

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MENTORING OPPORTUNITIES

*A presentation given annually at
the University of Arizona's Graduate Student Orientation*

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WHAT WE'LL COVER:

- **ABOUT MENTORING & MENTORS**
- **EXPECTATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES**
- **STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING EXPERIENCE**
- **TOWARD SELF-MENTORING**

WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring -- from the Greek word meaning “enduring”

“A mentoring relationship is a close, individualized relationship that develops over time between a graduate student and a faculty member (or others) that includes both caring and guidance.”

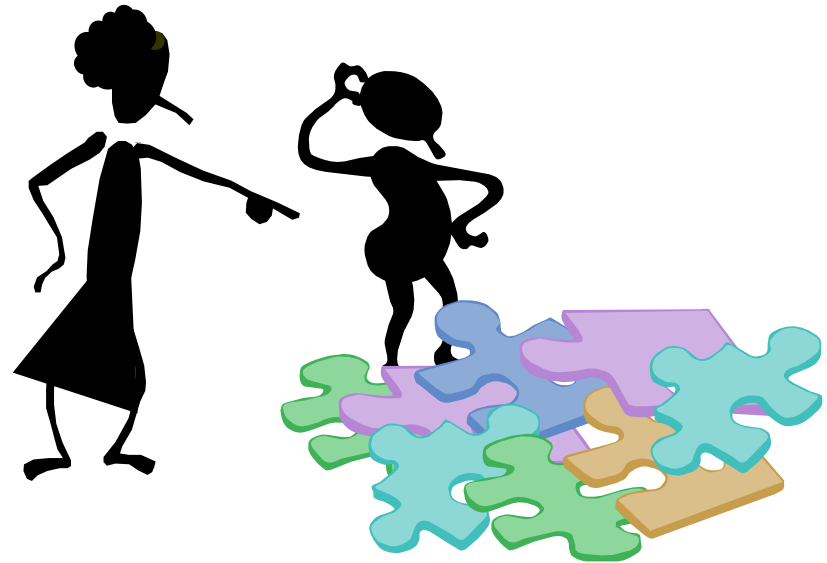
(from U of Michigan Graduate Handbook)

MENTORS ASSUME MANY ROLES . . .

ADVISORS

The most fundamental mentoring role.

Scholars with career experience willing to share their knowledge and guide you toward your degree.





SUPPORTERS

Those who give
you emotional
and moral
encouragement

TUTORS

Those who give specific feedback on performance; equip you with skills for successful careers.



“MASTERS”

Trainers, supervisors,
or employers to
whom you are
apprenticed





SPONSORS

Those who assist
you in obtaining
opportunities;
facilitate
networking

MODELS

Those who image the attributes needed to survive and thrive in the academic environment



2 QUESTIONS: ?

Q1. Who were the Mentors that played a Key Role in you being here TODAY?

Q2. Why? What important qualities did they have?

HOW TO FIND & CHOOSE MENTORS



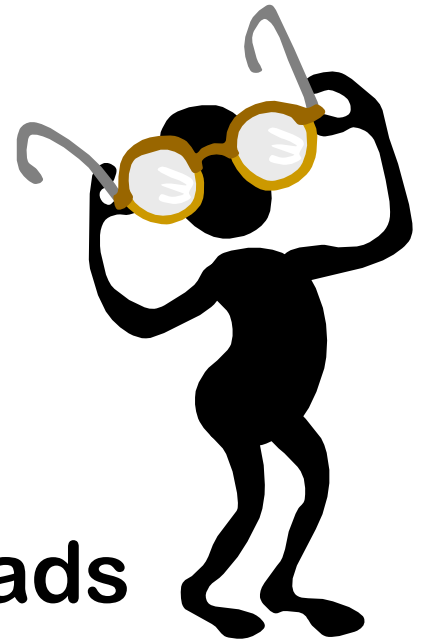
1. SELF-APPRAISAL

- What are my objectives, research interests, career goals?
- What training do I need / desire; what skills do I need to develop?
- What are my strengths; how independent do I want to be?



