# Learning to lead:  Higher education faculty explore self-mentoring

Marsha L. Carr, University of North Carolina, Wilmington, USA.
Diane K. Pastor, University of North Carolina, Wilmington, USA.
Pamela J. Levesque, University of North Carolina, Wilmington, USA.

Contact email: Carrm@uncw.edu

## Abstract

Using collective case-study inquiry the research question of how a formal semi-structured self-mentoring programme can support professional growth and faculty leadership development for new and existing university faculty is explored.  A research project was funded through the University of North Carolina-Wilmington Charles L. Cahill Award. Participants were recruited from a south eastern university. The results suggest that self-mentoring [is] a process to support faculty's individualized path to both acclimation and growth in higher education through increased confidence as self-leaders.

**Key words**:  coach, mentor, self-mentoring, higher education, faculty, leadership, case study

## Introduction

For faculty new to the professorial role, arriving on a university or college campus can be challenging (Nakamura, Sheroff, & Hooker, 2009). Many arrive with an anticipated view of the expectations of being a professor that is skewed or unrealistic; the real training for the assignment begins immediately upon arrival (Schoenfeld & Magnan, 1918).  For female faculty or nontraditional faculty it is often more challenging as additional barriers may be present (Mack, Watson, & Camacho, 2013).  To lessen the impact of this transition into academia, mentors are often provided to new faculty to soften the impact of this transition as well as influence the next generation of practitioners (Nakamura, Sheroff, & Hooker, 2009). Research suggests that these professionals benefit from the guidance and service of a mentor (Allen, Eby, O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008; Garvey, 2014; Garvey, Stokes, Megginson, 2014). If available, having a mentor can be a rewarding experience, however, when the pairing of a mentor and a mentee is mismatched, the results can be disastrous (Allen, Eby, O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008; Burk & Eby, 2010). Self-mentoring offers a complimentary or alternative practice to the traditional mentoring approach (Bonds & Hargreaves, 2014).

At a southeastern university, a study was envisioned for university faculty. The impetus for the study was to determine if self-mentoring was a viable method of support for new faculty during the first year, whether new or experienced with the professorial role. This work was supported through a university grant. Snowball recruitment took place through the university email system. The purpose of the study was to determine how self-mentoring could support new faculty.

**History**

There are deep historical roots to the word "mentor". The original Mentor appears in *The Odyssey* as an old and trusted friend of Odysseus. The story follows that Mentor is appointed to look after the estate and to look after Odysseus's son, Telemachus. The Mentor is a guide to young Telemachus in his search for reunion with his father. Mentor urges the boy on his quest, finds a ship, accompanies him on the first leg, and then departs, returning again at the end of the tale to assist as the father, son, grandfather recapture their heritage and consolidate their return home. His part in the tale is instructive, helping the youth achieve his manhood and confirm his identity (Daloz, 1999). The mentor takes on the role of guide and sage with characteristics of helper, teacher and advisor (Kostovich & Thurn, 2006; Yoder, 1990).

As a concept, mentoring was first utilized in the arts and humanities. Famous mentoring relationships include those between Lorenzo de Medici and Michelangelo, Verrocchio and Leonardo de Vinci and Franz Boas and Margaret Mead (Yoder, 1990). With current workplace challenges and complexities across multiple disciplines, such as business, education and nursing, the mentoring concept has a revived use and importance in today's work environment (Mijares, Baxley & Bond, 2013; Yoder, 1990). This research expands the mentoring concept by introducing self-mentoring as a recognized method of support in the workplace.

**Review of Literature**

The literature was searched using PROQUEST, CINAHL and EBSCO databases using the keywords mentor, self-mentor, coach, higher education, professor, concept analysis and theory in various combinations. There was a robust return on all keywords except self-mentor suggesting a gap in research and/or publications on this topic.

*Mentoring: Concept Analysis*

In two concept analyses, one by Yoder (1990) and the other by Mijares, Baxley & Bond (2013) the antecedents, consequences and related concepts of "mentoring" are explored. Antecedents include the presence of the mentor and protégé. Mijares et al (2013) includes interpersonal process and cultural awareness and training as necessary antecedents, whereas Yoder (1990) includes an open and teachable attitude along with the right "chemistry". Necessary criteria for the mentoring process include role-modeling, sharing knowledge and experience, as well as guiding and providing emotional support (Mijares, et al, 2013). Mijares et al (2013) looked at the mentoring literature from six disciplines; nursing, anthropology, business, education, psychology and social work. All six disciplines shared similar descriptions of mentoring, "…an interpersonal interaction between a seasoned mentor and a novice protégé, which includes supporting, guiding, teaching, encouraging, and role-modeling".

