

Mentor Matching: A ‘Goodness of Fit’ Model

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Abstract

One of the few mentoring topics that has received little attention in the abundant mentoring literature is the determinants of organically formed – (as opposed for formal program-based) mentoring relationships. We propose a "Goodness of Fit" model which outlines the basic elements of the mentor-protégé match, viewing the relationship as a social exchange based on the fit among mentor and protégé preferences, endowments, and the content of knowledge transmitted. After presenting the model, we provide a few illustrative research questions that flow from the basic logic and terms of the model.

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Introduction

By one accounting (Allen & Johnston, 1997), more than 500 articles on mentoring were published in management and education literatures during the ten years leading up to 1997. Despite the continuing rapid proliferation of mentoring literature, surprisingly few studies (e.g. Whitely, et al., 1991; Olian, et al., 1988) have focused specifically on the processes by which organic mentoring [author reference] relationships occur. Perhaps this inattention is due to a general concern among researchers with more instrumental questions (Russell & Adams, 1997). Another reason why the topic of mentor-protégé match may have drawn limited attention is that a significant number of mentoring relationships originate as part of formal programs, with mentors’ and protégés’ choices playing little or no role.¹

Our objective is to develop a preliminary model that might prove useful in developing a researchable model of mentor-protégé matching (we use the alliterative shorthand “mentor matching”). Our “Goodness of Fit” model emphasizes mentoring as decomposable into three different perspectives, the mentor, the protégé, but also the dyad as a discrete analytical entity.² The model draws from previous studies but attends to conceptual and analytical issues that have often been given short shrift. The model includes assumptions from which a conception of mentoring effectiveness flows directly. After presenting the model we suggest some of the research questions that seem to fall within its domain.

Before turning to the question of mentor matching it is worthwhile to attend to conceptual and definitional issues. The mentoring literature is rife with multiple meanings and undefined terms and we wish to be clear as to exactly what notion of mentoring we seek ultimately to predict.

Defining “Mentoring”

Carl Hempel suggests that in order “to determine the meaning of an expression...one would have to ascertain the conditions under which the members of the community use – or, better, are disposed to use – the expression in question” (1952; 9). Often the concepts presented are suggestive, identifying the attributes of mentoring rather than stipulating the meaning of the concept itself and, in particular, its boundary conditions. More than a few researchers fail to even provide a definition of mentoring (e.g. Allen & Johnston, 1997; Burke & McKeen 1997; Chao 1997; Collins & Scott 1978; Green & Bauer 1995; Tepper & Taylor, 2003).

Its contemporary popularity notwithstanding, serious research on mentoring began relatively recently (e.g. Levinson, et al., 1978; Kram, 1980). While it is impossible to identify a single work and say categorically that it is the beginning of mentoring research, one can make a good argument that Kathy Kram’s dissertation (1980) and her 1983 *Academy of Management Journal* paper provided a beginning to the contemporary research tradition. The 1983 article is still the most frequently cited journal article on the topic of mentoring and her conceptualization of mentoring has been either directly quoted or reworked only slightly in many subsequent studies. In her seminal paper, Kram identified four stages of mentoring, but at no point provided an exacting definition. In a subsequent book, Kram (1985) provided some information useful for a definition, but,

again, no formal, stipulative definition. She noted that mentoring involves an intense relationship whereby a senior or more experienced person (the mentor) provides two functions for a junior person (the protégé), one function being advise or modeling about career development behaviors and the personal support, especially psycho-social support.

The early Kram conceptualization of mentoring has influenced subsequent work to a considerable extent. For example, Eby (1997: 126) provides an appropriation of the Kram conceptualization that is quite typical:

Mentoring is an intense developmental relationship whereby advice, counseling, and developmental opportunities are provided to a protégé by a mentor, which, in turn, shapes the protégé's career experiences...(.)
This occurs through two types of support to protégés: (1) instrumental or career support and (2) psychological support (Kram, 1985).

