



Mentoring Program in Public & Academic Libraries: practical approach

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Today's Agenda

- 1. Testing your assumptions on mentoring (Quiz & initial discussion)**
- 2. Why formal mentoring program?**
- 3. WSU Libraries mentoring program**
- 4. The WSU study and recommendations for program developers and coordinators**
- 5. What do you think now? (Quiz's keys and final discussion)**

Testing Your Assumptions

*** Test adapted from Management Mentors, Inc (UK)**

Assumption no.1

For effective formal mentoring to occur, there must be “chemistry” between the two partners



Assumption no.2

A mentoring program and training are equally effective strategies for performance improvement



Assumption no.3

It is important to provide an orientation to the mentee's immediate manager on the role that s/he will play in the program



Assumption no.4

The less administration is involved the more effective a mentoring program will be



Assumption no.5

A library can gain similar benefits by implementing a training or a mentoring program.



Assumption no.6

- **It is more effective if a mentee chooses his/her mentor than if they are matched by administration**



Assumption no.7

**In a formal mentoring program
mentor and his/her mentee should
decide how long they will work
together.**



Assumption no.8

A minimum standard for how often a mentor and mentee should meet on a regular basis is once a month.





Why Library May Want to Develop a Formal Mentoring Program for Its Staff



Benefits of Mentoring

- 1. A supportive relationship of seasoned knowledgeable colleague to his/her less experienced peer**
- 2. The best way to share knowledge and the unique experience of a library**
- 3. The effective way of adaptation the new librarians to the library culture**
- 4. Benefit a mentor, a mentee, and a library**
- 5. An investment to the professional growth of new librarians with no money spend for outside training**



Informal vs Formal Mentoring

INFORMAL:

- **Less structured**
- **Continue indefinitely**
- **More like friendship**
- **Based on chemistry and trust**
- **No supervision involved**
- **No prearranged plans, or meetings, or expectations**

FORMAL:

- **Structured**
- **Limited by time**
- **Professional relations**
- **Arranged by a third party**
- **Monitored and controlled**
- **Success depends on mutual responsibilities & known expectations**

A Library May Choose a Formal Program

- 1. In all cases where library's interests and employee's interests met:**
 - Retention, team building, corporate culture development, adaptation of a newcomer to the library environment, including local policies and unwritten rules**
- 2. As a method of providing ALL eligible employees with equal access to their senior colleagues**

Mentoring Programs in Academic libraries

- **The important goal is: to maintain a faculty status for professional librarians. Formal mentoring program may be chosen as a method to introduce new librarians to specifics of academic librarianship, such as faculty status, its research and service requirements, tenure and promotion process**
- **The other important part of academic librarianship is a peer network of reviewers. Formal mentoring program helps to establish connection to senior colleagues and to build a peer network**

Mentoring Programs in Public Libraries

- **for patrons (children, teens, minorities, etc.) with librarians as mentors and patrons as mentees**
- **for staff for recruitment and retention purposes where seasoned librarians are used as a mentoring resource for newcomers**
- **state library, or library association may establish a mentoring program**

WSU Libraries

Mentoring Program Development

Mentoring Programs in Kansas

- University of Kansas Mentoring Program
- K-State Residency Program for new librarians
- Butler Community College [for all faculty]
- State Library of Kansas [statewide resource sharing mentor's list]
- Wichita State University Mentoring Program for Tenure Track Faculty

Why?

- **Personnel Changes**
- **New Challenges**
- **Small Group “Veteran” Librarians**
- **Larger Number of Librarians “New” to Academic Librarianship**

First Guidelines (2004)

- **Definition of Mentoring**
- **Mentoring Would Be Mandatory**
- **Original Program Length**
- **Who Could Mentor/How Mentors Chosen**
- **What Mentors Should Do**

What Worked/Didn't Work

- **Yes, It Worked!**
 - **All Eligible Participated**
 - **Genuine Interest**
 - **Helped With Orientation To Library/Campus**
 - **It started a good initiative by bringing new and long-time faculty closer together**
- **No, It Didn't!**
 - **Lack of Eligible Mentors**
 - **Is Policy in Effect?**
 - **Specific Expertise Lacking**
 - **Orientation and training vs. Mentoring**

