



Women Ophthalmologists Society

Mentor – Mentee Committee

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WHAT IS MENTORING ?

. a process whereby an experienced, highly regarded, empathic person (the mentor) guides another individual (the mentee) in the development and examination of their own ideas, learning and personal and professional development.

..... a process where mentor and mentee work together to discover and develop the mentee's abilities.

. . . a long term relationship with a responsibility to provide the support, knowledge and impetus that can facilitate professional success.

. . . a personal process that combines role modeling, apprenticeship and nurturing. The mentor will act as a teacher, sponsor, guide, exemplar, counselor, moral support to assist and facilitate the realization of the dream of the mentee.

THE CONCEPT

The origins of the concept of mentoring extend back to ancient Greek literature. In Homer's *The Odyssey*, the main character (Odysseus) leaves to fight the Trojan War. He entrusts his only son and heir, Telemachus, with Mentor. Highly regarded by Odysseus, Mentor is responsible for the child's well-being for many years.

Mentors can help individuals navigate through challenging bureaucracies or politics, focus career goals, identify a career path, connect to other professionals, and/or provide constructive feedback on tough issues.

They can also be a champion for the mentee, and spark energy or change. This kind of support and commitment can be invaluable to a new or an emerging professional.

Mentoring facilitates career selection, career advancement, publication productivity, and achievement of grant funding. Ideally, it

is a dynamic, collaborative, reciprocal relationship focused on a mentee's personal and professional development.

It is a multifaceted collaboration between a junior and senior professional with the primary goal being the nurturing of the junior professional's development. Junior members are paired with at least one career mentor. Mentors can then contribute significantly to the development of their mentees' research, teaching and clinical skills, particularly with respect to career satisfaction, career management and collegial networking.

Awards for excellence in mentoring can also be established to recognize the importance of mentoring for program members' career development.

Successful mentoring is all about:

- Having conversation
- Having knowledge, information and experiences
- Learning from each other
- Opening doors
- Providing inspiration
- Validating another's experience
- Helping an experienced professional to transfer their knowledge and experience so that they can achieve success in a new situation
- Staying focused

WHY MENTORING MATTERS ?

- Promotes career development and satisfaction
- Improves success of women
- Enhances member productivity
- Increases interest in academic careers
- Predicts promotion in academia
- Improves self efficacy in teaching, research and professional development

- Increases the time that clinician educators spend in scholarly activities
- Lead to less work-family conflicts

MENTORING PROGRAM GOALS

- To provide the junior mentees with a career mentor
- Support and facilitate member career development through mentor/mentee pairs
- Identify a comprehensive mentoring curriculum to enhance mentor/mentee competencies
- Build a mentoring database of processes and outcomes to support and evaluate mentoring activities
- Provide a strong central structure, resources and leadership to support member mentoring

BENEFITS OF BEING A MENTOR

The main goal of a mentor is to identify activities that will help your mentee achieve her learning and career development goals, and that suit both of your schedules, availability and work situation.

Please remember that the role of a mentor is not to find a job for the mentee. This expectation can put a strain on your mentoring relationship. Instead, maintain a focus on helping the mentee gain a better understanding and knowledge.

Career mentoring is a terrific way to support the growth, development and career progression of one another, share your knowledge, skills and experience, and even extend your own network. It can also help support your centre's formal training and development programs.

In a mentor-mentee relationship, both the mentor and mentee benefit. The mentor has the gratifying opportunity to “give back” to the public health community as well as to:

- Gain increased respect and recognition as individuals who have the ability to identify, encourage, and promote others.
- Extend their network to other mentors and mentees.
- Contribute to the development of new employees.
- Experience professional and personal growth and renewal.
- Increase their own and the mentee’s enthusiasm
- Use or develop additional skills not required in current position.
- Stay sharp and creative.

BENEFITS OF BEING A MENTEE

The mentee gains such things as career development, increased productivity and personality nurturing. The mentee also benefits by:

- Having a “Go To” person
- Knowing a person who can help problem-solve and identify resources
- Increasing their support network
- Reflecting on their practice
- Recognizing and sharing their successes

PHASES OF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Phase 1: Initiation phase : Get to Know Each Other

- Share information about your professional and personal life
- Learn something new about your mentee/mentor

Phase 2: Cultivation phase

When people trust each other, they allow their most authentic self to emerge. They feel free to share concerns, insecurities and doubts by listening and sharing reservations and uncertainties.

- Career functions emerge first; psychosocial functions emerge as the interpersonal bond strengthens
- Mentees want to receive honest, candid feedback from their mentor. Equally important is the feedback mentees can offer to mentors. Engaging in reciprocal and on-going feedback is a vital component of the partnership.