Other researchers (Chao, 1997; Ragins, 1997b) use close variants of this definition. To be sure, there has been a great deal of refinement and articulation of mentoring concepts and measures. However, as we see in Table 1 which presents a selection of mentoring definitions, most of the branches connect to the same conceptual taproot. For example, Eby (1997) expands the Kram (1985) conceptualization to the idea of peer mentoring, moving away from the original focus on the mentor-protégé dyad. Whitely, Dougherty, and Dreher (1991) distinguish between “primary mentoring” (i.e. more intense and longer duration) and more ephemeral “secondary mentoring,” but still beginning with the Kram conceptualization. Chao, Waltz and Gardner (1992) use Kram's conceptualization in connection with both “formal” and “informal” mentoring. Ragins (1997a, 1997b) examines diversity and power relations, beginning with the Kram conceptualization.

Scandura (1992) examines a number of questionnaire items, factor analyzing them and interpreting the results in terms of the dimensions initially suggested by Kram.

Insert Table 1 about here

Mentoring Concepts: A Variant

As we suggested above, relatively few scholars actually provide a stipulative definition of mentoring. Most researchers cite Kram's usage or neglect to provide a definition at all. It is useful, then, for us to provide a definition of mentoring before proceeding apace with a model of mentor matching. While our definition is not a radical departure from previous ones, it is sufficiently different in its nuances as to advance our objectives for this paper.

In developing our definition we employ standard criteria (Balzer, 1986; Parsons, 1971). First, the definition should reflect ordinary language usage of the term. The definition need not (and in this instance *cannot*) be identical to ordinary language use, but it should not be so far removed from reality as to be unrecognizable. Second, the definition should be useful in providing boundaries for mentoring and separating mentoring from related varieties of knowledge transmission. Third, and, of course, related to the other two criteria, the definition should be useful for advancing research.

We offer the following definition:

Mentoring: *a process for the reciprocal, informal transmission of knowledge, social capital and psycho-social support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career or professional development; mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and over a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom or experience (the mentor) to a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé).*

Since our definition is not a radical departure it seems unnecessary to focus on each of its terms. However, there are a few points which are important. First, while our definition of mentoring assumes differences in levels of knowledge and experience, it does not require a hierarchical dimension to mentoring. Although some research (Burke & McKeen, 1997; Eby, 1997; Scandura and Schriesheim, 1994; Tepper, 1995) focuses on the possible variations in mentorships when the mentor is the protégé's supervisor or peer, we argue that this distinction in rank is not a vital criterion for defining mentorships. It is possible to point out many instances where a person of inferior formal rank mentored a superior (perhaps the classic example being commonplace relationship between an Army master sergeant and an inexperienced lieutenant junior grade- a case where the ranking officer's very life may depend on the quality of an enlisted person's mentoring). Rather, we focus on the differentiation in relevant knowledge, wisdom or experience between the protégé and mentor as the defining characteristics of a mentorship. Whether the mentor compared to the protégé is in a lateral or hierarchical rank within the organization is irrelevant to our definition as long as the mentor is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom or experience compared to the protégé.

A second implication especially relevant to our study is that mentoring is viewed as an *informal* approach to knowledge transmission and social exchange. From this perspective, the term "formal mentoring" is an oxymoron. This does not mean, however, that the thousands of formal mentoring programs set up in organizations do not result in mentoring relationships, only that they do not develop on command. The question of whether someone in a formal mentoring program has a mentor is an empirical question.

According to Ragins and colleagues (2000), mentoring, whether formal in its origins or not, results in stronger job satisfaction outcomes. But Eby and Allen (2002) conclude that relationships based on formal program assignments can result in poor dyadic fit leading to more negative experiences and higher turnover and stress than is found in mentoring relationships that are informal in origin. We disqualify formal mentoring in our definition, but this decision does not contain judgment about the thousands of formal mentoring programs that have been set up in organizations. Rather, we view formal mentoring programs as sewing the seeds of relationships, many of which flower into useful and productive mentor relationships. The “Goodness of Fit” model presented in this paper offers a method for improving the odds of developing productive mentorships in a formal setting by facilitating the matching of mentors and protégés.

