1. Case Study: Awkward Mentor-Participant
2. Prioritizing Research Mentor Roles-Participant
3. My Mentoring and Support Network-Participant
4. Mentor Biography-Participant

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Learning Objectives

Trainees will:

► Discuss challenges that may arise in mentoring relationships.
► Develop strategies to address mentoring relationship challenges.

Sheneka has overcome many challenges to successfully transfer from a local community college to a research university, where she is earning a B.S. degree in biochemistry. She has developed a strong support network and learned a lot about how to be successful as a student and in life. A transfer advisor at the research university, who is part of her network, helped her to prepare a successful application to a prestigious, federally funded research training program. Through this program, she is preparing for admission to graduate school.

As a trainee in the program, Sheneka was matched with a research mentor, who provides very useful help when she needs it, but otherwise leaves her alone to work on her research project. In addition, each student in the program is matched with a career mentor. Sheneka’s career mentor is nice, but offers advice and mentorship in areas where she feels that she doesn’t really need it. She already has a strong network of mentors who understand where she is coming from and how to support her.

The meetings with her career mentor have begun to feel awkward. The mentor constantly talks about her own experience, which has been very different from Sheneka’s experience. Everyone in her career mentor’s family has a college degree and her greatest challenge growing up was waiting to hear which top-tier colleges she was admitted to. Sheneka’s mentor doesn’t seem to understand the kinds of challenges that Sheneka has overcome and will continue to face. Sheneka doesn’t want to risk offending her career mentor by pointing this out, but has come to dread the monthly meetings that are required by the program. They feel like a waste of time. What can she do?

Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe the communication between Sheneka and her career mentor?

2. To whom might Sheneka share her frustration and ask for advice about what to do?

3. How might Sheneka structure the meetings with her career mentor to better meet her needs?

PRIORITIZING RESEARCH MENTOR ROLES

Undergraduate

Learning Objectives

Trainees will:
- Identify the different roles that research mentors can play and prioritize those roles based on needs.
- Establish and align expectations with a mentor(s).

Consider the different roles of research mentors listed below. Add additional roles that may be missing from the list. Cut out the boxes and rank these roles according to your priorities and expectations of a research mentor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teach by example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Train you in disciplinary research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve your writing and communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide growth experiences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help build your self-confidence as a researcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model and promote professional behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer encouragement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist with advancement of your career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate networking with colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help build the bridge between research and application (i.e., industry, clinical work, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide guidance into future career options</td>
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</tbody>
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Other:

Other:

Other:

MY MENTORING AND SUPPORT NETWORK

Learning Objectives
Trainees will:
► Define current mentoring and support network.
► Explore how to establish professional relationships.
► Discuss how trainees can engage a mentoring network to advance their research career.
► Articulate the role(s) that each mentor in a network plays and develop strategies to fill any missing roles.

Different types of mentors provide distinct types of support and guidance to trainees as they navigate their research learning experiences and careers. Rarely is one person able to provide all of the support and guidance that a trainee needs. Therefore, it is a good idea to build a network of mentors. The types of guidance and support that mentors can provide include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Roles</th>
<th>My Mentors</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Feedback</td>
<td>People who provide critical feedback that helps you to improve your work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Community</td>
<td>People with whom you can brainstorm ideas and discuss your work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship</td>
<td>People who use their power and influence on your behalf to shape the story about who you are and the importance of your work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Opportunities</td>
<td>People who provide access to opportunities that will advance your work and career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>People who check to make sure that you are making quality and timely progress in your work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Models</td>
<td>People who exhibit the values, attitudes, and behaviors that you aspire to emulate as a person and a professional.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>People (or organizations) who provide professional development training to advance your work and career.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Mentor Roles | My Mentors
---|---
**Emotional Support**
People who provide support to help you maintain personal well-being (psychological and physical) as you navigate the ups and downs of your work and career.

**Safe Space**
People with whom you can talk about anything and everything who will not judge or share the information.

**Financial Support**
People who you could go to in hard situations for financial support.

**Other:**

**Action Plan: Building My Mentoring Network**

1. Identify at least two types of mentors that are missing from your mentoring network.

2. What strategies will you use to identify and invite people to fill these mentoring roles?

MENTOR BIOGRAPHY

Learning Objectives

Trainees will:

► Begin to establish a positive relationship with a research mentor by getting to know them as a researcher and a person.
► Learn about the diversity of experiences in research careers by comparing a mentor’s experiences to their own.

Interview your mentor using the questions below and at least three of your own questions. Take notes and write a two or three paragraph biography about your mentor that summarizes the information you learned in your interview.

Questions to Ask your Mentor

1. Where did you grow up and what was it like there?

2. Why did you decide to become a researcher?

3. What challenges or obstacles did you have to overcome in order to be successful in your field?

4. What keeps you motivated to do research?

5. Where did you do your training and why did you decide to attend those institutions? (undergraduate degree, graduate degree, etc.)

6. Why did you decide on your disciplinary/research area? Have you done research in any other areas? If so, which?

7. What classes do you currently teach, or have you taught? Which was your favorite and why?

8. Outside of your research responsibilities, what else do you do as part of your job?

9. What do you do when you are not at work?