

**Pathways to Success In Clinical Research:
The Roles of Protected Time and the
Mentor-Mentee Relationship**

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Life As We Know It

Family

Profession

Avocations

External Circumstances

What Are Your Goals:

Internal vs. Instrumental Motivation

Previous research has shown that people who do the same work can view it as a job, a career, or a calling, and that people who view their work as a calling find more satisfaction and do better work than people with the other two orientations.

Callings have several characteristics, but one significant factor that distinguishes them from jobs and careers is the relative insignificance of instrumental factors to why people are working in the first place. Instead, callings denote a focus on the fulfillment experienced from the work itself, often accompanied by a sense that the work contributes to others in a meaningful way.

Internal vs. Instrumental Motivation

Because activities generate instrumental consequences does not mean that those consequences should become motives. Internal motives may be weakened by focus on instrumental consequences and person who prioritize instrumental motives attain lower levels of success (time to promotion/rank) than those who are guided by internal motives

Planning the Next Five Years: Goals

Personal/Professional Growth

Career Success

Academic-Progress towards promotion

Independent, Continuing Funding

Secure Employment

Sustained Engagement

Getting Your Research Started

Are you ready to start? (Approvals, materials, resources)

What is the question?

What will you use to answer it?

Whose help do you need to get your answers?

Getting Your Research Started

Identify A Mentor/ Subject Area – both interpersonal chemistry and interest in the research topic are important. Optimally your research will be sustaining and distinguishing

Don't Wait – Get Started – Plan Ahead

Expect Delays

Protect Your Time

Necessary (and Overlapping) Distinctions

Advising

Coaching

Mentoring

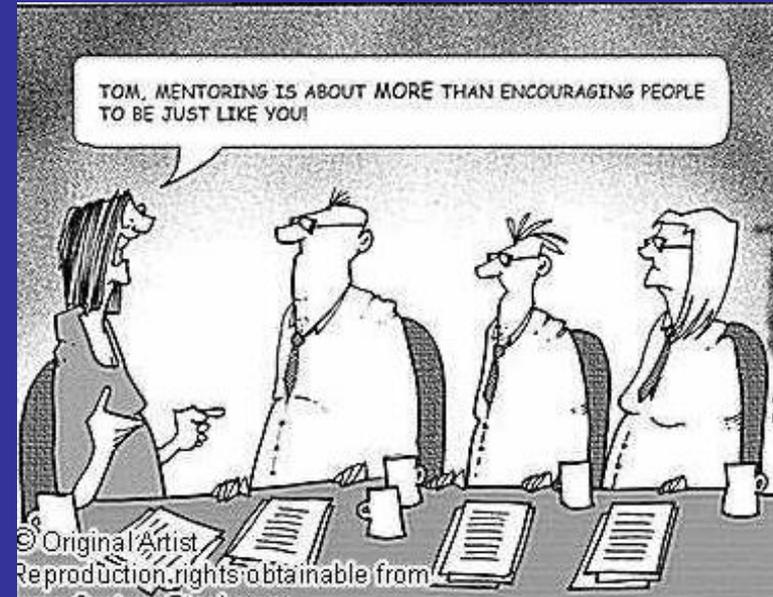
Mentor – Definition/Origin

Mentor: Greek, Mentor was the friend of Odysseus who was asked to look over Odysseus' son during the Trojan wars

Father-like teacher, trusted friend

What Makes a Great Mentor?

- A open ended commitment to mentorship
- Prioritization of the mentee's success
- Personal characteristics
 - Enthusiasm: infectious, sustaining
 - Sensitivity: especially when things inevitably go wrong
 - Be attentive to underlying concerns
 - Appreciate individual differences
 - Not all take the same path or want the same goal



Mentoring

Mentoring is a **committed**, long-term relationship through which an experienced individual (mentor) takes a special interest in, builds a relationship with, and **fosters the professional and personal growth** of another individual (mentee). Successful mentoring relationships typically focus on the conceptualization, delineation and attainment of both career (short and long term) and personal goals including efforts to overcome barriers to success and to carry out this process in an ongoing fashion. Mentors serve as role models, teachers, counselors, problem solvers and guides. Mentoring includes **personal feedback, extended interactions, frank bi-directional dialogue**, and provision of social and emotional support. A strong and effective mentoring relationship is beneficial not only to the mentee, but also to the mentee's academic unit, the mentor, and to the university as a whole.