A “Goodness of Fit” Model of Mentor Matching

Two aspects of the preliminary model we present here are especially important. First, we use a dyadic conception of mentoring. Second, we view the effectiveness of mentoring in terms of the “fit” between the members of the dyad.

Dyadic Concept

A focus on a dyadic conception of mentoring is not at all unusual. Since Kram’s (1985) pioneering work, the majority of studies have relied on a dyadic conceptualization. While there is no necessity of conceptualizing mentoring as dyadic, we feel it is both intuitively appealing and advantageous for the advance of theory. Viewing mentoring as dyadic has some face validity. If one agrees that mentoring is about informal, person-to-person communication, then it is difficult to think of mentoring as anything other than a dyadic relationship. True, one can envision a mentor imparting

knowledge to two or more protégés simultaneously, but if the relationship is *always* multiple, then it is difficult to think of the relationship as sufficiently tailored to individual needs as to qualify as mentoring. This is why, for example, we think the idea of a professional association mentoring an individual is not a theoretically useful approach (e.g. Dansky, 1966).

Thinking of mentoring as dyadic does not, of course, preclude mentors from having multiple, contemporaneous protégés, nor does it preclude protégés from having multiple mentors. Likewise, individuals may, at the same time, serve as both mentor and protégé. It is also possible, of course, to conceptualize networks of mentors and protégés and even the propagation of mentoring as protégés from successful mentorships become mentors (Fagenson-Eland et al., 1997; Kram 1980; Scandura, 1997; Scandura & Viator, 1994). None of these conceptualizations is inconsistent with a dyadic concept of mentoring.

Social Exchange and “Goodness of Fit”

Our mentor match model is based on a social exchange (Homans, 1958) concept of mentoring. Our model views mentoring as a social exchange predicated upon an acceptable fit between the mentor’s and the protégé’s preferences, incentives, and valuations. The relationship requires an “acceptable” fit- otherwise the mentoring relationship will be terminated. The quality of the mentor relationship is a function of the closeness of the fit. Given the social exchange nature of mentorships, reciprocity is critical to the relationship. Mentors and protégés who receive greater benefits from the mentorship can be expected to invest in and maintain the relationship thus increasing outcomes.

We can think of mentoring relations as having optimal conditions and minimal conditions. Minimal conditions are those required for a mentoring relationship to develop or for an existing one to continue. Optimal conditions, a theoretical ideal rather than a set of conditions identified empirically, are those in which both the mentor and protégé are fully and completely satisfied with the mentoring relationship and the value it imparts. In the range between minimal and optimal conditions we can determine the “Goodness of Fit,” which is the degree to which both the protégé’s and the mentor’s preferences are met. Of course, there may be cases where the protégé’s preferences do not align with the mentor’s preferences. For example, consider the case when a mentor identifies that the protégé is deficient in his ability to take direction for a particular department head. Although the protégé may not self-identify this deficiency, a good mentor will take the time to discuss this deficiency with the protégé. If the protégé and mentor share a high level of fit the protégé will be more likely to trust and value the mentor’s opinions and subsequently accept the mentor’s help in developing the protégé’s ability to take direction from the department head. In this case, though the protégé does not recognize a deficiency, a good fit enables the mentor to expand the mentorship to areas which the mentor identifies as important to the protégé’s professional development. Goodness of fit is, empirically, more important than optima because of the strong likelihood that at least some of the preferences (not to mention the actual performance) of the protégé and mentor will diverge or conflict and the goodness of fit will accommodate these divergent moments and enable the protégé and mentor to adjust to the changing relationship.