Consequences, those events resulting from the occurrence of the concept, are important to understand within the context of the mentoring relationship. While mentored employees are said to have greater job satisfaction, enhanced role development, greater productivity and reduced turnover, there can also be negative consequences experienced (Mijares, et al, 2013; Yoder, 1990). Not all mentoring relationships are successful, and some face challenges in the mentoring process. Some of these challenges could be related to a developmental difference in age and/or career stage, age differences, culture, gender, power and control challenges, and a change or difference in expectations from the mentoring relationship. If a mentor were to "fall out of favor" within an organization, the protégé may suffer the backlash of association (Yoder, 1990). Disrespect and incivility would certainly doom the relationship to failure,

such as might be seen if the mentor fails to protect the protégé from jealous peers or superiors or when the mentor betrays the protégé to others (Yoder, 1990).

The above concept analyses aid in understanding the complexities of the mentoring process.  While the mentor protégé relationship can provide role development within an organization or discipline it may not always be available or successful.  For these reasons self-mentoring may be a viable option.

### *Defining Mentoring*

Mentoring is often reserved for the induction of mentees new to an environment or a profession (Schoenfeld & Magnan, 2004; Alred & Garvey 2010). An ideal mentor is described as someone who "serves as advisor, sponsor, host, exemplar, and guide to a novice who is moving from dependence and inexperience toward independence and proficiency" (Nakamura, Sheroff, & Hooker, 2009, p 2) and most mentoring practices provide guidance built on a relationship of trust. The benefit of mentoring is the opportunity for collaboration, goal achievement and problem solving that it so often provides (Ragins & Scandura, 1997; Nakamura & Shernoff, 2009; Thomas & Saslow, 2011).  Alleman (1986) identifies nine mentor functions: 1) giving information, 2) providing political information, 3) challenging assignments, 4) counseling, 5) helping with career moves, 6) developing trust, 7) showcasing protégés achievements, 8) protecting, and 9) developing personal relationship/friendship (pp. 47-48).

Mentoring programmes flounder for various reasons such as the unavailability of suitable mentors, lack of sufficient time dedicated for mentoring, and cost restraints that create a burden on the organization (Allen, Eby, O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008; Burk & Eby, 2010). When the pairing of a mentor and a mentee is compatible, a relationship of trust can build; however, when the mentor and mentee are mismatched, it is referred to as 'negative mentoring' (Scandura, 1998). There are five types of negative mentoring practice experiences: general dysfunctionality, mismatch within the dyad, lack of mentor experience, manipulative behavior, and distancing behavior (Scandura, 1998). General dysfunctionality is the mentee's personal problem interference or a negative attitude to the work environment, individuals in the setting, or a general lack of responsibility. Dyad mismatch is when both the mentor and mentee report a mismatch in personality or work ethic. Lack of mentor expertise occurs when the mentee believes the mentor lacks the necessary skills – interpersonal or knowledge driven - to serve as mentor. Manipulative behavior exists when the mentoring position is used for power, influence, or politics.  The final type of negative mentoring is distancing behavior, which results when the mentor intentionally negates to provide proper guidance or sufficient time to the mentee (Scandura, 1998). In a 2013 literature review by Kent, Kochan and Green the influence of culture on mentoring programmes and relationships is explored.  Their results are categorized into three categories; 1) culture (age, social class, race, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual orientation) and mentoring relationships, 2) organizational culture (patterns, communication methods, physical and social environment) and mentoring, and 3) world culture, ethnicity and societal influences.  Their review expands the understanding of the mentoring relationship by acknowledging the many complex factors impacting its success. Albeit, mentoring practices and programmes remain indispensable in providing new faculty or employees with essential support.

In order to have the successful outcomes expected mentoring situations must consider the nuances involved during the mentoring process. Universities, like many organizations, provide mentoring services to faculty that are new to the system or new to the profession. The assignment of mentors varies from university to university. It may be a senior faculty member in the department or a combination of both internal and external faculty while some universities encourage new faculty to select a mentor while others assign a mentor (Allen, Eby, O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008). However even with the assignment of a

mentor, loneliness is a new faculty's most salient complaint over concerns of workloads and busyness (Schoenfeld & Magnan, 1918), regardless of race, gender, and sexual orientation (Mack, Watson, & Camacho, 2013). Collegiality, despite perceptions is not a hallmark of professors. A research study by Sands, Parson, and Duane, (1991) revealed that many departments apply a form of Darwinism. It can be thought of as, "Let's throw the kids off the end of the pier and see whether they can swim or not." (Schoenfeld & Magnan, p 6). Despite this perspective, faculty career development is recognized as an important factor in maintaining faculty vitality (Hynes, 1984).

