

Proceedings

Mentoring: Success Strategy for Minorities and other “New Entrants”

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Abstract

Mentoring is a partnership. Lois Zachary, author of “The Mentor’s Guide defines mentoring as “a reciprocal learning relationship between two (or more) individuals who work collaboratively towards a mutually defined goal of developing the mentee’s skills, abilities, knowledge and/or thinking. However for the purposes of this presentation and in basic terms, mentoring is the process by which an experienced person provides advice, support and encouragement to a less experienced person. In this instance, the mentor is the senior or experienced professor (in current setting.) The mentee is the new entrant, minority faculty or one who is entering this new and unequal environment for the first time. Time in place makes the mentor capable of helping. He/she knows their way around - around the campus, around pitfalls, around the formal and informal policies and procedures. The mentor is a valuable resource.

The challenge of this is 1) getting the mentee and mentor together, 2) establishing rapport and trust, 3) identifying the special goal or objectives, and 4) appropriate execution.

Minority faculty and select new entrants to universities, college and other institutions that have histories of exclusion often present themselves as open and welcoming yet there exist barriers, negative perceptions, and attitudes that inhibit maximum productivity and therefore the university must take deliberate measures to eradicate barriers and provide special corrective action or strategies to insure that all persons are treated with respect and dignity and achieve their professional objectives.

Mentoring is one strategy that has proven effective in assisting minorities and other new entrants achieve success and overcome existing or perceived barriers and to navigate effectively the myriad of policies and procedures that impede or propel them in achieving their professional, and at times, personal goals.

It is important to implement the mentoring process with care. This workshop will focus on the specific format for a mentoring program designed for minorities and other “new entrants” to achieve success.