Mentor Mentee Relationships: Goals

Mentee:

Personal/Professional Growth

Career Success, Promotion

Independence (Continuing funding, research area)

Mentor:

Mentee Success

New Colleagues/Collaborators

Program Growth

Elements of the Mentoring Relationship

Mentoring responsibility is difficult to define

Little formal teaching of the mentoring process

Rather mentoring is learned by example of colleagues and as OJT

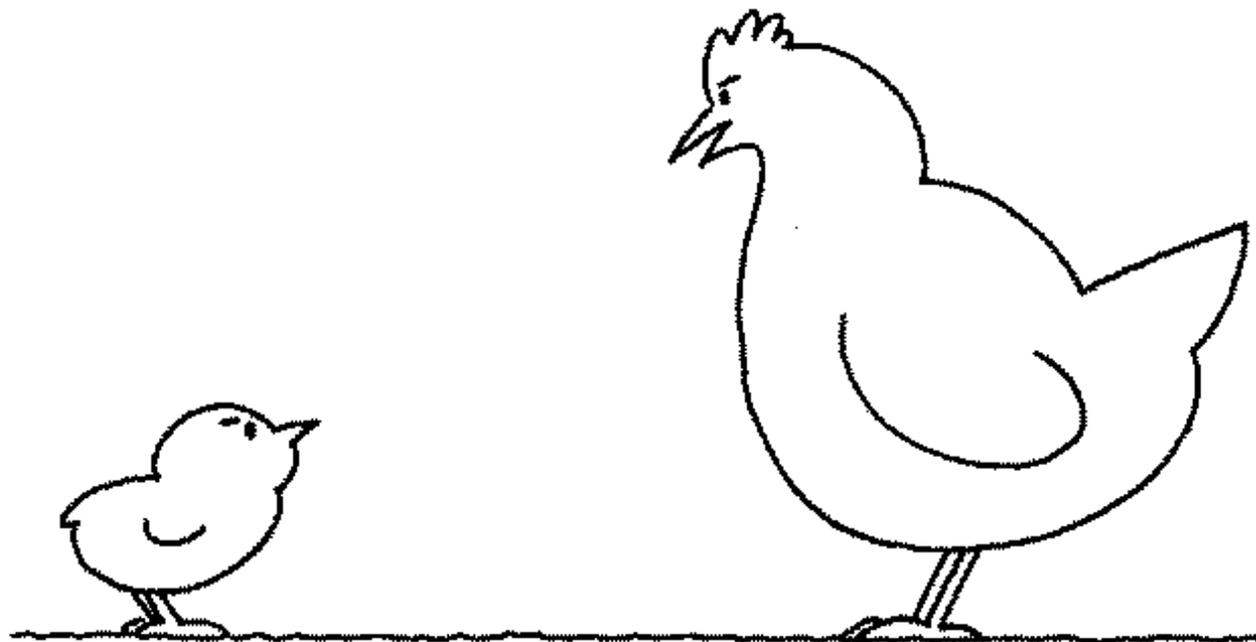
Two-way street

Difference between mentoring and advising

Modest reward for mentoring

Mentors role modeling in when to say No!

THE NEW YORKER



C. Brown

"You're free-range when I say you're free-range."

Elements of the Mentoring Relationship (cont.)

Mentoring is NOT directing

Mentoring should not interfere with becoming independent but for this to happen, there must be good communications with the mentee's interest considered foremost

Mentor Mentee Relationships: Mentee Requirements

Passion

Self-Discipline- Overcoming Tedium

Refereeing Between Multiple Mentors

**Be honest/sincere (including sharing your
reservations)**

Mentor Mentee Relationships: The Mentee

**Be Clear On Expectations-Ask Questions,
Don't Assume**

Be Available

Be Patient

Ask For Help/Verification

Obstacles to Mentoring

There are critical differences between mentoring and advising:

To many, mentoring suggests a level of personal interaction, nurturing, and guidance that is beyond the level of good advising

Advising is a more dispassionate activity and may be an event rather than a process

In academics often used synonymously

Mentorship: The Easy Part

Visibility

Record of Personal Success

Scientific Knowledge

Resources and Willingness to Invest Them

Mentorship: The Hard Part

Finding/Making Time (Formal-Informal)

**Reframing Perspective To Early Career
Needs**

**Clear, Agreed-upon Career Development
Plan**

Encouragement, Reminders, Harassment

Mentor Mentee Relationships: Shared Responsibilities

Balancing risk and Rewards

Making Time

The Research-Writing Agenda

Original Research

Low Hanging Fruit- Existing data, Reviews

Career Development Considerations

**Looking Forward To Define (and
Reappraising) Goals**

Non-Research Counseling Activities

Mentor Mentee Relationships: The Mentor

Be Clear On Expectations

Provide Opportunities

Existing Data

“Insertional Research”

