

Building a mentorship network and the importance of communication

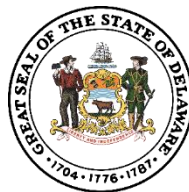
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*Project WiCCED Dialogue on Mentoring
June 5, 2020*



PROJECT
WiCCED
WATER *in the*
CHANGING COASTAL ENVIRONMENT
of DELAWARE



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
CENTER FOR EXPERIMENTAL
& APPLIED ECONOMICS

Structure of my comments

- A few thoughts about informal v. formal networks
- Importance of communication in building strong mentor-mentee relationships
- CEAE Layered Mentorship Program
- Improvements moving forward – What are your suggestions?

Informal and formal mentorship networks are tremendously valuable

- Take time to build informal networks
 - Make time for relationship-building
 - Update colleagues
 - Ask for advice (**questions** open up conversations)
- Formal networks have many advantages:
 - Accountability
 - Expand your network beyond those you may naturally connect with.
 - Comfort in knowing someone signed up to be your mentor (especially early in your career)

Communication involves an exchange of information



Communication involves an exchange of information

- **Listening** (no, REALLY listening) often matters as much as talking
 - What are your personal and professional goals? (This is not about creating mini-me's)
- Mentees – helps direct the conversation.
 - What are your **questions**? What would you like feedback/advise about?
- Good communication helps build **trust**

Mentorship is not a solo activity *and we're all learning as we go*

- Engagement is needed from both sides of the mentor-mentee relationship
- Remember that no one (well, very few of us) is trained on how to be a good mentor or mentee.
 - So, **tell each other what is working** and what is not (though the former is often easier).
 - **Ask questions** and explain needs and expectations.

CEAE Layered Mentorship Program

1st – let me set the stage

Center for

EXPERIMENTAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS

Nurture a community engaged in evidence-based research and dissemination of results to inform policy and promote sustainability at the nexus of agriculture and the environment.



CEAE Layered Mentorship Program

Mentoring Program:

Center for Experimental & Applied Economics

The mission of the Center for Experimental & Applied Economics is to "Nurture a community engaged in innovative, evidence-based research and dissemination of results to inform policy and promote sustainability at the nexus of agriculture and the environment."

Mentoring Benefits

For the Mentor:

- Opportunity to make a significant contribution to the Center
- Opportunity to pass along knowledge and experience
- Demonstration of leadership
- Personal satisfaction of helping another colleague to improve, learn, and grow

For the Mentee:

- Assistance with professional development and networking
- Increased knowledge of the Center and its activities
- Advice about research activities and/or strategies for academic and professional success
- Better knowledge about professional opportunities (e.g., securing paid internships)

For the Center:

- Fostering an environment that nurtures personal and professional growth through the sharing of information, skills, attitudes, and ideas
- Promoting a training model in which leaders teach other leaders
- Increasing job satisfaction for mentees and mentors by providing resources and a structure for professional development.
- Sharing and leveraging knowledge and skills throughout the Center

Mentor Responsibilities and Expectations

A successful mentor typically:

- **Fosters self-development:** helps the mentee take charge of her or his own growth, and does not expect the mentor to follow all advice or act on all suggestions.
- **Encourages broad thinking:** ultimately concerned that the mentee gains perspective and is successful at growing.
- **Provides informal guidance:** not responsible for managing the performance of the mentee.

Mentees are expected to:

- Discuss expectations with mentee
- Spend a minimum of 2 hours per month with the mentee during the semester
- Attend at least one educational lecture or seminar with mentee per semester
- Listen to and respect your mentee
- Connect in with the mentee before and during Center social gatherings
- Try to offer helpful advice and guidance, and provide consulting/coaching on mentee's development activities, as requested
- Offer help & follow through on commitments
- Periodically review how the mentor-mentee relationship is going (see below)

Thanks to Scott Allen who provided the initial template for this document.

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Expectations

ly:

g relationship and makes it high-value: take an active role in one's own and driving the mentor-mentee relationship.
es: come to meetings prepared to ask questions and accept advice.
strategies to accomplish goals: be open to new ideas and ways of doing

with mentor

and activities with mentor
educational lecture or seminar with mentor per semester
ng goals, seek feedback, and ask questions
ergy to accomplish goals
ne, and follow through on commitments
ow the mentor-mentee relationship is going (see below)

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hings right the first time
ce they should give or all of the questions they should ask
earning into one mentoring relationship
beyond the mentor-mentee relationship

tionship

he Boundaries of the Relationship

mentees discuss and agree personal and professional boundaries in their
ides what is in-bounds and out-of-bounds. It is at the start of the
issues, should be brought out, for example:

mmunication outside meetings

Goals of the Relationship

rage their mentees to share their needs, expectations, and goals. Then
in refine the goals together.

edule

ho have an effective relationship determine the frequency and length of
/ in the experience. They reflect on the purpose of the mentoring
her's schedules.