Phase 3: Separation phase

- Structural and emotional separation
- Provides opportunity for mentee to demonstrate skills and operate independently and for mentor to demonstrate that one has been successful in developing new talent
- Make sure an important goal has not been overlooked.
- Plan a formal acknowledgement or celebration of the mentoring relationship.

PROGRAM CORE COMPONENTS

- Mentoring Facilitators: Responsible for setting up and overseeing mentoring program
- One-on-One mentoring program: All junior/new members are paired with senior 'career' mentors
- Recognition for Mentors
 - Mentoring awards
 - Felicitations and acknowledgements
- Evaluation
 - Program and individual evaluations
- Mentoring Program Web Site
 - Links to other local and international mentoring activities
 - Mentoring Resources
 - Mentor Development

MENTORING FACILITATOR CHECKLIST

- Finalize list of eligible mentees' (junior/new members), current mentoring needs and relationships
- Assemble list of eligible mentors
- Assist in mentor/mentee pairings, confirm existing pairs and make assignments as needed
- Create database of mentor-mentee pairs
- Distribute mentoring forms, guides and other materials
- Periodic check-in: meet with mentors/mentees as needed
- Organize mentoring activities: meetings, retreats etc.
- Annual meeting or survey of mentors and mentees
- Assist in program evaluation
- Improvisation based on feedback

INDIVIDUAL MENTORING PROGRAM STRATEGY

- Mentor/Mentee matching and orientation
- Setting the goal
- Is the goal realistic?
- Is it achievable in the given time frame?
- Is it necessary to identify more manageable interim goals instead?
- Does the mentor have the resources to help address these gaps?
- Developing an action plan : Discuss mentee's growth areas and tentative plans for working on them. Discuss how feedback will be given and received, and what, if anything, either would like to avoid doing.

BEING A PRO-ACTIVE MENTEE

The most successful mentoring partnerships are those in which the mentee takes the initiative and truly drives the partnership. In a mentee-driven partnership, the mentee determines the pace, route and

destination. The mentor is then able to offer insights and counsel that is focused on the mentee's objectives.

Whether the objectives focus on broad issues or more specific developmental areas, the mentor's ability to help attain those objectives will be enhanced when the mentee has clearly defined where she wants to go and how she wants to get there. It's important to think carefully about the objectives and the challenges to be faced while achieving them.

Consider the following questions:

- Are my objectives clear and well defined?
- Am I comfortable asking for what I want?
- Am I open to hearing new ideas and perspectives?
- Do I allow myself to be open and vulnerable?
- Am I receptive to constructive feedback?
- Am I able to show I value and appreciate feedback?
- Am I willing to change or modify my behaviors?
- Do I consistently follow through on commitments?
- Do I make an effort to instill trust?
- Do I openly show appreciation and gratitude?
- Do you have an action plan to achieve your objectives?
- Have you considered the outcome of achieving your objectives?
- Have you determined a completion date?
- Is your timeline realistic?
- Will you need additional resources or tools to be successful?
- How can your mentor be most helpful to you?

Mentee Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Take initiative	Be passive. Don't wait for the mentor to initiate interactions
Look for opportunities	Be late, disorganized
Be respectful of mentor's time	Stay in the comfort zone
Communicate agenda and goals with mentor	Stay in a mentoring relationship when it is no longer helpful

Clarify goals and expectations	
Practice self reflection	
Support your peers	
Keep your CV etc. up to date	
Have multiple mentors	
Clarify your values	

BEING A USEFUL MENTOR

- Interested in developing the mentee's career
- Commitment to mentoring
- Realise the deficit – support / praise / challenge
- Match with her professional needs – Research /surgical / clinical interests / writing / personality development
- A successful track record
- Good communication skills
- Provide networking opportunities
- Institutionally savvy
- Potential for reciprocity

Provide support :

- Listening—actively (empathically)
- Expressing positive expectations
(Mentors) balance both a present sense of where their students are and a dream of what they can become.
- Serving as advocate
- Self-disclosure as appropriate

Provide challenge :

- Setting tasks
- Setting high standards
- Modelling
- Providing a mirror

Vision

- Provide a vision for a satisfying and successful career

Consider the following questions :

- Has your mentee identified specific short and long term goals?
- Are the goals definite and precise?
- Are your mentee's goals quantifiable in nature?
- Has your mentee determined how to measure success?
- Does your mentee have an action plan to achieve their goals?
- Has your mentee considered the outcome of achieving these goals?
- Are your mentee's goals realistic given the circumstances?
- Has your mentee determined a completion date?
- Can success be achieved within the time allocated?
- Will additional resources or tools be needed to achieve success?
- Is your role to advise, suggest or listen?
- How can you be most helpful to your mentee?

