Maximizing Your Research Mentorship Experience

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What is Mentoring?

• The story of Mentor comes from Homer’s Odyssey

• Odysseus, King of Ithaca, fights the Trojan War and entrusts the care of his son, Telemachus, to Mentor
What is Mentoring?

- Giving advice
- Coaching
- Teaching
- Supporting
Benefits of Receiving Mentoring

• Career development and satisfaction
• Improve success of women and under-represented minorities in academics
• Enhance academic productivity
• Predicts promotion
• Increases time spent in scholarly work

Cedars ML, 2011, SREI Fellows Retreat
Mentored Career Development Awards
Career Development Awards

– Individual
  • K08 Mentored Clinical Scientist Development Award
  • K23 Mentored Patient-Oriented Research Career Development Award
  • K01 Mentored Research Scientist Development Award

– Institutional (K12)
Managers, Sponsors, and Mentors

- Understand their roles
- Determine in which category your supportive work relationships fall
Managers

- Directs the work of the individual (i.e. supervisor)
- Within the hierarchy of direct reporting relationships
- Focused on performance, professional development, career development
- Influenced by organizational needs
Sponsors

- Champion the individual
- Driven by advancement goals
- Inside or outside reporting hierarchy
Sponsors

- Introduce you to movers and shakers
- Recommend you for positions of leadership
- Behind the scenes support
- Do not build your skill set like mentors
Mentors

- Driven by mentees needs and agenda
- Guide and support the individual
- Focused on professional and personal development
- Outside the hierarchy of direct reporting
Mentors

- Encourage your goals
- Provide honest and constructive feedback
- Challenge you
- Provide inspiration and direction

Your Research Mentors

- Senior researchers on your team
- Other researchers within and outside your institution
- CIRHT research mentors
Types of Mentoring

• One-to-one individual mentoring

• Group mentoring
  – Can be used for career development
  – Mentees build a network
  – Mentees get more feedback
  – Potential for loss of confidentiality
Types of Mentoring

- Peer Mentoring
  - Sharing of knowledge, skills, experiences
  - May have curriculum and senior input or not
  - Trustworthy, nurturing environment
  - Interactive, creative, collaborative

Johnson KS 2011; Kashiwagi DT 2013; Varkey P 2012
Specific Mentor Roles

• Potential Mentor Roles
  – Review protocol and provide feedback
  – Serving as a resource through the research process
  – Communicate through a mutually agreed upon plan
  – Participate in publication of the data for those providing research support/advice
Mentor Research Feedback

• You may get a lot of suggestions – they are meant to help.
• The project is yours and you will make the final decisions, but be open-minded.
Long Distance Mentors

- They are mentors and collaborators, not managers
- You are the content expert and know your local resources
Proactive Mentee

• Keys to success
  – Communication is critical
  – Take the initiative
  – Learn about your mentor
  – Timely, respectful responses
  – Set, update, and communicate milestones
  – Ask for help early on, rather than later
Proactive Mentee

-Keys to Success-

- Set goals for your research and send updates
- Schedule time with your mentor to review progress and ask questions
- Email an agenda prior to meetings
- Teach your mentor
- Involve your mentor in things they can impact
- Support your peers
Proactive Mentee

- Ask yourself
  - Are my objectives clear?
  - Am I comfortable asking for what I want?
  - Am I open to hear new ideas and perspectives?
  - Am I receptive to constructive feedback?
  - Am I able to show I value and appreciate feedback?
  - Do I consistently follow-through on commitments?
  - Do I openly show appreciation and gratitude?
Research Mentors

- Mentoring styles are different
- Each mentoring relationship is different
- Everyone’s experience with their mentor will be different
It Takes More than One Mentor

- Intellectual/Research mentor
- Career development mentor
- Departmental culture mentor

So, look for additional mentors and be a mentor to others
Overcome Fear of Criticism

• Take advantage of the help
• Ask for advice
• Ask for review of manuscript drafts and grants
Successful Research Teams

• Team qualities
  – Institutional support
  – Accomplished/collaborative members
  – Shared agenda
Opportunity to Connect

• View mentors as experienced collaborators
• Grow your team
• Welcome them to the team
Postmenopausal hormone treatment alters neural pathways but does not improve verbal cognitive function

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