2006 Rewrite

- **Mentor Pool Expanded**
- **Clarifications – Training vs. Mentoring**
- **Appointment/Recognition of Mentors Clarified**
- **Length of Process made More Flexible**
- **Calendar and Assessment Added**
- **Increased Confidentiality Added**

The study

**Interviews with WSU Libraries
mentoring program participants**

The goals were to investigate

- **how program works in real life**
- **if participants satisfied with the program**
- **how beneficial this program is for individuals and the library**
- **the interactions of mentors/mentees/supervisors**
- **areas needed improvements**

The study technical details

- **Interviewees:**
 - **4 seasoned faculty-mentors**
 - Tenured faculty ; 15-25 years at the Wichita State
 - **6 new faculty- mentees**
 - 4 women and 2 men, 3 foreign born,
 - all on tenure track, 4 completed the program; 2 started
 - **No administrators were interviewed**
- **Time: September 2006**
- **Place: WSU Libraries**

The study technical details (cont')

- **2 Questionnaires:**
 - **“mirrored” questions for mentors and mentees**
 - **general questions**
 - **specific questions about a program**
 - **satisfaction / dissatisfaction**
 - **suggestions for improvement of the program**

Findings

What we learned about the program

It was new for Mentors

Mentor	Formal Program	Had informal Mentor(s)	Had Informal Mentee(s)
1	No	Yes	No
2	No	No	No
3	No	No	Yes, 20
4	No	No	No

It was new for mentees

Mentee	Formal Program	Had Informal Mentor	Informal mentor was a supervisor
1	No	No	N/A
2	No	Yes	No
3	No	Yes	Yes
4	No	No	N/A
5	No	Yes	Yes
6	No	No	N/A

No goals assigned; no forms filled in; no review; no evaluation

Mentor	Mentee	Goals	Forms fill in	Meet regular	Dept
No.1	1 done 1 new	No	No	No	No Same
No.2	1 done	No	No	Yes + Irregul	The same
No.3	1 done	No	No	No	No
No.4	1 done 1 new	No	No	No	Both No

Mentees satisfied; Mentors are not

- **All 4 mentees are satisfied:**
 - **something extra; nice to have tenured faculty as a supporter; a person to ask questions**
- **3 of 4 mentors expressed mixed feelings of guilt and dissatisfaction:**
 - **2 feel that they did not give their mentees enough attention and support**
 - **1 feels that she spent too much of her time with her mentee and was used as a trainer**
- **2 of 6 interviewed mentoring “teams” were affected by poor psychological compatibility (administrator’s fault)**

Mentor's role is understood

- **Mentors see themselves as:**
 - **active supporters, trustful advisors, providers of useful information**
 - **but not necessarily friends;**
 - **senior colleagues who offer emotional support (“ a friendly face in the confusing situation”)**
 - **but not trainers**

... but not structured

- **Mentor & Mentee did not discuss their responsibilities; there were no goals assigned or exit reports.**
 - **Q: “Does your Mentee know about your responsibility as a Mentor?”**
 - **A.: “No.”**
 - **Q: “What is your responsibilities as a Mentor?”**
 - **A. “To be available. To answer questions.”**

With the program revision, mentees' expectations raise

•2004 Mentees expectations:

- A. “I did not think about it.”**
- A. “Expected to become friendly; to have lunch together”**

•2006 Mentees expectations:

- A. “I expect to get assistance with research and service**
- to develop professional relationship with my mentor,” etc.**

The study showed that ...

- **a new program is on its way from informal to formal mentoring**
- **the 2006 revision improved the policy**
- **the policy should be complemented by special implementation procedure**
- **administrative support and control are needed to make the program more effective**

Recommendations

**for the program developers and
program coordinators**

The steps in a program development

- 1. Initiation: decision to have a program; its goals**
- 2. Planning: plan carefully, discuss, design, and revise a program at the planning phase; write/approve documentation**
- 3. Implementation: provide written guides, FAQ, templates; training or orientation to all involved (mentor, mentee, manager) parties**
- 4. Control, review, and feedback (policy revision may be needed)**

Clarify Details for All Participants

- **There are at least three participants of a formal program: mentee, mentor, and administrator (informal has 2 participants)**
- **The mutual roles and responsibilities must be clarified to all participants**
- **Administrator role is to match mentoring “teams”; monitor, control, and intervene if requested by a mentor or a mentee**
- **Documentation helps Administrator to bring together right people (Application Form fill out by a mentor & Enrollment Form fill out by a mentee)**