The model presented here is in some respects a departure from the literature. Contemporary mentoring literature tends not to emphasize the give-and-take involved in

the formation of the mentor-protégé relationship or the fact that most relationships are almost necessarily sub-optimal. While many studies investigate how protégés obtain maximum value from the mentoring relationship (Auster, 1984; Eby et al, 2004; Olian, Carroll, Giannantonio, & Feren, 1988; Ragins & Scandura, 1994; Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994; Singh, Bains & Vinnicombe, 2002; Young & Perrewe, 2000), they typically do not focus on the fit of sometimes very different preferences between two different parties. Our assumption is that individuals come together motivated by perceptions of the benefit of social exchange (Homans, 1958; Huston & Burgess, 1979; Jacobs, 1970). We feel that mentoring relationships should in most cases be viewed as a sub-optimization process, seeking the best possible fit between different and possibly conflicting preferences, the product of a social exchange, focusing not only on the motivations and needs of the protégé, but also of the mentor, and, ultimately, of the two jointly (i.e. the dyad).

There are a great many important aspects of mentoring and the Goodness of Fit model does not pretend to cover them all. Whereas many researchers aim to understand organizational benefits from mentoring (Chao, 1997; Kram, 1985; Russell & Adams, 1997; Singh et al., 2002; Tepper & Taylor, 2003; Willbur, 1987), that can be no more than a secondary concern for our model. Some theories of mentoring are “stage theories” (Chao, 1997; Kram, 1983; Young & Perrewe, 2000) but we see no reason at present to include stages, at least no stages beyond beginning, in-between, and end. The Goodness of Fit model seeks to begin with the most elemental of issues of mentoring – why individuals enter into mentoring relationship.

Endowments and Preferences

The Goodness of Fit model examines social exchange according to the distinctive mix of “Endowments” and “Preferences” obtaining for any specific mentoring dyad. The key to the social exchange’s utility for each party (and, combined, for the dyad) is the extent to which Endowments, Mentoring Content, and Preferences match, where:

Endowments include (for the mentor) the fund of relevant knowledge, experience, social capital and psycho-social and communications ability and (for the protégé) the fund of prerequisite knowledge and experience, communications ability and learning capabilities.

Preferences include (for the mentor) the value for communicating various types of knowledge content and experience and the value for communicating it in various modes and (for the protégé) the value for receiving particular types of knowledge content and experience and for particular teaching and learning modes.

Content includes the particular substance of the social exchange. Content might include, for example, contacts with other specific persons in a profession, knowledge of office politics conveyed in terms of accounts of organizational history, or psychological reinforcement of particular types.

From the above, it can be deduced that mentoring has maximum benefit for the dyad only under the following case: *The mentor has the knowledge preferred by the protégé, has a value for transmitting that knowledge, and does so effectively to a protégé who has the capability to understand the knowledge transmitted and the learning skills to fully expropriate the knowledge being transmitted. In return the mentor receives the benefits of training a colleague, furthering her role as a leader in the organization, expanding her own professional networks, building social capital, and possibly advancing the organizational mission.* In all other cases, mentoring is sub-optimal in its outcomes, at least as long as we retain a definition of effectiveness based on the preferences of the parties to the mentoring (as opposed to, say, an effectiveness concept based on organizations’ benefits). Though, of course, suboptimal does not imply that the

mentorship does not procure benefits to the mentor and protégé, it is simply not producing optimal outcomes.

Table 2 is quite general and entirely fictional but can nonetheless give some insight as to the possibilities for matching the Preference Structure in a dyad. Illustrative variables are listed in the table, along with a crude setting of values (high, medium, low) for the individual for a given variable. The illustration shows a way of thinking about preferences and, perhaps, suggests that these could be subject to research and instrumentation. Once one identifies empirically the set of preferences for a sample of mentors and protégés (either actual or putative) it should be possible to develop instruments eliciting those preferences in systematic fashion.

Insert Table 2 about here

The table above could, theoretically, be used to diagnose the symmetry of mentor and protégé Preferences and, if applied in a formal mentoring program, could perhaps improve the likelihood that true mentoring relations would emerge from the pairing of dyads.

