We will start momentarily at 2pm ET

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“Why am I muted?”
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No Mentor Available? Mentor Yourself!
Reflective Self-Mentoring

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No Mentor Available? Mentor Yourself by Using *Reflective Self-Mentoring!*

Saundra Yancy McGuire, Ph.D.
Director Emerita, Center for Academic Success
Retired Asst. Vice Chancellor & Professor of Chemistry
Louisiana State University

**Tell us what you think…**

How familiar are you with the concept of self-mentoring??

A) Very familiar

B) Somewhat familiar

C) Have heard of it, but am not familiar with it

D) Never heard of the concept
Desired Outcomes

• We will understand the importance of structured self-mentoring
• We will have specific strategies for effective self-mentoring
• We will have greater confidence in ourselves and our ability to control our own destinies

What is a Mentor?

A mentor is a wise and trusted person who guides, protects, and promotes a protégé’s (mentee’s) career.*

*Donna Joyce Dean, Ph.D.
Why is a Mentor Important?

“Because science survival skills are rarely taught in a direct way, most young scientists will need a mentor. Some will find one in graduate school, or as a postdoctoral researcher, or perhaps as an assistant professor. “Those who do not have a mentor have an excellent chance of moving from graduate study to scientific retirement without passing through a career.”


Things a Mentor Can Offer

- Information about the culture/unwritten rules of an institution/organization
- Tools and strategies for success
- Information about resources
- Encouragement & inspiration
How often have you...

- You felt you really needed a mentor, but you didn’t have access to one
- You received advice from a mentor, but realized at the time, or found out later, that it was not the best advice for you

A) Never
B) 1 – 2 times
C) 3 – 5 times
D) More than 5 times

If you have experienced either of those situations (or if you may in the future)...

You can develop the skill of reflective self-mentoring
What is Reflective Self-Mentoring?

A type of mentoring in which an individual cultivates his or her own professional growth through self-tutoring activities and resource-finding techniques.

Self-mentoring requires the individual to be highly motivated and self-disciplined. The individual increases job effectiveness and augments professional talents by building a body of knowledge and skills without the aid of other people.

Things a Mentor Can Offer...

that you can provide for yourself!

- Information about the culture/unwritten rules of an institution/organization
  Observe and discern the rules/norms/mores

- Tools and strategies for success
  Observe and talk to others who have advanced

- Information about resources
  Google it!

- Encouragement & Inspiration
  Encourage yourself by reflecting on past successes!
It is crucial that you know yourself and others

- What are your personal characteristics?
  - Personality style (MBTI)*
  - Learning style preference (VARK)*
  - Job interests
  - Mindset (Fixed vs Growth Intelligence)

- What are the personal characteristics of those with whom you work?

*www.cas.lsu.edu

Monitor Your Mindset!


**Mindset** is Important!

- **Fixed Intelligence Mindset**
  Intelligence is static
  You have a certain amount of it

- **Growth Intelligence Mindset**
  Intelligence can be developed
  You can grow it with actions


---

What Do you Think…

What do you think is the mindset about intelligence of most of the scientists that you have encountered?

A) Most had a fixed intelligence mindset  
B) Most had a growth intelligence mindset  
C) Approximately evenly distributed among the two  
D) I couldn’t tell
Responses to *Many Situations* are Based on Mindset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed Intelligence Mindset Response</th>
<th>Growth Intelligence Mindset Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges</strong></td>
<td><strong>Avoid</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Obstacles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Give up easily</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tasks requiring effort</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fruitless to try</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criticism</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ignore it</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Success of Others</strong></td>
<td><strong>Threatening</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Monitor Your Self-Talk

Have you ever had any of the following thoughts?

- “I can't do this work; it is too much/too hard”
- “I'm not as good-smart as the others”
- “I remember the last time I tried this and failed”
- “I must be an idiot. What makes me think I can do this?”
- “They're gonna soon find out I'm in over my head.”
The Antidote to Negative Self Talk: Positive Self-Talk!

- Turning negative, destructive thoughts into positive, constructive thoughts
- Facilitated by objectively evaluating the validity of negative thoughts
- Forces the adoption of a different perspective
- Reflection and journaling can be important tools

How can we rephrase the negative thoughts into positive thoughts?

- “I can’t do this work, it is too much/hard”
- “I’m not as good/smart as the others”
- “I remember the last time I tried this and failed”
- “I must be an idiot. What makes me think I can do this?”
- “They’re gonna soon find out I’m in over my head.”
More Self-Mentoring Strategies

- Ask questions and listen carefully to the experts in your field of interest.
- Read and research materials in the field.
- **Observe people in leadership positions.** Notice the different styles of leadership and which are effective.
- Attend and present papers at conferences and other educational programs.
- **Seek out new opportunities.** Volunteer for projects or join professional organizations – but not too many.
- **Brainstorm with yourself!** Plan time for your self-mentoring activities.

Start using critical thinking to reflectively mentor yourself!

It’s a tool that works beautifully!
Additional References


• Feibelman, P. J *A Ph.D. is Not Enough!* New York: Basic Books


Useful Websites

• http://acswebinars.org/

• www.cas.lsu.edu

• www.vark-learn.com

• www.mentornet.net

• Searches on www.google.com
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Assistant Director,
ACS Careers

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