Mentoring 101
for the STEM Disciplines:

• “Mentoring Up”
• Choosing your Research Mentor

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Grad Student Orientation
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Group Discussion #1

1. When you first began doing research, what was your experience like? What did you enjoy? What were some challenges?

2. As you started in research, was there a person who helped you? Share stories how this person helped you.
Does this look familiar?
Common challenges with your mentor

Hi, Prof. Smith
I need some help with my project. Could we meet sometime in the next few days?
Thanks!

Prof. Smith,
I haven’t heard from you. I could use some help with my project.

Prof. Smith??
HELP!!!!!!

Never mind.
I figured it out.

Great.
- Smith
What exactly is mentoring?

Traditional Mentoring

Mentee

Questions, advice, etc

Mentor
Any other aspects of mentoring?

Peer Mentoring

Peer Peer Peer
Any other aspects of mentoring?

"Mentoring Up"

Questions, input, etc

Mentee

Mentor
Based upon original concept of:

“Managing Up”

Manager

Questions, input, etc

Boss

Mentoring up is:
the mentee learning to pro-actively engage with their mentor

Mentee

Questions, input, etc

Mentor
What skills are essential in managing and mentoring up?

Gabarro and Kotter point to 2 essential steps in managing up:

1. **assess yourself and the other accurately**
2. **apply** this assessment to develop a mutually beneficial relationship
Why is self-assessment so important?

Because research shows we don’t self-assess accurately

Dunning and Kruger, 1999 and 2003

Recent update:
“We are All Confident Idiots” Dunning, 2014
Why is self-assessment so important?

Because self-awareness leads to better team performance

PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS

- **High self-awareness teams**
  - Decision Quality: 68% (32%)
  - Coordination: 73% (27%)
  - Conflict Management: 65% (35%)

- **Low self-awareness teams**

_Dierdorff & Rubin, March 2015_  
_HBR.ORG_

Teams with less self-aware members made worse decisions, engaged in less coordination, & showed less conflict management.
Why is self-assessment so important?

Leadership experts stress self-leadership as the greatest need & challenge

- Daniel Goleman
  - developed concept of emotional intelligence (E.Q.)
  - successful people have high E.Q., which includes self-awareness and self-regulation

- Dee Hock
  - founder of Visa and leadership guru
  - we should spend 50% of our time on self-management

- Bill Hybels
  - founder of Willow Community Church and the Global Leadership Summit
  - self-leadership is the most important and most difficult
Take-Home Lesson

Assess & Apply

Assess yourself & others accurately

Apply your assessments strategically
How do we assess ourselves?
How do we apply our assessment in mentoring relationships?

**Group Discussion #2**

- Please refer to the handout, pages 1-2
- Complete the individual & group activities
Mentoring up is both:

**Engaging pro-actively** & **Following respectfully**

- act with confidence
- seek to understand your mentor’s expectations
- communicate your goals and expectations
- practice “follow-ship”
- actively listen
- determine and fulfill your responsibilities
- adapt to your mentor’s needs

Doing both is not easy!
What mentoring up is and isn't

Pro-active Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forceful, pushy</th>
<th>“mentoring up” actively engaging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult, disrespectful</td>
<td>Actively listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmanageable</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demanding</td>
<td>Action-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insubordinate</td>
<td>Collegial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Respectful Follow-ship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disengaged</th>
<th>Passive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apathetic</td>
<td>“Door mat”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
<td>Uncritical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-communicative</td>
<td>Mindless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncooperative</td>
<td>Obsequious</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Mentoring up is **NOT**

- manipulating your mentor
- false-flattery
When choosing a mentor, assess your priorities for your PI/advisor/mentor

- What’s their research area and projects?
- Do they have tenure?
  - assistant, associate, or full professor?
- What’s their publication record?
  - long-term and recent
  - look for patterns of grad student authorship
- How’s their funding record and situation?
  - for biosciences, use NIH RePORTER website
- How do they treat their grad students?
  - consider the whole lab group and members
Possible questions to ask research mentors

- What are your current research projects?
  - Are these new, or established projects?
  - If I were to join your lab, would you like me to work on one of your current projects or start a new one?
- Do your students have their own projects or do they work together?
- Do you have a philosophy about grad students working on high risk/high payoff vs. lower risk/lower payoff projects?
- How many and what kind of people are in your group?
  - Is this usual, or recent changes?
- Do you work closely with your grad students or prefer they be independent? What does this mean for you?
- Can I attend one of your lab group meetings?
Possible questions to ask lab members

- Do people have their own projects or work together?
- What’s the overall atmosphere in the lab?
- How does the PI react if people come up with new ideas?
- How does the PI react if someone disagrees with him/her?
- Does the PI travel a lot? Accessible when out of the office?
- What’s it like to write a paper or a proposal with the PI?
- How long do students take to finish their MS or PhD?
- Are people encouraged to attend conferences and present?
- Are you glad you joined the lab? Would you do it again?
- What is best and worst about being in this lab?
- What would you want to change about the lab?

**Note:** your perspective will likely differ from other students
Assess your needs as a mentee

A Gallup survey of 10,000 people asked:

- What leader has the most positive influence in your daily life?
- List 3 words that best describe what this person contributes to your life.

**Followers’ Four Basic Needs:**

- Trust  honesty, integrity, respect
- Compassion caring, friendship, happiness, love
- Stability security, strength, support, peace
- Hope direction, faith, guidance, initiating

You will need to find multiple mentors to fulfill your needs
Assess yourself and more

- **Assess yourself**
  - Myers-Briggs, StrengthsFinder, etc
  - *seek research-based, multiple assessments*
  - mylDP website, 7 success stories, journaling, etc

- **Assess your mentor**
  - are they receptive to doing a self-assessment?
  - how do I engage *and* follow?

- **Assess your context**
  - seek to understand the different aspects of mentoring relationships
Framework of multiple aspects of mentoring relationships

Handelsman, Pfund, Branchaw, etc at U of WI
Entering Mentoring and Entering Research

- Communication
- Aligning expectations
- Assessing understanding
- Ethics

- Addressing equity and inclusion
- Fostering independence
- Promoting professional development
How do we align expectations?
What are some common hidden expectations?

Group Discussion #3

- Read Questionnaire for Aligning Expectations
- Reply to statements #1, 3, 9, 11
Main Lesson

Assess & Apply
How can you mentor up more effectively in this situation?

- Communicate what the problem is and why it’s significant
- Don’t only bring problems to your supervisor
  - Bring possible solutions instead
Thanks for your participation!

What are your action items?

Any questions?

Slides and handout are posted