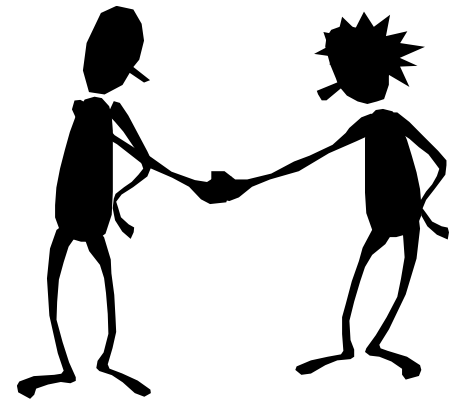
2. IDENTIFY POTENTIAL MENTORS

- Do your “research” on faculty
- Participate in departmental activities
- Take classes; go to presentations
- Seek input from fellow grads and other faculty



3. INITIATE CONTACT, PROVIDE DOSSIER, & INVESTIGATE POSSIBILITIES

- Be proactive; clarify purpose for meeting
- Provide potential mentor with your academic DOSSIER
- Identify possible mutual interests
- Follow-up



4. SEEK OUT MULTIPLE MENTORS

- Take full advantage of ALL your committee members – PhD minor too!
- Avoid limiting your options
- Appreciate the value of a mentor in position of power (+ and -)
- Seek a mentor outside your daily context . . . think “outside the box,” (e.g. virtual mentors)



4. SEEK OUT MULTIPLE MENTORS (cont.)

- Allow yourself to be challenged and stretched by differences . . .

but you may also want to . . .

- Seek a mentor who can validate your experiences; esp. in hostile environment

- Value PEER MENTORING (Yay!)



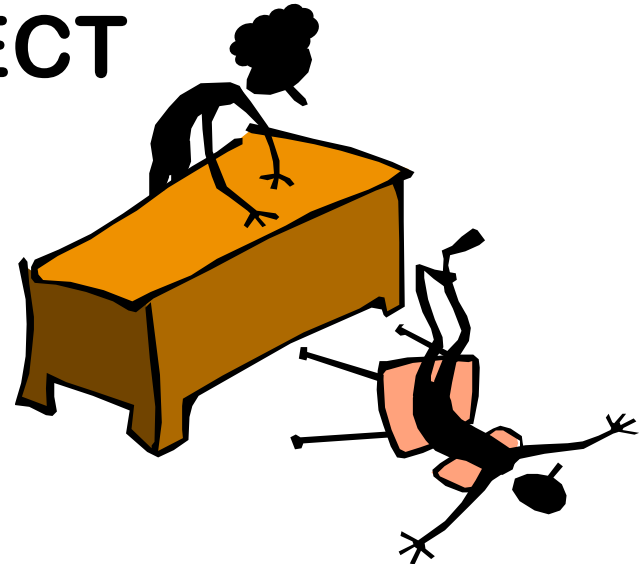
- Take full advantage of campus resources

EXPECTATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. WHAT TO EXPECT (AND REQUEST) FROM MENTORS



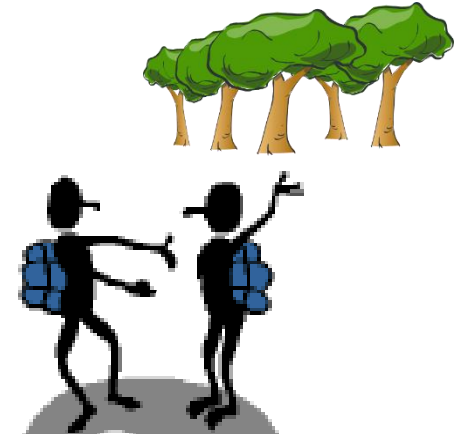
2. WHAT MENTORS EXPECT AND NEED FROM YOU



1. WHAT TO EXPECT (AND REQUEST) FROM YOUR MENTORS

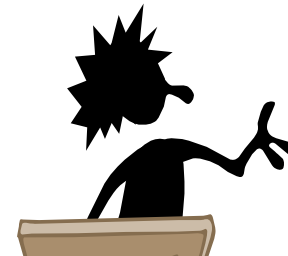
- **Availability for interaction**

- One-on-one time, group interaction
 - Answers to questions
 - Interaction beyond the classroom