Chapters/Review Papers

Presentations (Including Rehearsals)

Mentor Mentee Relationships

A Two Way Street

Regular meetings must be a priority

The mentor cannot be “too busy”

The mentee cannot expect unlimited access

Meetings may not occur during the usual work week

Ad hoc meetings/communications need to be possible

Mentor Mentee Relationships

Problematic Mentorship Models

Active Problems:

Taking over mentee's ideas as their own

Assigning mentees low-yield projects

Overly controlling mentors

Passive Problems:

Mentor preoccupation with competing priorities

Mentor (or mentee) conflict avoidance

Mentor unavailability (travel, other commitments)

Tools For A Successful Mentor/Mentee Relationship

Time Line

- Short term (3, 6 months)**
- Long Term**

Mentoring Contracts

Continuing Assessment and Re-appraisal

Mentoring Contract Elements

1. Expectations:

Mentor

Mentee

2. Meeting Structure

Frequency, Duration

Scheduling Responsibility

Mentoring Contract Elements (cont)

3. Ground Rules

Candor

Confidentiality.

4. Benchmarks For Completion

5. Agenda for First Meeting

Mentoring By Committee

Potential Strengths

Access to different areas of expertise and experience

Varied Perspectives

Potential Weaknesses/Challenges

Scheduling

Failure to identify a single “responsible” person for contact

Peer Mentoring

Potential Strengths

Generational Congruence

Potential Weaknesses/Challenges

Potential Competition

Access to Resources (Reagents, Tech Time, Funds)

Limited Perspective

Getting Your Research Started

Don't Wait – Get Started – Plan Ahead

Expect Delays

Identify A Mentor/ Subject Area

Protect Your Time

Corollary For The Aspiring Clinical Investigator:

**Although the days of the “triple
(or even double) threat” may
not be over, you can’t get there
without help or protected time**

Corollary For The Aspiring Clinical Investigator (II)

**On The Other Hand, If You Are Planning
In Following Your Mentor's Footsteps,
Beware- His/Her Shoes May No Longer
Fit**

PROTECTED TIME

What Is It

Time Devoted To Career Development

Research Time

Education Time

Conferences

Mentor Interactions

PROTECTED TIME

What Is It

Which Denominator for calculating % effort?

40, 60, or 80 hour week

When Do You Start Counting?

Before or after the other work is done?

Where do vacations, committees, and other responsibilities fall?

PROTECTED TIME

How Much Is Needed-Quantity vs Quality

Quality:

Not after “everything else” is done

Scheduled, not catch as catch can

Quantity

When is your best time to work/think

Must be blocked off (i.e. on the calendar)

Must be “enough” to be meaningful

Specified in some training grants

PROTECTED TIME PITFALLS

Too many opportunities-difficult choices

**Misperceptions that there will be more time
in the future**

**Opportunities presented by multiple
mentors (formal or informal) who are
unaware of the “big picture”**

**The desire to “live up” to expectations of
respected mentors**

Protected Time

Whose Job To Protect

Departmental/Division Commitments

Mentor Responsibilities

For protection

For taking “the heat”

Mentee Responsibilities

Must stick up for yourself-others may
(honestly) not be aware of other
commitments

Avoid retreat to your “comfort zone”

Time Management

Two (Three or Five) Years Will Pass Quickly

Steps To Increase Research Time

Consolidate Clinics (Clinics, Other Obligations, “Two A Days”)

Don't Save Research/Writing Until _____ is Done

Mentor Selection: What Should You Consider?

- **Area of interest**
 - Look at CV, publications
- **Research reputation**
- **Grant support**
- **Team**
- **Mentoring reputation**
 - Talk to former and current trainees
 - Where are they now?
- **Time commitment & availability**
- **Lifestyle**

Choice: What Do I Consider?

- **Trainee Potential**
 - **Enthusiasm: Are they alert? Will they be passionate about an area I care about?**
 - **Inquisitiveness: Do they ask questions?**
 - **Preparation: Do they have an idea of what I do? Have they read any papers from our group? Has this provoked ideas?**
 - **Solid academic background**
 - **Work ethic**
- **My Issues**
 - **Space, money and time to mentor well**
 - **Fit with the team**
 - **Other commitments**

References

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