Clarify Details for All Participants (cont')

- **Mentors and mentees should indicate their needs and preferences**
- **They need to be provided with written materials and official guidelines**
- **Memo of understanding fill in by mentor and mentee would be helpful**

Other advice

- **Postpone enrollment to a mentoring program for one to three months to let new faculty and their colleagues know each other better**
- **Organize training workshop for mentors, mentees, supervisors, and program coordinators**

Facilitate and Reward:

- **Find the appropriate form for exchange of mentoring experience between mentors (e.g. committee, business lunch, meeting, wiki, blog, etc.)**
- **Focus on benefits of all participants, including mentors**

Quiz's Keys

Answers and Discussion

1. *For effective formal mentoring to occur, there must be “chemistry” between the two partners*



Chemistry, though an important dynamic, is not the critical component for success in a formal mentoring program. Rather, compatibility whereby the mentor has the necessary background and can communicate effectively with the mentee, is the decisive factor. This often gets confused with informal mentoring where chemistry is what brings the pairs together.

2. A mentoring program and training are equally effective strategies for performance improvement



**Training is a more effective tool for performance improvement.
Remedial instruction is not an effective use of mentors.**

3. *It is important to provide the mentee's immediate manager on the role that s/he will play in the program*



Even if the manager will have minimal involvement, it is important to provide him/her with an understanding of what mentoring is and how this will affect his/her role with their employee.

4. The less administration is involved the more effective a mentoring program will be



Self-managed programs do not provide enough structure and support that is often needed by the mentor/mentee “team” to develop and maintain a positive relationship.

5. A library can gain similar benefits by implementing a training or a mentoring program



Training is more properly used to assist in the acquisition of skills or knowledge. Mentoring is more properly used to provide a more comprehensive approach to developing a person both professionally and personally. Mentoring provides development of skills/knowledge but also goes beyond that. Both share some aspects but they also differ significantly and not understanding their differences often lead libraries to use the wrong strategy for what they are trying to accomplish.

6. It is more effective if a mentee chooses his/her mentor than if they are matched by administration



Though providing an opportunity for mentees to choose a mentor may appear to be more effective, in reality, most formal programs have had great success without providing that option. The bias in favor of allowing mentees to choose is often related to not understanding the differences between informal and formal mentoring.

7. In a formal mentoring program mentor and his/her mentee should decide how long they will work together



Mentoring “team” needs to follow schedule established by the program policy. A recommended length of the program is one year. Libraries that bring closure to mentoring relationships at the 6 month level are often shortchanging their investment in mentoring as that is about the point where the real benefits of mentoring are beginning to happen.

8. *A minimum standard for how often a mentor and mentee should meet on a regular basis is once a month*



Ideally, a mentor and mentee should meet more often but once a month seems to provide enough contact on which to build a successful relationship. This presumes supplemental contact in between via phone calls and emails.

Conclusion

- **The most important for the longtime success of a mentoring program is to find a BALANCE between formal and informal mentoring**
- **The program should be formal enough to leave no any eligible employee behind**
- **Informal enough to build a team of good coworkers and to develop trustful healthy relationship in a library**
- **Supervised, controlled, & monitored enough to pair the right people and to keep a program alive**

Useful Links

State Kansas Library Mentor Directory

<http://www.skyways.org/KSL/KLNB/mentordirectory.html>

Kansas University Library Program

<http://www.lib.ku.edu/public/mentoring>

Louisiana State University Library Program

<http://www.lib.lsu.edu/committees/mentoring/>

Mentoring Manual. A Handbook for Public Library Homework Center

<http://midhudson.org/department/youth/MentorManual.pdf>

DeKalb County Public Library (Georgia)

<http://www.dekalb.public.lib.ga.us/new/jobs.htm#dev>

Medical Library Association Mentoring Program

<http://www.mlanet.org/mentor/>

Management mentors

<http://www.management-mentors.com/TestYourMentoringAssumptions.aspx>

Thanks!! Any Questions?

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**Presented to the Tri-Conference by Susan
Matveyeva and Nancy Deyoe**