- **Effective communication**

- Clear expectations
 - Email / appointment system for communication
 - Constructive feedback
 - Positive role model

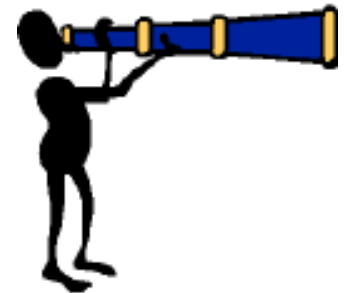


1. WHAT TO EXPECT (AND REQUEST) FROM YOUR MENTORS (cont.)

- **Advice & guidance** -- *ideally mentors should provide . . .*
 - Clear road map of requirements / procedures /
/ timeframe for completion
 - Support & encouragement
 - Help in troubleshooting the system

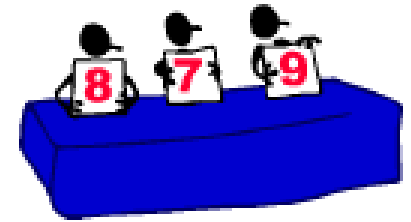


- **Research direction** – *ideally mentors should . . .*
 - Stimulate & challenge thinking
 - Demystify literature / share expertise
 - Critique research ideas & results
 - Facilitate funding opportunities



1. WHAT TO EXPECT (AND REQUEST) FROM YOUR MENTORS (cont.)

- **Feedback** -- *ideally mentors should provide . . .*
 - Written / oral evaluation of progress & performance
 - Editing / guidance on professional writing & publishing
 - Oral presentation critiques



- **Initiation into “the discipline”**

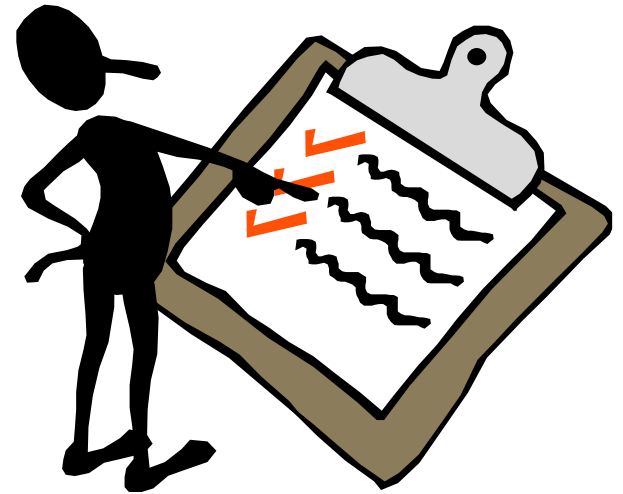
ideally mentors should...

- Facilitate networking
- Assist entry into professional associations
- Identify career opportunities
- Model & foster ethical milieu



2. WHAT MENTORS EXPECT & NEED FROM YOU

- Take responsibility for your own degree, **KNOW** the rules & requirements & policies!
- Take charge & own your education!



✓ Make a serious commitment to your department, discipline, research/work

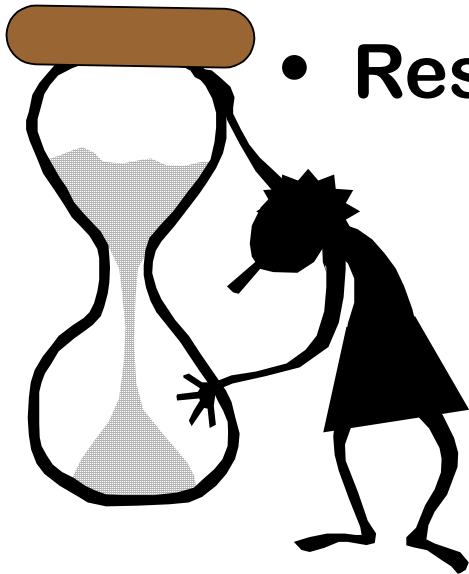
2. WHAT MENTORS EXPECT (cont.)

