The Elements of Excellent Mentorship: A Skill-Building Workshop

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The *Elements of Mentoring*
THINK OF YOUR MOST IMPORTANT MENTOR. WHAT DID HE/SHE “DO” THAT MADE THE BIGGEST IMPACT ON YOUR LIFE/CAREER?
Know Thy Mentee

- Take Time with mentees.
- Be accessible and available.
- Identify mentee’s talents and strengths and communicate these insights clearly.
- Spend time discovering areas for further development.
Do you mind if I strap your phone to my forehead so I can pretend you're looking at me when I talk?
Unearth the “Dream”

- Listen for the emerging career/life dream
- *Michelangelo Phenomenon*
- Practice both perceptual and behavioral affirmation
Affirm, Affirm, Affirm

• Perhaps the “greatest” mentor function.

• *Imposter Syndrome*

• Be consistent & unconditional.

• Deliberately counteract negative messaging about whether she belongs
Ask Socratic Questions

Clarifying Questions
- Can you tell me more about that?
- Can you help me understand why you say that about yourself?
- Can you give me a specific example?

Challenging Questions
- Is there a different way to look at this?
- Is it really true that “everyone” thinks ___?

Implications Questions
- What’s the worst that could happen?
- Assuming you really believed _____, how would you feel?
MOMENT FOR MENTORING:

“MENTORS”: ASK YOUR MENTEE TO ARTICULATE HIS OR HER CAREER “DREAM” PRACTICE GENEROUS LISTENING, AFFIRMATION & SOCRATIC QUESTIONING
Be a Teacher & Coach

- Early, explicit teaching.
- Demonstrate complex tasks (take your mentee along...).
- “Capitalitize on Teaching moments.”
Tolerate Idealization

- Identification & Idealization

  leads to....

- Individuation
Give the Inside Scoop

- Demystify the “System.”
- Hidden norms, rules, and expectations.
- Give the political “lay of the land.”
- Avoid Gossiping or undermining colleagues.
Offer Counsel in Difficult Times

- Stand ready to listen, support, and triage.
- Don’t become a counselor.
- Offer warmth and kindness but know how to artfully refer when needed.
- Get over the “tear thing” guys!!
Stimulate Growth: Challenge

- Deliberately challenge.
- When challenging, use the principle of titration.
- Exposure is the only answer to anxiety.
- Don’t let tears or gender stereotypes hold you back!
Self Disclose (When Appropriate)

- Disclose as a means of teaching, reassuring, and connecting.
- Who is benefiting?
- Offer a **coping**, not a **mastery** model.
- Boundaries...
Encourage Increasing Mutuality

• Encourage increasing collegiality and friendship.
• Collegiality is validating for mentees.
• Respect cultural preferences for hierarchical structure.
Provide Sponsorship

• Match opportunities to your mentee’s “dream.”
• Kick open doors
• Be her raving fan
• Share power & social capital
MOMENT FOR SPONSORING:

MENTORS: INTRODUCE YOUR MENTEE TO AT LEAST TWO PEOPLE. USE THE INTRODUCTION TO AFFIRM HIS OR HER BEST OR IDEAL SELF (MICHELANGELO) AND REVEAL YOURSELF TO BE A “RAVING FAN!”
Mentoring a Perfectionist

- Check your own perfectionism at the door
- Highlight the costs of perfectionism
- Use Socratic questions
- Cultivate curiosity vs. catastrophic thinking
- Use Humor
- Deliberately Expose Mentee to Mistakes
- Self-disclose and model imperfection
Protect When Necessary

- Mentees sometimes need intervention.
- Respond clearly but calmly to injustice.
- Don’t go all mixed martial arts cage fighter!
- Use this function sparingly (the bully factor).
- Don’t undermine her autonomy!
Narrate Growth and Development

- Point out milestones and successes.
- Help mentees step back and appreciate their progress.
Practice Humility & Patience

- Remain non-defensive and open to feedback.
- Nobody wants a “perfect” mentor...
- Humble mentors model fallibility w/o shame.
- Patience & EQ
Embrace Humor 😊

- Be kind, competent, and fun to be around.
- Help mentee not take herself TOO seriously.
- “Yes, I’m sure that if you do not present perfectly at that meeting today, we’ll probably both end up unemployed and homeless...!”
Distance Mentoring?
Plan for Change and Say “Goodbye”

- Welcome change and growth.
- Accept Endings (address your own issues with loss).
- Schedule a formal time to reflect and say goodbye.
- **All** relationships are fluid and must be redefined.
OTHER ELEMENTS??

WHAT OTHER KEY ELEMENTS HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED IN YOUR OWN CAREER AS A MENTEE?
SOME SPECIFIC *INCLUSION* ELEMENTS
#METoo
Is She Included?

- Does she have a nameplate at the table?
- Does she get interrupted?
- Do you call it out (appropriately) when she gets "bropropriated" or "hepeated"?
Hello
my name is
That Guy
Cloning: No...Just No...
MENTORING: make it a constellation
Home: A Place of Tranquility
“And that’s how you make a peanut-butter sandwich.”
Thank You!