

Gender and mentoring

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Aims of workshop

- ◆ To look at
 - an overview of the effect of gender on the mentoring relationship.
 - issues surrounding a mentoring dyad which includes a heterosexual male mentor paired with a heterosexual female mentee.
 - the implications of findings to a formal mentoring scheme.

Why gender?

- ◆ Increasing diversity
- ◆ Visible group memberships
- ◆ Invisible group memberships
 - Race
 - Ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Sexual orientation
 - Class
 - Religion
 - Disability






Gender of medics

- ◆ Increasing number of women entering medicine in UK
 - 54% in 1996
 - 61% in 2001
- ◆ Filling of senior posts predominantly by men



KSS mentoring scheme

- ◆ 26 male mentors
- ◆ 6 female mentors
- ◆ 43 female mentees
- ◆ 54 male mentees



Consider key mentors in your life

- ◆ How did their gender affect the mentoring relationship?

The components of mentoring



**Professional
development**

**Continuing
education**

**Personal
Support**



Functions of mentoring

Kram 1985

◆ Career

- sponsorship
- exposure and visibility
- coaching
- protection
- challenging assignments

◆ Psycho-social

- role modelling
- acceptance and confirmation
- counselling
- friendship



Benefits

Clutterbuck and Ragins
Mentoring and diversity, p 62

- ◆ Development outcomes
- ◆ Career outcomes
- ◆ Enabling outcomes
- ◆ Emotional outcomes



Gender and mentoring.

What do we know so far?

- ◆ Most studies use Kram's perspective.
 - Career
 - Psycho-social
- ◆ Most studies use mentee views.
- ◆ Most studies are surveys.
- ◆ Most studies done in business or academic world.



Key findings

- ◆ Gender effect
 - formation of mentoring relationship
 - mentoring function
 - gender composition



A. Formation of mentoring relationship

- ◆ Gender does not affect the probability of becoming a mentee
- ◆ Men and women are equally likely to get help
- ◆ Those who mentor are more likely to mentor others
- ◆ Women find more barriers in getting a mentor



B. Effect on mentoring function

- ◆ Inconsistent results
- ◆ Informal and formal
 - **No difference** in functions received in **informal** relationships
 - **Women** received **less** mentoring functions in **formal** relationships



◆ Some studies

- women look for more socio-emotional support
- men look for more instrumental help
- women care more about the lifestyle and values of their role models
- males get more career development help
- women get more psycho-social help
- male and female mentors provide the same types of mentoring
- mentor gender affects the outcomes
 - male mentor gets more promotion for mentee
 - male mentee with male mentor will earn more
 - in academia same gender pairs result in greater productivity



C. Gender composition

- ◆ Men more likely to have a same gender mentor than women
 - women and men exposed to differing mentoring experiences
- ◆ Men and women at a senior level are equally likely to mentor
 - less women at senior levels
- ◆ Women perceive role models in the same sex mentors



- ◆ Cross gender mentoring pairs avoid socialising more than same gender pairs
 - less access to mentor
- ◆ Male mentees with female mentors
 - fewer mentoring functions fulfilled
 - less satisfaction
- ◆ Sexual involvement



In groups of four

- ◆ A common model of mentoring in medicine is a male heterosexual mentor paired with a younger heterosexual female mentee.
 - In the light of experience and evidence so far, what issues need to be considered in this type of pairing?



5 problem areas

Kram 1985

- ◆ Adoption of stereotypical roles
- ◆ Role modelling is missing
- ◆ Intimacy and sexual tension
- ◆ Peer resentment
- ◆ Public scrutiny



1. Stereotypical roles

- ◆ 'Father' and 'pet'
 - Lisa Dolittle in 'My Fair Lady'
 - Rita in 'Educating Rita'
- ◆ Constrain behaviour
- ◆ Decrease effectiveness



2. Role modelling

- ◆ Same sex mentoring pairs
 - Freud and Jung
 - Haydn and Beethoven
 - Plato and Socrates
- ◆ Areas of role modelling
 - Multitasking
 - Home life balance
 - Pregnancy, PMS and menopause



3. Intimacy and sexual tension

- ◆ “What I am saying is that ... men and women cannot be friends because the sex part always gets in the way.” ‘When Harry met Sally’, Columbia pictures 1989.