Integrating new faculty into the organization is also viewed as a critical aspect of leadership development and sustainability (Lambert, 2003). Oakes, Quartz, Ryan, and Lipton believed in 1999, and it still holds true today, that unless there is a commitment by those involved, either mentoring or self-mentoring programmes may fail to be impacting. Barth (1999) looks at leadership as everyone's work and that leaders grow when they engage with others to make sense of the world, reach out to the newly hired, commit to shared outcomes, and develop their identities as owners of their system - the organization. Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth (2004) suggest there is a growing recognition of a proactive role by mentees, which coincides with the growing recognition of the proactive role in the socialization (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000), career attainment (Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001), and mentoring literatures (as cited in Witzki, & Schneider, 2008).

Self-mentoring is coming to the fore as a complementary practice or viable alternative for individual or group mentoring programmes (Bond & Hargreaves, 2014). A self-mentor is an individual of any age, profession, gender, race, or ability willing to initiate and accept responsibility for self-development by devoting time to navigate within the culture of the environment in order to make the most of the opportunity to strengthen competencies needed to enhance job performance and career progression (Carr, 2013, 2014; Bond & Hargreaves, 2014). Central is the idea of self-development and self-reflection (Huang & Lynch, 1995), while self-motivation is a predominant attribute of a self-mentor.

### Self-Mentoring
Proactive individuals are receiving increasing acknowledgement in the world of work (Blickle, Witzki & Schneider, 2009). Proactive behaviors are named as personal initiative, taking charge and those who are active agents initiating improvement in their work setting (Blickle, Witzki & Schneider, 2009). While traditional mentoring typically represents a one-to-one relationship between a less experienced and a more experienced person, self-mentoring offers an alternative for the proactive individual who does not have the typical mentoring relationship option.

Self-mentoring is the act of leading oneself in an unknown environment or even hostile settings if necessary (Carr, 2014, 2015). Darling recognized self-mentoring strategies as early as 1985 (Darling, 1986). She uses the following as examples of self-mentoring: resource finding strategies, self-tutoring strategies, listening and clarifying, reading and researching and observing people. Self-mentors accept responsibility for their personal and/or professional growth through the identification and development of individual skills and aligning internal and external resources to meet expectations using social and professional networking when necessary. Lambert (2003), a scholar in the field of leadership development, believes leadership is a process, not an innate or taught set of individual skills but includes problem solving, broad-based skillful participation, conversations and stories among colleagues, and task enactment in the environment. Those who aspire to become leaders need a structured approach to reach their full leadership potential such as provided in the process of self-mentoring (Bond & Hargreaves, 2014).

Self-mentoring is grounded in the self-leadership theory. As a normative theory, self-leadership is a theoretical construct focused on the internal mechanisms individuals use to intentionally focus their attention and efforts to lead and guide themselves in aspects of both self-direction and self-motivation in three key strategic areas: personal behaviors, natural rewards, and constructive thought patterns (Manz and Neck, 2004; Neck and Houghton, 2006). Within the area of personal behavior, individuals who practice effective self-leadership strive to increase their self-reflection and self-awareness regarding targeted behaviors (typically negative, inefficient, or unproductive behaviors) through the application of reflective techniques (self-observation, self-goal setting, self-reward, self-punishment, and self-correcting feedback) in order to eliminate or reduce negative and unwanted actions thereby increasing positive behaviors (Manz and Neck, 2004). In terms of natural rewards, effective self-leadership practices emphasize the creation of positive elements or items within tasks and/or the redesigning of tasks reducing the amount of negative forces within the task thereby increasing both the natural intrinsic motivational qualities of the task and the energy producing qualities of the task (Houghton and Neck, 2002). Finally, the utilization of constructive thought patterns emphasizes the elimination of dysfunctional beliefs and assumptions, application of mental pictures and mind mapping, and use of positive self-talk so that self-leaders create positive and consistent patterns of thinking thereby eliminating negative thoughts and derailing mental energy (Manz and Neck, 2004). Neck and Houghton (2006) called for a future research streams in the area of self-leadership to include self-mentoring. Within the larger field of leadership, Andressen, Kondrdt, and Neck (2012) found that self-leadership impacted transformational leadership and employee motivation and in a virtual work environments positively impacted individual's level of self-motivation. Stewart, Courtright, and Manz (2011) placing self-leadership within a larger field of leadership summarized that self-leadership at the individual level played a dependable role in the increase of work attitude and performance and that self-leadership was not a replacement for organizational leadership roles.

