

Developing Effective Mentor-Mentee Relationships in Radiology

Rachel E. Perry, MD, Jay R. Parikh, MD

Abstract

Radiologists seek mentors to facilitate career advancement and to help overcome professional and personal challenges. Characteristics of effective mentors include altruism, honesty, active listening skills, a collaborative approach, and accessibility. Characteristics of effective mentees include being respectful of mentors' input and time, being an active listener, and being open to feedback. Radiology departments should consider establishing structured processes for identifying and preparing mentors. Strategies to support mentor-mentee relationships include effective pairing of mentors with mentees, maintenance of confidentiality, clear definition of expectations, voluntary participation, and allowing mentees to change mentors without judgment or repercussions. A culture shift is needed in radiology departments to enable successful mentor-mentee relationships.

Key Words: Mentorship, radiology, mentor, mentee, relationship

J Am Coll Radiol 2017;■:■-■. Copyright © 2017 American College of Radiology

INTRODUCTION

Radiologists seek mentors for numerous reasons, the most important reason being to facilitate advancement [1-4]. Advancement can be in the form of professional success, clinical and/or academic, or overcoming personal challenges, such as issues with work-life balance and stress management. Radiologists also seek mentors when pursuing new skills or new opportunities in their careers [1]. Mentors can serve as important sounding boards in radiology by helping mentees reflect on their strengths and weaknesses [1] and by providing informed perspective regarding issues that may arise during a radiologist's professional career [1]. Many components are necessary to effectively initiate and support successful mentor-mentee relationships in radiology. In this article, we discuss the characteristics of ideal mentors and mentees, the importance of identification and preparation of effective mentors, strategies for initiating and supporting effective mentor-mentee relationships and for managing

strained or failed mentor-mentee relationships, activities that contribute to successful mentor-mentee relationships in radiology, and the need for a culture shift in radiology to support such relationships.

CHARACTERISTICS OF IDEAL MENTORS AND MENTEES

Several articles have been published on characteristics of mentors and/or mentees required for the formation of a successful mentor-mentee relationship in medicine. These characteristics were determined from data collected through a variety of measures, including written faculty award nominations [5], written surveys [6], and telephone interviews [7]. Responses were reported from different perspectives: the mentor only, the mentee only, or both mentor and mentee [2,5-7]. Although these articles come from disciplines other than radiology, many or all of the characteristics identified can apply to mentors and mentees in radiology.

An effective mentor must possess the experience and temperament needed to provide the support, knowledge, resources, guidance, and example expected from the mentee [6]. The characteristics of effective mentors can be organized into two descriptive categories: personal qualities and professional traits [5]. Straus et al [7] report that altruism is the most common personal quality of an effective mentor. Other common personal

Department of Diagnostic Radiology, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas.

Corresponding author and reprints: Jay R. Parikh, MD, Department of Diagnostic Radiology, Unit 1350, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, 1515 Holcombe Boulevard, Houston, TX 77030; e-mail: jrparikh@mdanderson.org.

The authors have no conflicts of interest related to the material discussed in this article.

qualities of outstanding mentors include honesty, selflessness, active listening skills, compassion, nonjudgmental attitude, enthusiasm, and wisdom [2,5,7-9]. Common professional traits of effective mentors include being collaborative, skilled, accessible, and intellectual [5,7].

Effective mentees should be respectful of mentors' input and time, be active listeners, be open to feedback, be responsible, possess a good sense of timing, and have a willingness to engage in a mentor-mentee relationship [2,7-9]. An effective mentor-mentee relationship must be "mentee centered"; that is, the mentee must drive the relationship according to his or her personal goals and objectives [7,9].

IDENTIFICATION AND PREPARATION OF EFFECTIVE MENTORS

Ultimately, not all physicians possess the experience or skill set to function as mentors [2]; therefore, radiology departments should consider establishing some structured process for identification of radiologists who have the potential to be effective mentors. This identification process could include a third-party mentor selection committee [4,10-12], a formal mentor preparation program during which participants' performance is used to identify the most effective potential mentors [10,12], or even a nomination and/or selection process in which mentees identify radiologists believed to be good mentors. Radiology departments that identify effective mentors before pairing mentors with mentees may have a better chance of developing effective long-term mentor-mentee relationships [2].

Several authors have described mentor preparation as a prerequisite for implementation of a mentorship program [10,12]. Reported approaches to mentor preparation vary; some departments distribute books or mentoring manuals to potential mentors before mentor-mentee pairing, whereas other departments require physicians to attend mentorship-focused seminars. Overall, the purpose of mentorship preparation is to shape individuals into effective mentors before any relationship with a mentee is established. Although mentor preparation has been described in the literature, little has been published concerning the detailed requirements for attendance or participation, and the effectiveness of mentorship preparation has not been quantitatively assessed [10].

Some radiology departments may have a limited supply of effective mentors because of staffing constraints or limited resources. Departments with high turnover of

radiologists may lose access to good mentors as radiologists change jobs or retire [6]. Female radiologists or radiologists from underrepresented minorities may find limited availability of mentors of similar backgrounds within their departments [2,10,12,13]. Because mentees may feel more hesitant and intimidated conversing with mentors who do not share common background or interests [2], radiology departments may wish to identify a diverse population of effective mentors, both academically oriented mentors and clinically oriented mentors, who can fulfill the different roles needed to coincide with the unique interests and goals of mentees [1,2,10,13,14]. A radiology department that provides a greater network of mentors will more likely succeed in establishing well-matched mentor-mentee pairs, even as individual career goals evolve and change [2,13].

STRATEGIES FOR INITIATING AND DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIPS

Effective Mentor-Mentee Pairing

Radiologists will be more willing to engage in mentor-mentee relationships if a proper relationship match occurs [13]. Two general strategies for mentor-mentee pairing are described in the literature: formal and informal. In a formal relationship, mentees are formally assigned to mentors by a third party [8,10,14]. Overall goals, directions, and expectations of both the mentor and the mentee are clearly outlined at the beginning of the relationship [8,14]. In contrast, in an informal relationship, a mentee is encouraged to self-select a mentor or mentors who match the mentee's individual interests and goals [10,13,14].

Each type of mentor-mentee relationship has benefits and drawbacks. In a formal mentorship setting, outcomes are easily monitored [8,9,14]. A more structured mentoring program allows better control of the overall mentorship process and more timely evaluation and adjustments [14]. However, formal mentor-mentee matching may be limited by lack of funding or by time constraints, and a formal mentor-mentee relationship may feel unnatural or forced to one or both participants [14]. Informal matching, which focuses on using good "chemistry" to match mentor with mentee [1,10,12], is more spontaneous and cost-effective than formal matching [4,8,9,14]. An informal matching process can feel more "organic" [10,13,14]. However, an informal mentorship setting may lead to frustration on the part of both the mentor and the mentee if expectations

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/8823264>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/8823264>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)