

Mentoring Role of a Teacher in Medical College.

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Introduction:

Anderson and Shannon described mentoring as:

"A nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilful or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and personal development. Mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and protégé"(1).

The key activities as mentor should be following:

1. Specifically teaching:

Engaging mentee in learner-centered conversations, changing stance as appropriate (consult, collaborate, coach). Designing lessons/units/assessments around the standards and individual student needs

2. Sponsoring:

The mentor should sponsor his mentee on the activities that he/ she wish to perform. Mentor should help with minimum involvement so that the activity remains mentee based.

3. Encouraging and Providing emotional support:

Building positive relationship through contact based on the understanding of new teacher phases, concerns, and transitions.

4. Being accessible:

(phone, e-mail, frequent visits) The amount of attention that a mentor gives will vary widely. A student who is doing well might require only "check-ins" or brief meetings. Another student might have continuing difficulties and require several formal meetings a week; one or two students might occupy most of an adviser's mentoring time. Try through regular contact daily, if possible to keep all your students on the "radar screen" to anticipate problems before they become serious. Don't assume that the only students who need help are those who ask for it. Even a student who is doing well could need an occasional, serious conversation. One way to increase your awareness of important student issues and develop rapport is to work with student organizations and initiatives. This will also increase your accessibility to students.

5. Counselling:

Good mentors are able to share life experiences and wisdom, as well as technical expertise. They are *good listeners*, *good observers*, and *good problem-solvers*.

6. Strong listening:

Mentor should listen to his mentee very carefully. He will

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pay attention to his plans, goals, understanding and problems. He should also try to understand what he/ she finds difficult to say.

7. Befriending:

In long-term relationships, friendships form naturally; students can gradually become colleagues. At the same time, strive as a mentor to be aware of the distinction between friendship and favoritism. You might need to remind a student and yourself that you need a degree of objectivity in giving fair grades and evaluations. If you are unsure whether a relationship is "too personal," you are probably not alone. Consult with the department chair, your own mentor, or others you trust. You might have to increase the mentor student distance.

b. Problem faced by mentors.

While the mentor Protege relationship can be mutually rewarding, it can be potentially destructive. Over mentoring can limit the potentials of a portage. Mentor can inadvertently stifle the maturation of the protege by discouraging autonomous work; the protege may not develop self mentoring skills and grow dependent on me. Constructivism shows that knowledge cannot be transferred. It can be and should be (re)constructed in an individual on the knowledge structure already built on him.

c. How could they be solved?

Mentor should keep reminding himself that his aim as a mentor is to enhance and encourage the protégé's professional development, to encourage autonomous work and self mentoring skills. He should patiently guide him and encourage his active participation in his work. He should insist that mentee comes out with his own ideas, differ with mentor's opinion and produce argument for his point of view. In short, mentor will not want the protégé to be like mentor but to be like a better him.

d. What are the key pre requisites for being a good mentor?

Strong interpersonal skills

The whole mentor-protege relationship depends on understanding, supporting and communicating. Hence the mentor should have strong interpersonal skills (Glickman, 1985, Hese& Blanchard, 1974 and Rowley & Hart, 1993).

Commitment to the role of mentoring

A mentor should be highly committed to the job as mentoring is an intentional activity. Hence forcing the role of mentor does not usually work. Good training programs to teach mentoring skills are also good means of excluding those who are unwilling.

Confidence building attitude

The mentor continuously acknowledges protege's strengths and successes: challenges by inviting him to participate in growth producing activities; and inspiring him by words and examples.

Technical competence/ expertise

As a role model, the mentor serves as an example to the protege and provides him/ her with a sense of what

they will become. Beginning teachers enter their careers with varying degrees of skill in instructional design and delivery. Good mentors are willing to coach beginning teachers to improve their performance wherever their skill level.

Knowledge of organization and profession

The mentor uses his knowledge of organization and profession to make the protege's progress easier and smoother. He also seeks to protect the protégé from potential threats in the environment. For example preventing the protégé from more work than he can handle, or confronting those who wish the protégé ill.

Status/ prestige within the organization and profession

As the mentor plays the role of a bridge between protege and other members of the organization and profession, it always helps if the mentor enjoys a good status and prestige within the organization and profession.

Willingness to be responsible for someone else's growth and Development:

Mentoring is an intentional activity wherein the mentor fosters the full maturation of the protégé's potential capabilities by giving feedback on observed performances.

Ability to assess and evaluate.

The mentor recognizes the protege's current level of ability and actively engages the protege in growth producing activities. The mentor determines how best to assist the protégé by considering the total personality of the individual being nurtured.

Ability to share credit

As the protégé advances in his/ her career, people usually start paying complements to the mentor. At this point, if he does not mention the hard work, potentials and abilities of the protege, the protege develops a sense of being used unfairly. Similarly if a work is published where the protege has done the bulk of the work, the mentor should insist on the protege being the first author even though the idea and overwhelming support may be that of the mentor.

Patience.

The foundation of any effective helping relationship is empathy. As Carl Rogers pointed out, empathy means accepting another person without making judgment. The relationship between mentor and protege may pass through many uncomfortable moments especially during the latter separation phase. There may be conflicts and disappointments. It is important that the mentor should be patient and show understanding to the protege's difficulties.

Conclusion:

Students need support and guidance. Hence student support programme and mentoring are very helpful in improving student's involvement and motivating them to better learning. This in turn helps the college in attaining its aims and objectives.

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