Figure 1 is a graph illustrating the concept of mentoring effectiveness derived from the Goodness of Fit model of mentoring. In the previous table illustrating mentor and protégé Preference Structures, we see that one of the few ways in which the preference functions of our hypothetical dyad sharply diverge is with respect to a desire for “office politics” knowledge content. According to the model, both the protégé and the mentor can be said to have a quantity of Preference from either imparting (or receiving) knowledge about “office politics” and, likewise, each can be said to have a quantity of

Endowments he or she can draw from in, respectively, communicating and learning such knowledge. Finally, we see that there is an actual and observable quantity of knowledge about office politics transmitted in this particular mentoring relationship (quality is presumed to be entirely a function of Endowments).

Insert Figure 1 about here

While the illustration shows that protégé and mentor share a mentoring dyad, their respective evaluation of it differs because of their different Preference functions. The areas D' (deficit) and S' (surfeit) represent these values. In the case of the protégé, the relationship focuses somewhat more than the protégé would prefer on the topic of office politics, resulting in a surfeit (negatively valued) of quantum D'. In the case of the mentor, the relationship focuses somewhat less on office politics than the mentor would prefer, resulting in a deficit (also negatively valued) of quantum S'.

From the figure, we can infer that mentoring effectiveness ultimately is a function of the alignment, on intersecting planes, of Preferences, Endowments, and Content- the closer the fit, the more effective the mentoring. The best case, of course, entails a transmission of knowledge (Content) that reflects a strong symmetry of preferences between the mentor and the protégé, enabled by endowments that support the provision and the absorption of the knowledge.

Preliminary Research Questions

We are not at this point prepared to suggest hypotheses flowing from the Goodness of Fit model of mentor-protégé match, but even this preliminary formulation seems to suggest some possible research questions. While some of these questions have

received at least modest attention in the mentoring research literature, others have received none at all. There is no intention that the questions below are exhaustive, rather they are intended as illustrative.

Illustrative Mentor Research Questions:

R1.1: What are the elasticities of mentor preferences? That is, will preferences be more robust as a function of such factors as the talent (endowments) of the protégé, the number of prior protégés, or the perceived quality of prior mentoring relationships?

R1.2: What are the effects on a mentor of having had a mentor? If the focal mentor has himself/herself had a mentor, will the preference minima be lower or higher? Will the endowments the mentor brings to the relationship be affected by his/her own experience as a protégé? As a result of previous protégé experience, will some endowment types (e.g. psychosocial) be stronger, all else equal, than others (e.g. social capital)?

R1.3: Do mentor endowments tend closely to match mentor preferences? Are mentors more likely to focus on content reflecting their strongest endowments? Or does mentoring content relate more closely to perceived or communicated protégé preferences?

Illustrative Protégé Research Questions:

R2.1: Do protégés tend to seek mentoring content more closely aligned with their endowments or their limitations?

R2.2: What approaches do protégés use to gauge potential mentors' endowments? Is in situ observation more important than reputation? Do protégés tend to make direct inquiries about mentor endowments?

R2.3: What are the dynamics by which protégés' preference functions crystallize and then change? Are preference functions highly mutable (e.g. varying with specific job demands) or are they more fundamental and embedded in basic values?

Illustrative Dyad Research Questions:

R3.1: If the mentoring relationship begins to move below acceptable minima for both parties is the mentor or the protégé more likely to exit (i.e. terminate the relationship)? What are the social processes employed in exiting the mentorship?

R3.2: If the mentor has more than one protégé or if the protégé has more than one mentor, how does the dispersion of focus affect the assessment of the relationship's utility? In cases of multiple relationships, do they tend to substitute or complement one another?

R3.3: Regardless of the *magnitude* of perceived marginal benefit from a mentoring relationship, does the *symmetry* of perceive benefit (accruing to, respectively, the mentor and the protégé) affect either the formation of the relationship or its termination?