Previous studies in self-mentoring suggest that educators involved in self-mentoring report increased confidence and self-efficacy (Bond & Hargreaves, 2014). Self-efficacy refers to how confident an individual feels about handling particular tasks, challenges, and contexts. It is derived from Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory and is basically your judgment of your own capability (Bandura & Locke, 2003). Self-efficacy can be described as a process of self-reflection, which evaluates one's ability to accomplish tasks to obtain a favorable resolution (Bandura & Locke).

Converging evidence from controlled experimental and field studies verifies that belief in one's capabilities contribute uniquely to motivation and action (Bandura, 1997; Bandura and Locke, 2003). How people perceive their own efficacy can have an impact on behavior (Pajares, 1996) and motivation in various settings, such as academia (Lee, Lee, & Bong, 2014). Pajares (1996) indicates that self-efficacy perceptions play an important role by suggesting "the value an individual places on a particular outcome directly influences the amount of motivation one has to achieve that outcome, and thus the amount of effort put forth in pursuing the outcome" (p. 450). As perceived capability or self-efficacy increases, so does confidence in one's own ability as a leader. The need to amplify self-efficacy occupies a pivotal role in contributing to motivation and in the accomplishment of self-mentoring expectations.

**Methodology**

A descriptive collective case study method was used for this study. A case study is an exploration of a "bounded system" of a case (or multiple cases) over time with a detailed, in-depth data collection (Creswell, 1998). Multiple sources of information include observations, interviews, documents or reports. The context of the case, essential to an understanding of it, involves situating the case within its setting. When more than one case is studied, it is referred to as a collective case study (Creswell, 1998) and inferences and interpretations are drawn from a group of cases (Munhall, 2001). A collective case study was used here to investigate the phenomenon of using self-mentoring as a strategy to situate new faculty into a new role and context.

Specifically, the three academics described here transitioned to a public southeastern university in fall term 2013, with varying degrees of professional role experience and skill sets. This research focused on what are the multiple shaping experiences, which produced the academic's capacity to self-mentor in a new environment?

Hinds, Chaves and Cypess (1992) suggested that examination of four levels of context provide insight into a phenomena: (1) the immediate context (the present, here and now); (2) the specific context (one's unique perspective); the general context (an individual's life general life frame of reference); and the metacontext (a social construction representing shared social views and attitudes). In the academic setting, mentoring involves translation of skills and socialization into the "academy" (Ilevbare, 2011). This study sought to elicit these levels of context and *how* they were linked to an individual's use of self-mentoring techniques to accomplish the task of successfully transitioning to a new academic role and setting.

The university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the study with expedited review and three faculty participants in this study consented to participate. As a group, they were told the purpose and design of the study and were given some literature by the principal investigator, summarizing the state of the science about self-mentoring. Although the primary research question was shared with participants, they were instructed that they could use their own individual methods to track their data collection in response to the question. Over the course of academic year, participants shared their data with the Principal Investigator (PI) and met with her twice for face-to-face interviews lasting thirty minutes. During the interviews, participants updated the PI both about the challenges they faced in acclimating to a new role and setting, and the strategies they were using to self-mentor. A final videotaped interview occurred with each participant.

**Findings**

New faculty members adapt differently and apply self-mentoring uniquely. Data was collected from the personal narratives of those participating in self-mentoring. Diverse paths were used to meet each participant's professional expectation for transitioning to a new academic environment and professional role development.

*School of Nursing: Lydia*
As a new faculty member at a large southeastern school of nursing, Lydia knew that an important first-year goal was to establish an understanding of the existing and potential networks which would help her to achieve her scholarly role definition there. Coming in to this university as an associate professor

with over 10 years' experience teaching at a variety of other academic institutions, Lydia identified that she would benefit from a programme which focused her on setting goals and objectives while reflecting on her progress in role clarification at her new educational institution. Specifically, Lydia planned to pursue a tenure and promotion application within her first few years there, so she realized that focusing her efforts on teaching quality, creativity, scholarly research projects, and success with publishing manuscripts were paramount now. Previously, Lydia seemed apt to consistently volunteer for many service and community activities without viewing her contributions in a strategic way. What she realized now was that she needed to first set clear scholarship goals, and then view every opportunity offered to her as either a way to move forward with those goals or as a distractor, which would take her time away from her goals. Joining a self-mentoring study on campus, led by an expert educator, provided Lydia with time for reflection about goal setting, timetables, and networking with other academics at her new university.