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should check in with each other on how the relationship is
xchange reviews in writing. Below is a sample review you

ntship were:

, I gained the following knowledge and/or skills:

d from this mentoring relationship

ationship be more effective?
ne differently:

tor:

Date: _____

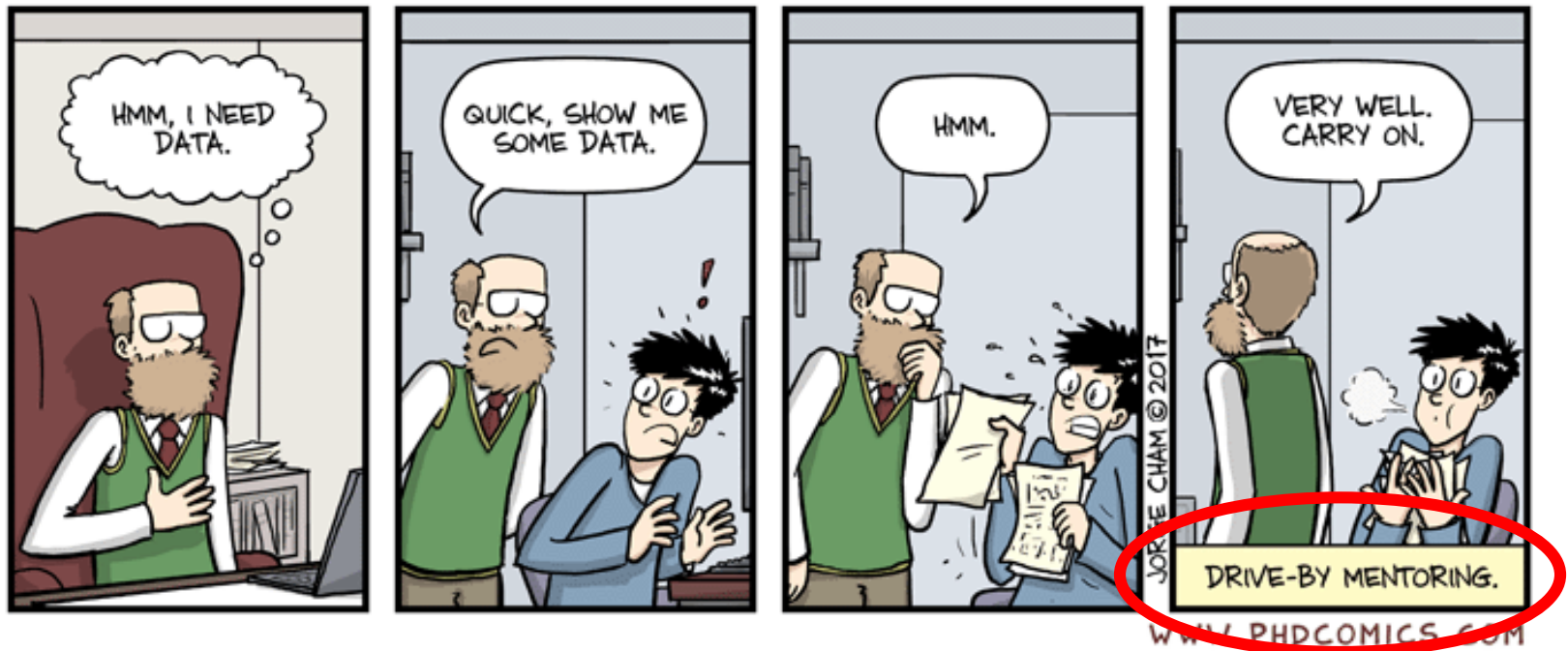
How do we make the program more valuable for everyone?

- Challenges I've observed:
 - How can we emphasize the value of mentor networks early? Sometimes students do not seem to fully utilize their mentorship networks.
 - Should the program be opt-in or opt-out? Forced mentorship is not fun for anyone, and neither is wishing your mentor was more engaged.
 - How do we facilitate better feedback and (re)assignment? We don't want to hurt each others feelings. And who wants to fill out another form? But feedback is a key part of good communication!

What we want to avoid....

Piled Higher and Deeper by Jorge Cham

www.phdcomics.com



title: "Drive by" - originally published 4/12/2017

