

How to Mentor, by Kim Skarupski

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What is Mentoring?

Mentoring, def. Broadly-used term applied to a wide variety of *functions*, depending on the *discipline*. May refer to: coaching, supervising, advising, counseling, sponsoring, role-modeling, precepting, tutoring, teaching, or peer support. Mentoring *types* (e.g., in an academic medical center) revolve around *roles* in: clinical care, education, research, or administration. Regardless of discipline or type, mentoring has unique and key features: a) a dyadic (not always) relationship between a more experienced or senior person (mentor) and a less experienced or junior person (mentee/protege); b) this relationship reciprocal, yet asymmetrical because the mentee's development is paramount; c) the relationship is dynamic, that is, changing over time; and d) it involves a high level of commitment on both parts.

How are my mentoring skills?

How often do I/can I give examples of how I....Appreciate individual differences, am available, promote self-direction, engage in active questioning, celebrate successes, build a scientific and social community, provide opportunities for skill development, networking, and practice mentoring for life?

Reference: Lee, Dennis, & Campbell. "Nature's Guide for Mentors," Nature (Vol. 447), 14 June 2007.

Am I self-actualized? (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs)

Red flags: Too busy to meet (distracted while meeting [emails/texts/pages]; unprepared); procrastinate; insincere; unnecessarily critical; unclear/unfocused; selfish/dishonest; don't follow-through; irresponsible

Tools to improve my mentoring skills

Guidelines: Getting started – establish your "contract"; Getting to know each other; Setting goals & expectations; Revising goals & expectations; Identifying challenges & issues; Resolving challenges & issues; Evaluating the mentoring relationship

Reference: "Entering Mentoring: A Seminar to Train a New Generation of Scientists, the Wisconsin Program for Scientific Teaching," HHMI. http://www.hhmi.org/resources/labmanagement/downloads/entering_mentoring.pdf

Dimensions of High-level human relating (back of sheet).

ABCs of communication (*also, Seven Pillars reference*): **A**ct "as if" interested (display a "posture of involvement"); **B**e encouraging (overcome your tendency to judge, analyze, interrupt, or hurry; I see, That's interesting, Then What?); **C**larify (Periodically summarize what you've heard and reflect back).

"Personality colors" – reference: *PACE Palette, The PACE Organization. Indiana*

Outcomes of good mentoring

It's all good. "In academic medicine, the quality of mentorship is often the single most predictor of academic success." *Mentorship Task Force Report, Dept. of Medicine, University of Chicago, 10/21/2008*

Peters & Waterman, In Search of Excellence, excellent organizations invest in their people!

Dimensions of High-level Human Relating (“People skills”/EQ)	<i>J.W. Sipe & D. M. Frick. 2009. Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership: Practicing the Wisdom of Leading by Serving. Paulist Press, New York.</i> Behaviors	Rating: 1= poor, 2= fair, 3= good, 4 = very good, 5 = excellent
Empathy	I see the world through the eyes of others; it is easy for me to put myself in other people’s shoes. Understanding their point of view is important to me. I listen well to both verbal and nonverbal cues. I reflect back my awareness and understanding of their thoughts, feelings, and desires with clarity and respect.	
Warmth	I express that I am “for” others in a variety of ways, that I respect and care about them. I accept others for who they are, even though I do not always necessarily approve of what they do. I am a supportive and positive person.	
Genuineness	I am real and authentic in my interactions. I do not hide behind roles or facades; others usually know where I stand. I am comfortable being myself.	
Concreteness	I am not vague when I speak to others; I do not speak in generalities nor do I beat around the bush. I deal with concrete experience and behavior when I talk. I am direct and specific.	
Initiative	In my relationships, I would rather act than just react. I confront problems directly. I am solution-oriented and optimistic. I do not blame others.	
Immediacy	I deal openly and directly with my relationship to others. I engage in “you-me” talk in the “here and now.” I am willing to take risks to promote mutual, intimate sharing. I am open to feedback.	
Self-disclosure	I let others know the “person inside” whenever appropriate. I am willing to share my thoughts, feelings, likes, dislikes, regrets, ambitions, and dreams. I am not intrusive; I maintain adequate interpersonal boundaries. I use self-disclosure to help establish sound relationships with others.	
Confrontation	I challenge others responsibly and with care. I invite others to examine discrepancies in their thoughts, feelings, intentions, and behaviors. I use confrontation as a way of getting involved with others, helping them to grow, and never to punish.	
Self-exploration	I examine my lifestyle and behavior and want others to help me do the same. I desire to learn how I affect others. I respond to feedback as nondefensively as possible. I am open to changing my behavior.	