builds skills and deepens insight and understanding in both the mentor and mentee. Through a process of mutual sharing, they develop trust, invest in the relationship, listen to each other, and offer help. The end result is a stronger, more insightful, more supportive team.
THE FOUR-STAGE MENTORING MODEL

STAGE ONE:
FIRST MEETING
Uncertain, Hesitant,
Expectant and Excited,
Promises, My Needs-Your Needs,
Contract, What? How?

STAGE FOUR:
COMPLETING
Transition from Mentor to Friend,
Preparing to Say Goodbye
Thanks, Growth, Joy, Regret,
Dawn of a New Age, New
Direction, Hope, Planning the
New Journey

STAGE TWO:
BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND
Getting to Know,
Recognizing Differences,
Valuing Differences, Challenge,
Allowing Time and Space,
Pain and Pleasure, Reciprocating,
Supporting

STAGE THREE:
LEARNING & INCORPORATING
CHANGE
Making Changes, Commitment,
Reconciling Differences,
Pain and Pleasure,
Strengths and Weaknesses,
Answering the Questions,
Mutual Support

Source: 32 Activities on Coaching and Mentoring by
Mike whittaker and Ann Cartwright, American
BEHAVIORS TO AVOID

Mentors should not:

× Betray mentee confidences.
× Try to solve mentee’s problems for them.
× Always have a better idea.
× Try and dictate how mentee performs job.
× Gossip about coworker.
× Constantly praise the past, lament the present.
× Become involved with administrative problems involving mentee.
× Preach or lecture. Talk with mentee, not at him/her.
× Do not be overly critical, sarcastic, or tease excessively.
× Pry into mentee’s personal life.
DEVELOPING YOUR MENTORING STYLE

POSITIVE BEHAVIORS:

☐ Foremost, be a positive role model. Actions speak louder than words.

☐ Listen carefully without taking on the mentee’s problem or giving advice. This will enable the mentee to articulate the problem and sort out solutions on his/her own.

☐ Enable the mentee to determine what an appropriate course of action is in a problem situation.
  • Review the existing situation.
  • Question what the desired results would be.
  • Focus mentee’s attention on possible solutions.
  • Realize that the mentee must determine their own course of action.

☐ Respect the right of individuals to make their own choices.

☐ Keep all conversations confidential.

☐ Ask open-ended questions that lead to more detailed answers.

☐ Be available to the mentee when needed.

☐ Be dependable in meeting times; provide stability, inspire trust.

☐ Serve as a sounding board for new ideas.

☐ Introduce mentee to other Extension co-workers.
☐ Promote mentee involvement in Extension culture (agent associations, activities).

☐ Serve as a patient, tolerant, competent teacher.

☐ Calm fears of the unknown by explaining generally what can be expected at specific activities.

☐ Provide job shadowing opportunities.

☐ Be honest, sincere, and comfortable with differences.

☐ Help mentee learn from his/her mistakes, not to be discouraged by them.

☐ Be encouraging and supportive; praise even small accomplishments.

☐ Help mentee put problems in perspective.

☐ Help mentee define short and long term goals.

☐ Understand the natural stages of a mentor/mentee relationship:
  • Initiation - relationship is established
  • Cultivation - both people are involved in the relationship and receive benefits
  • Separation - mentee concludes contractual time of mentee relationship or desires independence
  • Redefinition - mentor and mentee become colleagues and share a mutual respect

A mentor’s role is to help the mentee adapt to the organization, but also to encourage him/her to think independently.

Your purpose is not to produce a clone of yourself!
## MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highly Structured</th>
<th>1. Highly structured, short-term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The relationship is formally established for an introductory or short period, often to meet specific organization objectives. For example, a new employee may be paired with a senior person.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Highly structured, long-term</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Often used for &quot;Succession Planning&quot;, this relationship involves grooming someone to take over a departing person’s job or function or to master a craft.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virtually None</td>
<td>3. Informal, short-term</td>
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<td>This type of off-the-cuff mentoring ranges from one-shot or spontaneous help to occasional or as-needed counseling. There may be no ongoing relationship.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spontaneous Short-Lived</td>
<td>4. Informal, long-term</td>
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<td>&quot;Friendship mentoring: consists of being available as needed.</td>
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### Length of Intervention

- **Long-Term**
  - **(even for life)**

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WAYS TO REACH YOUR MENTEE

❖ **By e-mail.**
   It’s free and can be done at your convenience.

❖ **By regular mail.**
   Send examples of programs, brochures, letters that you think could help.

❖ **By phone.**
   It’s more personal, more effective, but may be long distance.

❖ **By personal visits.**
   Early in the mentoring process, visit his/her county to get a better understanding of the work environment.

❖ **At all scheduled district and state Extension functions.**
   Be sure your mentee feels part of the informal structure of the organization. When appropriate, include him/her when going to lunch, traveling to meetings, attending free time functions.

❖ Invite mentee to **attend your programs** or serve as a co-presenter with you.