We reiterate that these are only illustrative research questions. However, we feel that these examples help demonstrate that the Goodness of Fit model imposes a framework for thinking about mentor-protégé relations as a social exchange in which the fit of preferences and endowments shape mentorship outcomes. Because the “Goodness of Fit” model aligns the mentorship according to mentor and protégé endowments and preferences we can get a better understanding of how these components are interrelated. For example, the “Goodness of Fit” model enables us to investigate how preferences adjust due to experiences from previous mentorships, endowments, and the needs of the

other party. If mentors and protégés align themselves based on endowments and preferences, it follows that each mentoring relationship will be an ongoing negotiation to exchange endowments and benefits. The Goodness of Fit model enables us to investigate how preferences affect endowments, and vice versa, and also to measure the changing patterns between the two, over time. In fact, the fit between a mentor and protégé will vary not only as the relationship matures, but also as the two individuals move on to engage in mentorships with other individuals. The Goodness of Fit model provides a fluid framework for understanding these shifting relationships.

Conclusion

Our Goodness of Fit model narrows the conceptualization of the mentor-protégé match to dyadic pairs engaged in relationships that aim to transmit knowledge, psychosocial support, and social capital perceived by the dyad as relevant to work or career. Mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge or experience (the mentor) to a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé). These mentoring relationships are organic and emerge among individuals who have a distinct set of Endowments and Preferences which, together, promise to increase the utility of both the mentor and the protégé.

Potentially, our Goodness of Fit model provides a tool for addressing the ever growing number of research questions listed in the “future research” section of most mentor research papers. Calls for future research include a need to identify the characteristics of mentors, protégés, and the mentoring relationship (Scandura, 1992), explore the positive and negative aspects of mentoring (Eby et al, 2004), integrate findings from various organizational settings (Russell & Adams, 1997), investigate

mentoring at different career stages (Kram, 1983), examine the role of similarity between mentors and protégés in identifying the probability for success in mentoring relationships (Burke et al., 1991), and investigate the nature of power balances in diversified relationships where shared identity and perceived similarities may be lower than in more homogenous relationships (Godshalk & Sosik, 2003). The Goodness of Fit model of mentoring gives cues for addressing each of these questions.

Our model is a limited one. It does not impinge on “formal mentoring” because it is based on the fit of the preference structures of the parties to the mentoring relationship. Similarly, our model says little about “negative mentoring.” Clearly it is possible to have negative outcomes from mentoring; both the research literature and personal testimonials point out instances of negative outcomes. Since we focus on informal mentoring, the implication of our focus is that both parties to the relationship are receiving sufficient benefit to continue the relationship. Thus, assuming our focus, negative mentoring outcomes imply either (1) some aspects of the relationship are negative but the relationship is viewed by both parties as net positive or (2) there is a compulsory or exploitative element to the relationship. We feel that the first instance is compatible with our perspective. It simply implies that the fit is in respects deficient. The second case is not compatible with our focus or our definition of mentoring. If a relationship is at its core exploitative or compulsory it does not seem to us that it is in any important sense mentoring but, rather, a qualitatively different relationship. To put it another way, negative mentoring should (excepting exploitation or compulsion) but short-lived inasmuch as organic mentoring is voluntary.

Were one to use the Goodness of Fit model to develop a research agenda on

mentor-protégé matching, a variety of research approaches would likely edify. However, a particularly fruitful approach might entail the combining of in-depth dyadic interviews and thick descriptions of the protégé and mentor preferences and endowments within mentorships, ultimately yielding structured questionnaires that could be used to test hypotheses about the dynamics of effects among preferences, endowments, and contents and employing multiple measures of mentoring outcomes and effectiveness. Though these methods have been used in past mentoring research, the key would be to investigate the goodness of fit between mentor and protégé preferences and endowments, thus capturing both sides of the relationship and their intensity of fit. For mentoring relationships where the fit is sufficient to maintain the relationship, but is less than optimal, research should focus on increasing the effectiveness of the fit (and thereby the mentoring relationship). For relationships where there are negative outcomes such that one or both parties view the relationship as on balance negative and perhaps even destructive, a different sort of research strategy may be required, one focused on pathologies, and perhaps a different set of concepts, ones going beyond “bad mentoring” to consider the nature of poisonous social relationships and the forces that sustain them.

¹ In a recently completed study (author reference), based on questionnaire data from 787 public sector managers, we found that more than 26% of mentoring relationships began as part of formal program assignments.