Lydia began by establishing a simple Excel worksheet where she listed her professional goals for the next two years. She matched those goals to the appointment, reappointment and tenure document presently in use at both her school of nursing and her larger university. This enabled her to visualize both her accomplishments and those areas where gaps could be identified. The Self-mentoring project included group meetings with the faculty involved in the study plus individualized guidance and support from the Principal Investigator. These meetings encouraged Lydia to continue with her efforts to track her progress in meeting identified goals and to regularly question if a particular scholarly opportunity (requests for proposal, requests for abstracts, seminars and conferences, etc.) closely matched her strategic goals in her self-mentoring plan. After nearly one full academic year of participation in this project, Lydia has learned more about goal setting and refining her potential contributions to this academic community. She will use these tools as she moves forward in her growth at the university, mindful of the need to focus her work efforts and scholarly pursuits according to the criteria and objectives she has established. For Lydia, self-mentoring became a strategic tool in her tool belt as an educator.

### *In Search of Self:  Joan*

Opportunities come in many forms and can be or are often unsettling.  While moving to a new area and university opened up paths for growth in a multitude of areas for Joan, it also created chaos.  Seeking to make meaning of the internal conflicts associated with her new position, to be successful and define what that meant to her, Joan chose to take the invitation to join a self-mentoring project at the university.

Mentoring was of particular interest to her.  She had been a mentor to faculty and to students and believed it to be both a moral choice and spiritually fulfilling.  At a previous university she had taken doctoral courses in education and in one course, *The Professorial Role*, she had written a paper exploring the concept of mentorship.  In his 1999 book Daloz writes, "A good education tends to our deepest longings, enriches them, nourishes the questions from which grow the tentative answers that, in turn, sow fresh questions that really matter" (p 4).  And she began to wonder, what is this education before me and how will self-mentoring help me find and answer the right questions?

Balance was essential as well as not losing the 'self' in all the demands placed on university faculty, which range from high volumes of service and full course loads of teaching, to ongoing research projects and publications.  This is where her process began.  The self-mentoring journey started with a meeting by the university faculty facilitator for an overview of the practice and what would be expected as a commitment from each individual.  The facilitator was warm and inviting, which heightened the comfort in participating immediately. After the meeting Joan read the self-mentoring handbook that had been

provided to the participants and began to complete the available worksheets in the manual. In the process of completing some of the pages in the manual, something felt unsettling and she struggled with the tasks. She explained that it just felt too sterile, too academic and she thought: *how can I tailor it to my quest, me, at this point in time*? The planning template was divided into sections, such as a contract with a goal and role to self during the process as well as time commitment. In addition there was a chart where goal, activity, and time spent could be tracked. The work felt overwhelming and she sensed she was destined to failure in something that was intended to support the turbulence she felt in her job. She contacted the university faculty facilitator and explained what she was feeling. She was told to use the tools only as guides when needed as the forms were variations of the same task but designed to offer personal preferences.

Joan abandoned the forms in lieu of a beautiful new journal and began the first page with an entry from *The Wise Heart* by Jack Kornfield (2008) "Mindful attention to any experience is liberating. Mindfulness brings perspective, balance and freedom." (p 97) She explained that the shift from completing forms to the journal was what she had been searching for – balance and freedom to create herself in a new job. Her plan, which the handbook helped create by providing structure and prompts, was to embrace the process for emancipatory knowing using questions such as, what are the barriers to freedom?, what is wrong with this picture?, what is invisible and who benefits? (Chinn & Kramer, 2008). Her plan was to return to the practice of mindfulness: meditation, yoga, journaling and Buddhist psychology teachings, all pieces of her life prior to moving that she wanted to integrate once again.

The unsettled feelings she had from the new job, its expectations and stressors were an education for her. Self-mentoring was the impetus to demand time and space for herself. She had support to dive into the feelings and ways-of-being that brought her back to self through identification of external activities such yoga, lunches with friends, personal writing and peer and self-reflections. The courage she rallied to take time for personal needs generated the balance necessary to increase productivity and accomplishments in her new position. She believes that the release from outside activities allows her to work more efficiency. Now, a year later, she continues the process of self-mentoring to find balance and wholeness in the very busy and demanding academic world of which she is equally successful.