- Receive critiques the right way & follow your mentor's advice
- Communicate your progress on a regular basis; don't wait to be asked



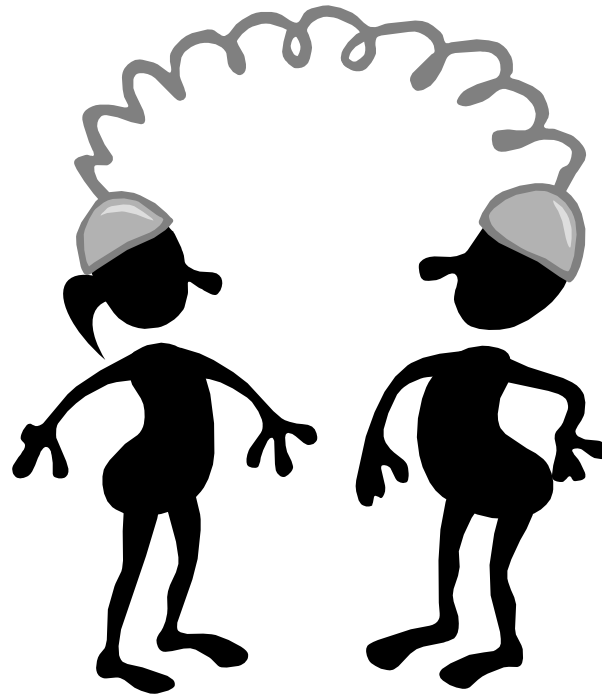
2. WHAT MENTORS EXPECT (cont.)

- Be resourceful in seeking the advice of others with specific expertise as needed (e.g., take full advantage of *all* committee members, etc.)



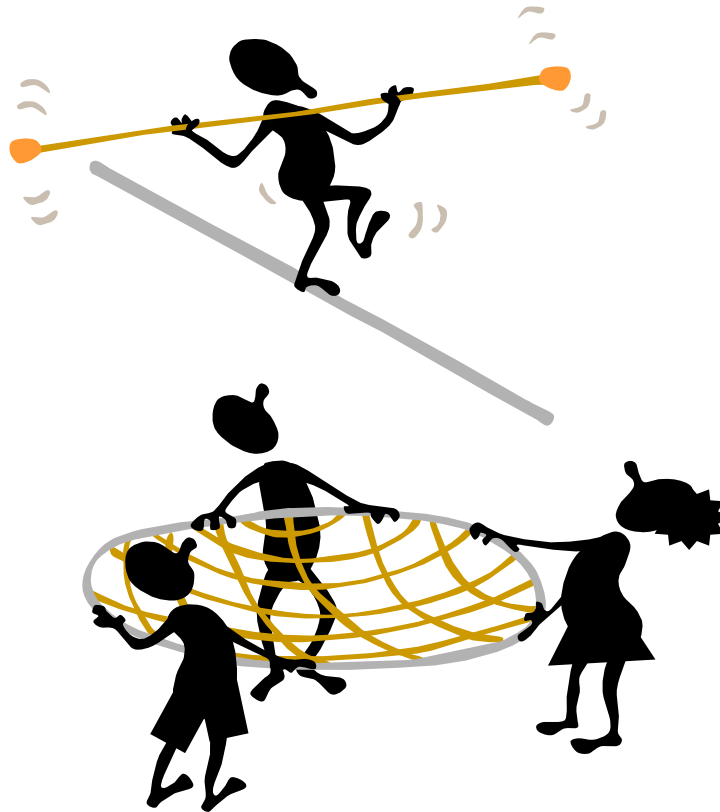
- Respect your mentor's TIME demands:
re: meetings, turnaround times,
letters of recommendation, etc.