² While there are still other perspectives one might take, such as the work unit or the organization, our focus is restricted to the mentor, protégé and dyad. Later in the paper we suggest in detail why we maintain this more limited perspective but, essentially, it is because the meaning and implications of these three levels have often been confused in previous research and theory.

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Table 1

Illustrative Examples of Mentoring Definitions

Mentoring Definitions
"Mentoring is defined as a developmental relationship that involves organizational members of unequal status or, less frequently, peers (Kram, 1985)" (Bozionelos, 2004: 25).
"Mentoring is an intense long-term relationship between a senior, more experienced individual (the mentor) and a more junior, less experienced individual (the protégé) (Kram, 1985)" (Eby & Allen, 2002: 456).
"Mentors provide young adults with career-enhancing functions, such as sponsorship, coaching, facilitating exposure and visibility, and offering challenging work or protection, all of which help the younger person to establish a role in the organization, learn the ropes, and prepare for advancement" (Kram & Isabella, 1985: 111).
"Mentoring is a developmental relationship typically occurring between senior and junior individuals in organizations" (McManus & Russell, 1997: 145).
"The mentor is usually a senior, experienced employee who serves as a role model, provides support, direction, and feedback to the younger employee regarding career plans and interpersonal development, and increases the visibility of the protégé to decision-makers in the organization who may influence career opportunities" (Noe, 1988: 458).
"Traditionally, mentors are defined as individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to protégés careers (Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1985)" (Ragins, 1997b: 484).
"A mentor is generally defined as a higher-ranking, influential individual in your work environment who has advanced experience and knowledge and is committed to providing upward mobility and support to your career. Your mentor may or may not be in your organization and s/he may or may not be your immediate supervisor" (Ragins <i>et al</i> , 2000: 1182).
"We conceptualized supervisory mentoring as a transformational activity involving a mutual commitment by mentor and protégé to the latter's long-term development, as a personal, extra organizational investment in the protégé by the mentor, and as the changing of the protégé by the mentor, accomplished by the sharing of values, knowledge, experience, and so forth (Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1985)" (Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994: 1589).
"[W]e define mentors as 'individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward support and mobility to their protégés' careers'" (Singh <i>et al.</i> , 2002: 391).
"[T]he term 'mentor' refers to a more senior person who takes an interest in sponsorship of the career of a more junior person" (Smith <i>et al.</i> , 2005: 33).
"Mentoring relationships facilitate junior colleagues' (protégés) professional development and career progress (Noe 1988a, Ornstein & Isabella, 1993; Ragins, 1989)" (Tepper, 1995: 1191).
"This study focuses on a more formal type of relationship between a senior member of an organization and a novice, in part, to address the growing emphasis organizations are placing on formal types of mentoring in the socialization and career development of many professionals (Russell and Adams, 1997)" (Young & Perrewe, 2000: 613).
"A mentor is a person who oversees the career and development of another person, usually junior, through teaching, counseling, providing psychological support, protecting, and at times promoting or sponsoring. The mentor may perform any or all of the above functions during the mentor relationship" (Zey, 1984: 7).

Table 2
Example of Dyadic Preference Structure for Mentoring

Mentoring Preference Variables	Mentor	Protégé
H=High M=Medium L=Low		
Work Orientation		
Task-Oriented	H	H
Socio-Emotional	L	L
Teaching Orientation		
Directed	H	H
By Example	M	M
Indirect (metaphors, stories)	L	M
Learning Preference		
Active	H	H
Absorptive	L	L
Content Preference		
Strategy	M	M
Tasks	H	H
Career Advance	M	H
Advocacy Functions	L	H
Access to Social Networks	M	H
Visibility	H	L
Special Assignments or Activities	M	H
Problem or Conflict Resolution	L	L
Personal Attributes		
Gender (homophily preference)	H	M
Race (homophily preference)	L	L
Extrovert-Introvert	L	L
Friendly or Business-like	M	M
Marital Status	M	M

Figure 1
Effectiveness Concept for “Goodness of Fit” Mentoring Model