### Surviving Transition: John

Beginning a new position in a new career path, John began as a faculty member in higher education. He was new to the university as well as the programme but with his prior years of leadership experience in public education, he believed that he had the necessary skills, and there were obvious similarities that would create a healthy transition.

John found that fitting into the higher education profile was not as akin to his former position. He did not speak the same language nor was he treated with the level of respect he was accustomed from his previous work where he was a leader in the field. His perspective was that he was at the bottom of a huge mountain – obtaining reappointment and eventually tenure - that he would have to scale over a long period of time.

The greatest obstacle was that those in the organization seemed to guard the secret of how to climb this mountain of challenge as a sacred key. When answering questions, other colleagues used the same phrases that provided little or no guidance whatsoever. John stood before the mountain helpless until he was introduced to self-mentoring. Through learning to self-mentor, John began by establishing an expectation he had for his success as defined by the institution outlined in the faculty handbook and

through personal conversations. He began formulating some strategies to meet this expectation. If a strong research, teaching, and service agenda was the golden apple, then John would work from his reappointment date backwards to determine what needed to be captured each year to meet this three year expectation. In essence, this was a process of personal strategic planning. After developing a pathway for the next three years, he isolated the year before him into months and established a suitable timeline for his work – primarily focusing on research and publications, which after some conversations, he identified as the greatest barrier to reappointment success. Several books that outlined how to write a journal article became resources and he looked outside of his own department for networking opportunity. In time, John developed a system that provided him the tools to accomplish the tasks for his success through his identification of skills he needed such as self-motivation, organization, and networking. As his success became apparent, he gained confidence in his ability to succeed and eventually was able to share his insight with others who would follow in his footsteps by entering a new domain.

## Analysis

Lydia, Joan, and John each self-mentored to make meaning of their new faculty roles at the university. Their first step was to identify an expectation in acclimating to the new expectations within their roles. All three were struggling with the new environment but all three identified different challenges, which is common in self-mentoring. Through self-awareness and self-assessments, each began to identify a strategy for capturing data to isolate his or her particular challenge. Each believed self-mentoring would be a practice to guide them in focusing on their professional development since self-mentoring promotes self-reflection. They recruited resources, both internal and external, to reach their goals. Each of them used different self-mentoring strategies to accomplish their goals. Lydia was comfortable using Excel in a quantitative way, to track her tasks and steps towards meeting established tenure guidelines. This concrete and visual tool worked for her. In contrast, Joan used journaling, qualitative data, to identify the missing balance in her life through the identification of her personal needs such as not having time for yoga and meditation. John found that building networks outside of his department allowed him to clarify role expectations. John used a more isolated approach but was able to draw upon his innate and learned leadership skills from years of experience to build a plan for becoming successful in meeting his individual expectations as well as the department's in the years to come. Each faculty member used a different path to reach his or her expectation. This is the value of self-mentoring – the individualization of the practice to meet the needs of each individual.

Suggested in this study is the possibility that self-mentoring can serve as a viable tool for new faculty. All three participants believed that self-mentoring was beneficial and contributed to their personal success. During interviews conducted with participants, they confirmed that self-mentoring provided:

- An organized approach to meeting challenge or obstacles.
- Provided opportunity for individualization and learning styles.
- Drew on individual strengths, and
- Affirmed each individual's ability to perform successfully in a new environment.

While each participant chose a different path to meet professional expectations for success, they each were successful by their measurement standard. Through the ability to meet their expectation, confidence is gained. The participants viewed confidence as the greatest outcome during the process of self-mentoring.

## Conclusion

While this study is only a snapshot into the potential for self-mentoring to benefit faculty, it does provide an interesting foundation to begin future work. Self-mentoring may not accommodate everyone, but it does appear to serve individuals who are motivated to take control and lead using a common sense approach to self-leadership. Self-mentoring draws on organizational skills that we all recognize yet often forget we possess until needed.

## References

Adam, K. (1990). *Journal to the self: Twenty-two paths to personal growth*. New York; NY: Warner Brother Books.

Alleman, E. (1986). Measuring mentoring – frequency, quality, impact, in: W.A. Gray & M. M. Gray (Eds) *Mentoring: Aids to Excellence in Career Development, Business, and the Professions.* British Columbia.