2. WHAT MENTORS EXPECT (cont.)

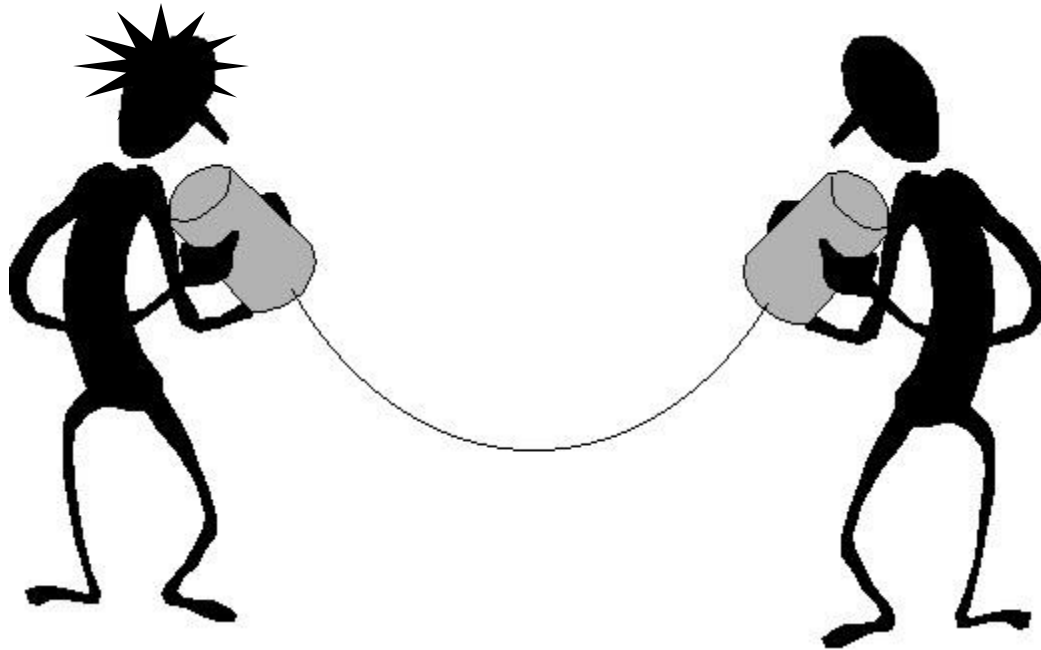


Engage in scholarly discourse!

STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING EXPERIENCE



1. COMMUNICATION IS KEY



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- **Develop & communicate work plan; update your mentors at least once a semester**
- **Clarify role & frequency of email vs. face-to-face meetings**
- **Take charge of meetings you request**
- **Summarize agreements; follow up**

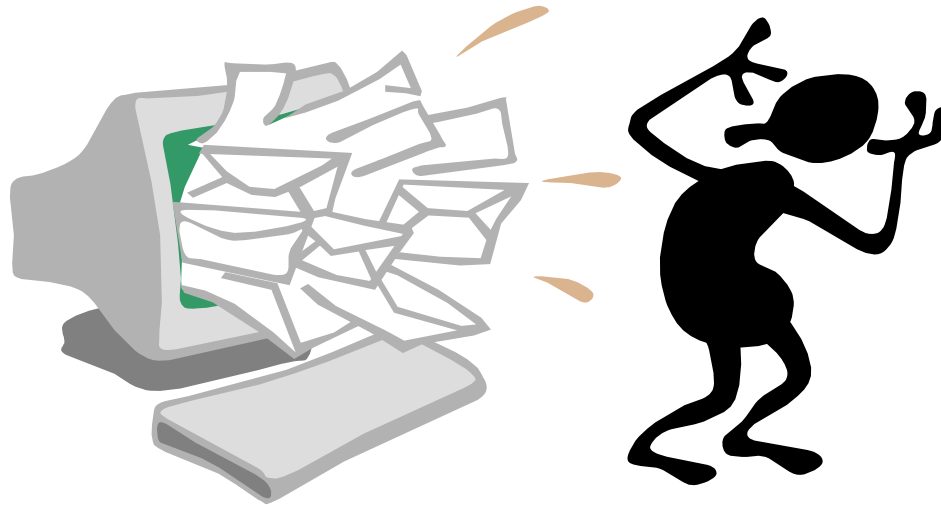
1. COMMUNICATION IS KEY (cont.)

- Clarify how often you will get feedback about your general work and progress
- Inquire about typical turnaround time for feedback on specific work (papers, theses, etc.)

