Peer Mentoring for Career Success

Please consider sitting with someone you don’t know. Maybe you’ll find a new peer mentor!
Objectives

• Utilize a peer-to-peer mentorship framework to enhance career development.
• Engage in brief “speed peer mentorship” to focus on career development and gain experience in providing and receiving peer mentor support.
• Develop a set of peer mentorship skills to assist with career success.
Agenda

• Introductions
• Introduction to Peer Mentoring, including our experiences
• Speed peer-mentoring
• Wrap-up
Introductions
What is a mentor/mentoring?

- “a trusted counselor or guide”

Bussey-Jones et al, 2006
Functions of Mentors

**Career-Related**
- Teaching
- Enhance visibility and connection in academic environment
- Coaching
- Guidance
- Information sharing
- Moral Support

**Psychosocial**
- Develop competence
- Role-modeling
- Encourage self-reflection
- Emotional support
- Personal feedback
- Socialization into profession

Qualities of a Good Mentor

• Honest
• Sincere
• Active listener
• Understand mentees need
• Create a safe environment for expression

Sambunjak, et al, 2009
Why you need a (peer) mentor?

• Having a mentor:
  – Facilitates academic career development
  – Associated with improved job satisfaction and productivity

• It may be difficult to identify and develop relationship with senior mentor.

• Peer mentoring complements traditional mentoring and may have different advantages.

Lord et al, 2012; Varkey et al, 2012; Shollen et al, 2014
Traditional Mentor vs Peer Mentor

• More experienced mentor
  – More knowledgeable guidance
  – Professional connections
• Aimed at mentees’ needs
• Hierarchical
  – Risk for exploitative relationship
• Risk of homogeneity
  – Mentor teaching mentee to be like him/herself
• Role modeling
• Lack of “suitable” mentors

• Similar experience/rank
  – May limit professional connections and experience in early career
  – Helps with career strategizing
• Mutuality
• Absence of power inequality
  – Supports mutual feedback
• More personalized support
  – Less inhibition
• Information sharing

Bussey-Jones et al, 2006; Johnson et al, 2011; Kram and Isabella, 1985
Advantages of Peer Mentoring

• Increase career satisfaction and confidence
• Receive critical feedback
• Provide additional, specific accountability
• Foster professional collaborations and networking
• Moderate relationships with colleagues
• Obtain detailed assistance from someone in the trenches

Lord et al, 2012; Varkey et al, 2012; personal experience
Challenges of Peer Mentoring

• Professional-personal enmeshment
  – ie avoiding “coffee with a friend” syndrome
• Finding time to meet
• Professional competition among peers
• For early career peers:
  – Fewer cumulative experiences
  – More limited advisory role
  – Fewer professional connections

Peer Mentoring across the Career Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Career</th>
<th>Mid-Career</th>
<th>Late Career</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning the ropes</td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>Maintaining knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining professional role</td>
<td>Maintaining visibility</td>
<td>Assuming consultative role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work/life balance</td>
<td>Leading a team</td>
<td>Recognizing others expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining visibility</td>
<td>Mentoring others</td>
<td>Preparing for retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing for advancement</td>
<td>Re-assessment/re-direction of career</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Kram and Isabella, 1985
Peer Mentoring Structures

• Peer mentoring groups
  – Facilitated
  – Unfacilitated
  – By seniority, research area, geography, gender, etc

• Dyadic mentoring
TOM, MENTORING IS ABOUT MORE THAN ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO BE JUST LIKE YOU!
Our Experience
Agenda

• Introductions
• Introduction to Peer Mentoring, including our experiences
• Speed peer-mentoring
• Wrap-up
Questions for Peer Mentor

• May be related or unrelated to goals
• Examples:
  – Are my goals realistic?
  – What do I need to do to take the next step in my career?
  – How do I discuss problem X with my senior mentor?
  – How do I approach a struggling learner?
  – How could I implement this QI idea I have?
Preparation for Speed Peer Mentoring

• 3-5 minutes to prepare
  – Think about the next 6 months
  – Write down some goals and questions
• Prioritize what you want to discuss
Speed Peer Mentoring Guidelines

• Find someone you don’t know well
• Share the time
• Each person should be both mentor and mentee
• Consider setting up a plan for continuing your conversation
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Wrap-Up Discussion

• How did it feel to be both mentor and mentee?
• How is this different from other (peer) mentoring experiences you’ve had?
• Moving forward how will you use this workshop?
• What barriers to and facilitators of peer mentorship are you likely to encounter?
Questions?