Allen, T. D., Eby, L. T., O'Brien, K. E., & Lentz. E. (2008). The state of mentoring research: A qualitative review of current research methods and future research implications. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 73*(3), 343-357.

Alred, G. & Garvey, B. (2010). *Mentoring pocketbook.* Alresford; UK: Management Pocketbooks.

Barth, R. S. (2001). Teacher leader. *Phi Delta Kappan,* 82(6).

Beckford, A. (2012). Self-Mentoring: An idea for the twenty-first century. Retrieved 23 July 2015 from: http://theinvisiblementor.com/self-mentoring-an-idea-for-the-twenty-first-century/

Beckford, A. (2013). Mentoring yourself to success: Thoughts from educator Marsha Carr. The Invisible Mentor. Retrieved 23 July 2015 from: http://theinvisiblementor.com/mentoring-yourself-to-success-thoughts-educator-marsha-carr/

Blickle, G., Witzki, A. & Schneider, B. P. (2009) Self-initiated mentoring and career success: a predictive field study. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 74, 94-101.

Bond, N. & Hargreaves, A. (2014). The Power of teacher leaders: Their roles, influences, & impact. Kappa Delta Phi in partnership with New York; NY: Routledge, Taylor, & Francis Group.

Bromley, K. (1989). *Journaling: Engagements in reading, writing and thinking.* New York; NY: Scholastic Books.

Burk, H. G., & Eby, L. T. (2010). What keeps people in mentoring relationships when bad things happen? A field study from the protégé's perspective. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 77,* 437-446. doi: 10.1016/j.jvb.2010.05.011

Carr, M. L. (2011). *The Invisible Teacher: A self-mentoring sustainability model.* Randall Library. University of North Carolina Wilmington. Wilmington: NC.

Carr, M. L. (2012) *The Invisible Leader: A self-mentoring sustainability model for university faculty.* Randall Library. University of North Carolina Wilmington. Wilmington: NC.

Chinn, L. P. & Kramer, K. M. (2008*). Integrated theory and knowledge development in nursing*. (7th ed.) St. Louis, MO: Mosby Elsevier.

Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Darling, W. L. (1986). Self-Mentoring Strategies. *Nurse Educator,* 11(1), 24-25.

Daloz, A. L. (1999). *Mentor: guiding the journey of adult learners*. (2nd ed.) San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Dougherty, T. W., Turban, D. B., & Haggard, D. L. (2007). Naturally occurring mentoring relationships involving workplace employees. In T. D. Allen & L. T. Eby (Eds.), *The Blackwell Handbook of Mentoring. A Multiple Perspectives Approach* (pp. 139–158). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Duke, D. L., 'Author' & Sterrett, W. (2013). *The school improvement planning handbook: Getting focused on turnaround to transition.* Rowan & Littlefield Publishing House. Lanham: MD.

Eby, L.T., Durley, J.R., Evans, S.C., & Ragins, B.R. (2008). Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences: Scale development and nomological validation. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*(2), 358-373. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.93.2.358

Fugate, M., Kinicki, A. J., & Ashforth, B. E. (2004). Employability: A psycho-social construct, its dimensions, and applications. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 65, 14–38.

Fox, M. (1993). *Radical reflections: Passionate opinions on teaching, learning and living.* Marrickville; AUST: Harcourt Brace.

Fullan, M. (2001). *The new meaning of educational change.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Garvey, B., Stokes, P. & Megginson, D. (2014) *Coaching and Mentoring: Theory and practice.* London; UK: Sage.

Harkins, P. (1999). *Powerful conversations: How high impact leaders communicate.* New York; NY: McGraw Hill.

Hasbrouch, J. (2007). Student focused coaching: A model for reading coaches. *The Reading Teacher*, 60 (7) 690-693.

Hinds, P.S., Chaves, D.E. & Cypess, S.M. (1992). Context as a source of meaning and understanding. *Qualitative Health Research, 2* (1), 61-74.

Horn, K. (2013). The increasing importance of self-mentoring. Research Accelerator: Resources for Public Health Research. George Washington University. Washington: DC. Retrieved 23 July 2015 from: http://publichealth.gwu.edu/blogs/researchaccelerator/2013/01/28/the-increasing-importance-of-self-mentoring/

Huang, C. A. & Lynch, J. (1995). *Mentoring: The TAO of giving and receiving wisdom.* New York; NY: HarperCollins.

Hynes, W. J. (1984). Strategies for faculty development. *New Directions for Higher Education*, *1984*(47), 31-38.

