Building Your Mentor Network

Local and Distant Mentors

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What is a Mentor?

- **mentor**: 'an experienced trusted adviser

- Mentorship is a relationship in which a more experienced or knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or knowledgeable person.

- "Mentoring" is a process that always involves communication and is based on trust.
Mentor was a trusted friend of Odysseus

When Odysseus set out for the Trojan War he entrusted Mentor with his house and the education of his son

Thus the term “wise and faithful counselor” or “monitor”
Mentor: 

**Drive** = How motivated is the mentee?

**Distance** = Where is the mentee’s experience vs. where they need to be

Mentee: 

**Gap** = The experience level of the mentor vs the mentee.

**Relevance** = Distance from the mentor’s expertise to the mentee’s goal.

**Effort** = How much work is it to bridge the gap of experience or relevance.

What Are the Attributes of a Good Mentor?
**Attributes of a Good Mentor? Empirical Search**

- **Purpose**: Conducted a systematic review to evaluate the attributes of a good mentor
- **Data Sources**: PubMed®, Embase®, the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews and Google from January 2000 to November 2014 for English-language studies
- **Study Selection**: Independently screened citations to identify suitable studies
- **Data Extraction**: Extracted data on participant characteristics, interventions, outcomes, applicability, and quality
- **Results**: Due to the immense heterogeneity in study design, effort deemed not feasible!!
  - Therefore relied on expert opinion and personal experiences

*Duke Clinical Research Institute*
Attributes of a Good Mentor

- Devoted teacher
- Wise person
- A positive role model
- Enthusiastic and driven
- Effective communicator
- A good listener
- Has high emotional intelligence
- Takes a personal interest in the mentoring relationship
- Committed to ongoing personal and advisee’s growth
- Sets high expectations of oneself and others
- Motivates others to achieve their full potential
- Puts the advisee’s best interest ahead of his/her
Aspects of Mentoring in Research

- Helps the mentee figure out where they want to go
- Listens and helps sort out what the mentee wants
- Gives guidance through being a role model
- Provides opportunities and resources
- Provides reassurance and positive feedback
- Sometimes saying no or “having difficult conversations”
- Knowing when to let the bird fly from the nest
Knocking on the Doors

Know what are you looking for!

- Career differentiation
- Research direction (niche)
- Project ideas(s)
- Funding

- Honing skills
- Prioritization / decision-making
- Finding a job / promotion
- Contacts-opportunities
- Establishing a national reputation
Tricks to Distant Mentoring

- **Forms of Communication**
  - Email, text
  - Phone, Skype
  - Visits
  - Fellowships, sabbatical

- **Regardless How…**
  - Be compulsive, keep routine!
  - Use formal agendas and work update lists
  - Choose medium wisely!
CORC Collaborative Research Model

- **Traditional Research**
  - Single investigator, site
  - Slow data collection
  - Working in a ‘silo’
  - Few papers, slowly produced
  - Credit to single person
  - Slow pace of scientific contributions
  - Competition
  - Sequential projects

- **CORC Model**
  - Multiple sites and PIs
  - Rapid data aggregation
  - Sharing of credit
  - Multiple, simultaneous multi-author papers
  - Shared team credit
  - Rapid contributions to science
  - Collaboration
  - More parallel projects