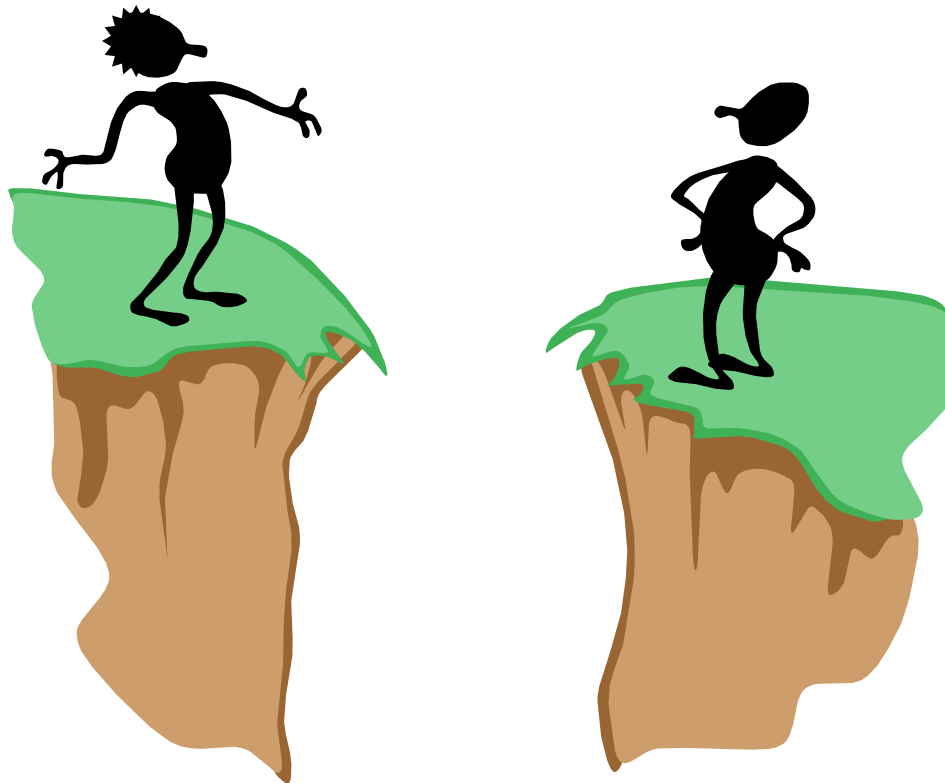


1. COMMUNICATION IS KEY (cont.)

- Be prepared to adjust expectations based on mentor's current workload
- “Remind” tactfully.



2. AVOIDING MENTORING PITFALLS



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- Know yourself & how you react / communicate
- Know your mentors & appreciate roles and time constraints
- Accept input; use tact
- Seek out advocates if necessary



2. AVOIDING MENTORING PITFALLS (cont.)

Two Important SAFEGUARDS:

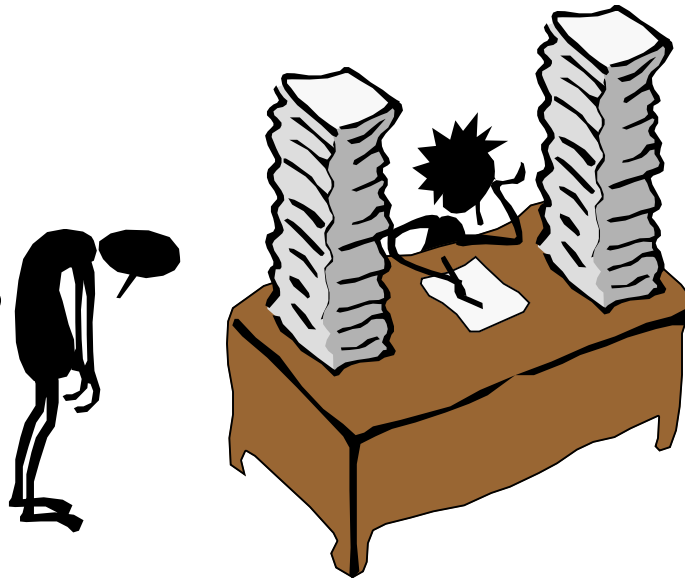
- Know rules & policies of the Graduate College, the University *and* your major & minor departments; don't rely solely on advisor -- see it or get it in writing!
- Keep copies of all forms, papers, etc. you submit to advisor, mentors, dept, online . . . **GradPath !**



