

CHAPTER 3: Mentoring Concepts and Practices

Chapter Subjects:

- The Mentor
- REACH Mentor Job Description
- Mentor Roles
- Qualities of Good Mentors
- Build-a-Mentor (Exercise)
- Successful Mentor Attitudes
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The Mentor

Mentoring, at its core, guarantees young people that there is someone who cares about them, assures them they are not alone in dealing with day-to-day challenges, and makes them feel like they matter. Most of us have had a teacher, supervisor or coach who has been a mentor to us and made a positive difference in our lives. The REACH Mentor is a critical role and component of student success. Serving as a mentor is noble and rewarding for all parties involved.

REACH Mentor Job Description

Qualifications

- A sincere desire to be involved with a young person
- Warmth, openness, patience and empathy
- Willingness to listen
- Trustworthy and discreet
- Ability to see solutions and opportunities
- Flexibility; Ability to travel to and from the site of activities
- Pass the required background check



Responsibilities

- Serve as a friend, advocate, coach, and listener to mentee on personal, school, career, and other issues
- Meet with mentee weekly at a minimum of 30 min. per session; one to one
- Make a one-year commitment
- Participate in training and supervisory meeting with agency staff
- Participate in special group events and activities
- Complete project reporting forms

Benefits

- Achieve personal growth and learn more about yourself
- Giving and sharing your lifetime of experience
- A sense of feeling valued, appreciated, needed, competent and accomplished
- Greater awareness of community resources and the needs of today's mentees
- Opportunity to have a positive impact in your community
- Development of leadership skills i.e. (Coaching, Decision Making, Goal Setting, etc.)
- Gain a better understanding of other cultures and develop a greater appreciation for diversity

Mentor Roles

Mentors assume various roles in their relationships with mentees. These roles overlap and change over time. In successful relationships, the number of roles that a mentor takes on often increases as the relationship develops. Some of the roles you may assume are:

- **Teacher/trainer** - Providing learning opportunities and offering your experience as a guide
- **Positive role model** - Demonstrating exemplary behavior and offering values that will increase chances for success and happiness
- **Social supporter/guide** - Providing encouragement to the mentee as he or she embarks on new experiences
- **Resource supporter/advocate** - Speaking and acting on behalf of the mentee and helping the mentee access community resources
- **Challenger** - Encouraging the mentee to maximize his/her potential
- **Friend/companion** - Being consistently available and sincere; providing the mentee with a caring and unconditional friendship

The roles you play at any given time are determined by the mentee's needs, desires, and interests.

Qualities of Good Mentors:

List the qualities that your ideal Mentor has, especially the ones that are important to you.

Build-a-Mentor (*Exercise*)

- Break up into groups by following the instructions today's trainer gives you.
- On the flip charts, draw an outline of a person.
- One at a time, go to the white board and with colored markers, write in a trait of an *ideal* Mentor. You can either draw the trait or write the name of the trait.
- Let your creative juices flow.
- When all the groups are finished, your trainer will let you know how you are to share your great work of art with the larger group.

Successful Mentor Attitudes

Research has shown that the most important element within the mentoring relationship is **the attitude of the Mentor**. An organization called Public/Private Ventures conducted a study and found that the Mentor attitude which best correlates with a successful Mentor-Mentee relationship was one that clearly demonstrates a wish to develop a relationship of trust and respect with the Mentee. The proper Mentor attitude includes all the qualities of good mentors mentioned above.

The Successful Mentor Attitude

"I wish to develop a relationship of trust and respect with my Mentee."

This type of Mentor is called the "supportive" or "developmental" Mentor, as their focus is to support the young person, and their concern is on the development and the personal growth of their Mentee.

Unsuccessful Mentor Attitudes

The same Public/Private Ventures study described unsuccessful mentors as having a "prescriptive attitude." That is, they were mentors who had high expectations for immediate change with their Mentees. Prescriptive mentors push too hard, too fast, presuming that **they** are the missing ingredient, the quick fix, the prescription or pill that can bring about immediate changes in their Mentees. These unsuccessful mentors fail to consider that mentoring is about the Mentee - **not** about the Mentor.

The Unsuccessful Mentor Attitude (Prescriptive)

"I believe that I am the prescription or pill that will bring about immediate changes in the Mentee."

Unsuccessful or Prescriptive Mentors:

- Are impatient, inflexible and uncaring
- Often strive to dominate the relationship
- Believe they are the "prescription" to higher functioning for the Mentee
- Are demanding and directive
- Consider themselves therapists or counselors to the Mentee
- Are ultimately self-focused