Ilevbare, F. (2011). Mentoring in the workplace: a case study of the academic setting: chapter 17. *IFE PsychologIA: An International Journal: Mentoring: a key issue in human resource management: Special Issue 1*, 197-206.

Kostovich, T. C. & Thurn, E. K. (2006). Connecting: perceptions of becoming a faculty mentor. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship*, 3(1). DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.2202/1548-923X.1148

Kornfield, J. (2008). *The wise heart: A guide to the universal teachings of Buddhist psychology.* New York, NY: Bantam Dell.

Lambert, L. (2003). Leadership redefined: An evocative context for teacher leadership. *School leadership & management*, *23*(4), 421-430.

Lezotte, L. W., & McKee, K. M. (2002). *Assembly required: A continuous school improvement system.* Okemos, MI: Effective Schools Products.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2010). *Designing qualitative research* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mijares, L., Baxley, M.S. & Bond, L.M. (2013). Mentoring: a concept analysis. *The Journal of Theory Construction & Testing*, 17(1), 23-28.

Munhall, P.L. (2001). *Nursing research: a qualitative perspective.* (3rd ed.). Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett.

Nakamura, J. & Shernoff, D. J. (2009). *Good Mentoring: Fostering excellent practice in higher education.* San Francisco; CA: Jossey-Bass Books.

Oakes, J., Quartz, K., Ryan, S., & Lipton, M. (1999). *Becoming good American schools.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publications.

Patterson, K., Grenny, J, McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2012). *Crucial conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high.* McGraw Hill Publishing.

Ragins, B. R., & Scandura, T. A. (1997). The way we were: gender and the termination of mentoring relationships. *Journal of Applied psychology*, *82*(6), 945.

Salanda, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researcher.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sands, R. G., Parson, L. A., & Duane, J. (1991). Faculty mentoring faculty in a public university. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 174-193.

Scandura, T. A. (1998). Dysfunctional mentoring relationships and outcomes. *Journal of Management*, *24*(3), 449-467.

Schein, E. H. (1992). *Organizational culture and leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Schoenfeld, A. C. & Magnan, R. (2004). *Mentor in a Manual: Climbing the academic ladder to tenure.* Madison; WI: Atwood Publishing.

Seibert, S. E., Kraimer, M. L., & Crant, J. M. (2001). What do proactive people do? A longitudinal model linking proactive personality and career success. *Personnel Psychology*, 54, 845–874

Thomas, N., & Saslow, S. (2007). *Improving productivity through coaching and mentoring.* Chief Learning Officer. Retrieved 23 July 2015 from: http://www.clomedia.com/articles/improving_productivity_through_coaching_and_mentoring

Wanberg, C. R., Welsh, E. T., & Hezlett, S. A. (2003). Mentoring research: A review and dynamic process model. In G. Ferris (Ed.), Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management (Volume 22; pp. 39–124). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Whitworth, L, Kimsey-House, H. & Sandahl, P. (1998). *Co-Active Coaching: New skills for coaching people toward success in work and life.* Palo Alto; CA: Davies-Black Publishing.

VaASCD (Winter, 2014). Virginia Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development Quarterly Newsletter. Retrieved 23 July 2015 from: http://www.vaascd.org/index.php/home/archives_publications

Yoder, L. (1990). Mentoring: a concept analysis. *Nursing Administration Quarterly*, 15(1), 9-19.

Dr. Marsha L. Carr

Carr is an assistant professor and former Masters of School Administration coordinator at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. She previously served as a superintendent of schools for over a decade and received the National Milken Educator Award. She is author of Educational Leadership: Hostile Takeover to a Sustainable-Successful System and co-author of The School Planning Guide: Focus on Turnaround to Transition.

Dr. Diane K. Pastor

Pastor is an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. As a nurse educator and adult nurse practitioner, her programme of research focuses on the patient, family and caregiver experiences of chronic illness in the community. Diane's clinical practice is primary care for older adults, with skill sets in palliative care and chronic illness management. Diane's particular expertise lies in supporting care giving families for those with dementia.

Dr. Pamela J. Levesque

Levesque is an assistant professor and holds certification in nursing education and as a family nurse practitioner.  She has taught for 18 years in nursing programmes from associate degree to master's level and has served as an associate director.  She is the recipient of the New Hampshire Community College Commissioner's Award for Teaching Excellence and the Robert Wood Johnson Nurse Educator Scholarship Award.  Her research is focused on social justice issues for transgender persons.