Mentor Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen actively• Support and facilitate networking• Teach by example• Be aware of role conflict• Encourage and motivate mentee to move beyond their comfort zone• Promote independence• Promote balance• Rejoice in success and convey your joy• Encourage reciprocity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fix the problem• Take credit• Take over• Threaten, coerce or use undue influence• Lose critical oversight• Condemn

Characteristics of an Effective Mentor : The Three C's

Competence

- Professional knowledge and experience
- Respect
- Interpersonal skills and good judgment

Confidence

- Shares network of contacts and resources
- Allows protégé to develop his/her own terms
- Demonstrates initiative, takes risks
- Shares credit

Commitment

- Invests time, energy and effort to mentoring
- Shares personal experience

MEASURES TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

- Communicate. The subject matter can be determined by the mentee's particular goals for growth. Identify areas that the mentee may need to focus on. Start by understanding the mentee's priorities.
- Discuss your expectations of one another. Do you expect your mentee to initiate most communication, or do you prefer that it be more balanced? Be careful not to make assumptions. If you expect something, such as that your mentee responds to an email from you within 48 hours, be specific in stating so. It is likely that your mentee has not had many, if any, professional relationships such as this one.
- Share your current resume with your mentee and ask her to share hers with you. Talk about what you look for in a resume or in an individual's experience
- Share a life experience that had a significant impact on your career trajectory
- Ask your mentee about her current career goals. Talk about your own career goals and how they have evolved over time.

- Ask your mentee to create a vision for where she wants to be in five, ten and/or fifteen years, even if she does not know which career path she would like to be on.
- Conduct informal networking by introducing mentee to at least two people who could prove helpful to their careers.
- Invite mentee to one of Mentor's key meetings. Debrief with mentee afterward.
- Exchange and discuss potentially useful articles. Identify an article or book that you feel would be beneficial for your mentee to read. Discuss the reading.
- Share/lend books, tapes, CDs, weblinks etc.
- Review and discuss a letter, proposal or other documents written by mentee.
- Invite your mentee to shadow you or others in your workplace for a partial or full day. Talk about what a typical day is like for you and what tasks/responsibilities within your current position you enjoy most and those you find most challenging and how you manage them.
- Discuss any cultural values that each of you hold onto. Has culture or environment come into play at all in adjusting to the work setting?
- Discuss some of the "unwritten rules" each of you had observed or learned about success in your organization. How has this differed from other organizations? What other lessons have been learned?
- Communicate about what you have appreciated about your mentoring relationship with one another and thus far.
- Seek referrals to other programs or services The mentor may make referrals within his or her networks or outside them.
- Redirect the mentee to training options for areas where the gaps in skills and knowledge are significant.
- Avoid discussing priorities that are not highly relevant to the mentee's goals
- Discuss "what if" scenarios of challenges people may face in the workplace and develop solutions.

- Check on new developments in the mentee’s life. Do they present a new opportunity or a new challenge that needs to be addressed?
- Attend to anything that needs immediate attention, including a lack of motivation.
- Ask your mentee to share a workplace (or similar) situation with you that she feels she handled poorly and how she might have handled it differently in retrospect. Offer your feedback. Similarly, discuss a time when she handled a situation well. Talk about how what he has learned in these situations can be applied to her career. Share similar examples from your own experience.
- Ask your mentee to identify risks, difficulties or stress she is facing in the coming months (e.g., job search, challenging academic load, upcoming exam, balancing work and family etc.). Discuss strategies for minimizing stress and preparing in positive ways to handle these challenges.
- Encourage your mentee to get involved in / become members of appropriate professional organizations.
- Give your mentee short “homework” assignments that will enhance her understanding.
- Discuss the appropriate use of social media
- Invite your mentee to have a business lunch or dinner with you and a couple of your colleagues. Afterwards, discuss the ways in which she could have handled herself better and ways in which she can improve
- Ask a colleague to conduct a mock interview with your mentee and give the mentee feedback on her performance. Talk also to your colleague and hold a debriefing session with your mentee later.
- Follow up on earlier commitments – what has been achieved, what challenges came up, how can they be addressed directions taken, and what is still needed to be accomplished?

Thank you for your interest in the WOS mentoring programme.
We welcome constructive feedback about the program and look forward to your active participation in it.