2. AVOIDING MENTORING PITFALLS (cont.)

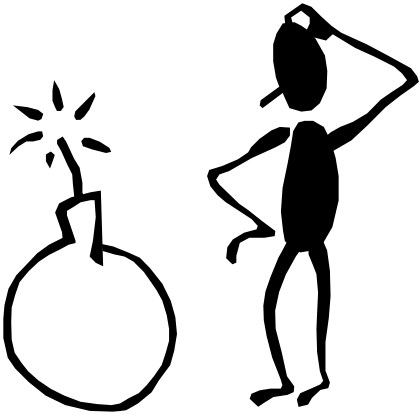
Recognize your mentor's multiple roles and responsibilities; be aware of possible tensions due to role expectation "mismatches"

"I'm thinking of dropping out of school . . .
. . .can we talk?"



"I'll NEVER get -- this grading done in time!!!"

2. AVOIDING MENTORING PITFALLS (cont.)



- **Inform mentor of crises or situations that may impact your progress; reassess your timeline realistically**
- **Be understanding when crises impact your mentor's interactions with you.**
- **Changing mentors is always an option; try to work things out; be diplomatic**

3. MAINTAIN AN ETHICAL MENTORING MILIEU



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- Value diversity;
foster collegiality



- Avoid departmental politics



- Ask questions & encourage discussion on issues related to:

- conflicts of interest
- authorship
- allocation of credit
- plagiarism
- error & negligence
- misconduct, etc.



3. MAINTAINING AN ETHICAL MENTORING MILIEU (cont.)



Research Gateway
rgw.arizona.edu



Research Integrity Program

Conflict of Interest Program

Compliance

Responsible Conduct of Research Program

3. MAINTAINING AN ETHICAL MENTORING MILIEU (cont.)



Thought-provoking reference:

On Being a Scientist: Responsible Conduct in Research (3rd edition)

National Academy of Sciences 2009

Available on the web at:

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12192

3. MAINTAINING AN ETHICAL MENTORING MILIEU (cont.)

Respect Boundaries

- Respect need for time & personal life outside of academia
- Respect the built-in hierarchical relationship between mentor & protégé; being “buddies” can backfire



3. MAINTAINING AN ETHICAL MENTORING MILIEU (cont.)

Respect Boundaries *(cont.)*

- Certain relationships are inappropriate because of the built-in hierarchical relationship between mentor & protégé.
- Non-Discrimination
& Anti-Harassment policy at UA:



Office of
Institutional Equity

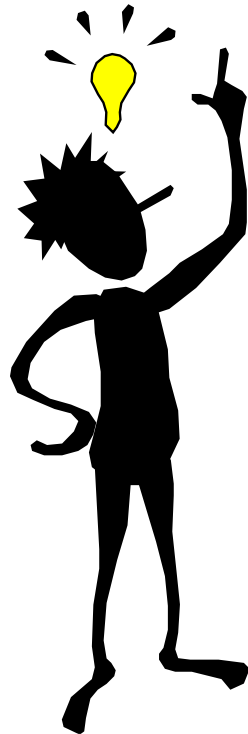
equity.arizona.edu/policies

TOWARD SELF-MENTORING

**Mentoring can be most fruitful when
it is received by persons who know
themselves well enough to integrate the
input suitably & effectively
into their lives**



- **Knowing yourself helps to deal with advice overload & conflicting recommendations**



A Final Thought

“ The daily situations in which we find ourselves are a source of directives for life.

Mentors, try, therefore, to help us clarify the meaning of such situations.

They encourage us to read them rightly,

to flow with them graciously

**. . .To refine our radar for what
circumstances they communicate.
Then they leave us on our own . . .
. . . allowing the life situation
to be our guide.”**





**A COPY OF THIS PRESENTATION
CAN BE FOUND AT:**

www.ltrr.arizona.edu/kkh/mentoring.htm

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WHAT TO PUT IN YOUR DOSSIER:

Curriculum vita (contact info, education, employment, experience, skills – focus on academic)

- **Statement of goals** (e.g., why in grad school, career aims, research interests, grad application essay, etc.)
- **Course transcripts** (or list of courses taken or planned; draft of *Plan of Study*, etc.)
- **Other useful information** (abstracts, papers, summary of thesis, etc.)