- ◆ 'When a man becomes interested in guiding and advising a younger woman there is usually an erotic interest that goes along with it'. Sheehy, quoted in Freeman 1998a p33.



Pickering: "Are you a man of good character where women are concerned?"

Higgins: "Have you met a man of good character where women are concerned?"

Pickering: "Yes, very frequently!"

Higgins: " Well I haven't!"

My Fair Lady, Paramount, 2001.

Life experience?





Research?

- ◆ 10% cross gender mentoring pairs became romantically involved.
 - Fitt and Newton 1981, quoted in Mentoring and Diversity
- ◆ 25% of male faculty reported sexual relationships with students.
 - Fitzgerald et al 1988, quoted in Mentoring and Diversity
- ◆ 25% of female mentees admit to having sex with their male mentors
 - Collins 1983, quoted in Mentoring and Diversity



Coping strategies?

- ◆ Serial monogamy or polygamy not seen as a problem.
- ◆ 'sexual attraction is a highly emotional issue, so they try to ignore it and hope it goes away'. Spruell 1985 p21
- ◆ 'Sexual attraction can't be stopped and it can enhance the organisation. It should be managed so it has a positive, not negative, effect on the organisation and the people'. Kaleel Jamison quoted in Spruell 1985 p 21



Kram

- ◆ Adoption of stereotypical roles
 - typically father / daughter
- ◆ Relationship withdrawal
- ◆ Tested boundaries
 - greater intimacy
 - sexual liaison
 - problem of different expectations
 - effect on mentoring relationship



- ◆ 'The attempt of effectively managing sexual tensions limits the overall value of the relationship in providing critical development function.' Kram 1985, page 123



- ◆ 'What I am saying is that ... men and women cannot be mentors because the sex part always gets in the way.'



Solutions?

- ◆ Awareness
- ◆ Avoidance
- ◆ Cross gender mentoring guidelines
 - Murray 1991 p184
- ◆ New models
 - mentoring circles
 - co-mentoring



4 . Peer resentment

5. Public scrutiny

- ◆ Resentment and jealousy of other employees with no access to mentoring.

- Fiona, Bob and office politics. Bennets 2002 p 124, Mentoring and Diversity

- ◆ The jealous spouse

- 'There are sex problems unique to cross sex mentoring and they affect relationships at work and home' Bowen 1985 page 32

- Educating Rita



Implications?

- ◆ 'Research suggests that for most mentoring relationships gender matching or mismatching may not matter. But for some proportion it does - especially because of sexual tensions. In other ways, not yet measured by researchers, difference in the quality of the mentoring experience may exist.' O'Neill 2002 p 14, Mentoring and Diversity



AMFY

- ◆ 10. Volunteering looks good on your resume.
- ◆ 9. Playing scrabble yourself is not much fun.
- ◆ 8. They will think your car is cool no matter what you drive.
- ◆ 7. Good for ego.
- ◆ 6. Always someone to hang out with.
- ◆ 5. You get to go back to school.
- ◆ 4. Somebody out there needs you.
- ◆ 3. A chance to relive your glory days.
- ◆ 2. Someone to listen to your boring stories.
- ◆ 1. You actually make a difference.

Other issues

- ◆ Resource
 - staffing
 - money
- ◆ Growth in diversity



Recommendations

- ◆ Gender combination is an issue
- ◆ Guidelines should be in place for cross gender pairings
- ◆ Mentees should be given choice in mentor gender
 - Increased mentee ownership and commitment
 - Mentor choice?



Recommendations

- ◆ Other models should be explored and evaluated
 - Co - mentoring [Leicester]
 - Peer supported learning [Anglia]
 - Mentoring circles [KSS]
- ◆ Further research is needed
 - sexual diversity
 - gender bias changes





Key references

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