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1981

A DESCRIPTION OF MENTOR/MENTEE RELATIONSHIPS  
AMONG PERSONS ENGAGED IN OR PREPARING  
FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES

By

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## ABSTRACT

### A DESCRIPTION OF MENTOR/MENTEE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PERSONS ENGAGED IN OR PREPARING FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES

By

Beverly Jean Schmoll

The purpose of this study was to describe mentor/mentee relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for professional roles. A professional role was defined as one that required particular knowledges/skills usually acquired through formal education. A mentor was a person who was perceived by him/herself or another person to have had significant influence on the professional and/or personal growth and development of another person. The mentee was a person who perceived him/herself or was perceived by another person to have had his/her professional and/or personal growth and development significantly influenced by another person.

Twenty-two persons who comprised fourteen mentor/mentee pairs were individually interviewed and asked to describe: 1) the overall qualities of their relationships; 2) qualities about themselves and their mentors or mentees; 3) how their relationships developed; and 4) the significance of their relationships for themselves and their mentors or mentees. These four areas of inquiry served to guide this study. The interview data were subjected to multiple comparative



analyses consistent with grounded theory methodology.

The findings of this study resulted in three conclusions. First, characteristics common to mentors, characteristics common to mentees, characteristics common to mentor/mentee pairs and environmental factors collectively contributed to the establishment and continuation of the mentor/mentee relationships. Second, the mentor/mentee relationships contributed to the professional and personal growth and development of the mentors and mentees. Third, the mentor/mentee relationships were distinguishable from other types of relationships.

## DEDICATION

To Fred and Stephanie

Friendship is, strictly speaking, reciprocal benevolence, which inclines each party to be solicitous for the welfare of the other as for his own. This equality of affection is created and preserved by a similarity of disposition and manners.

Plato

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose

There is growing evidence to suggest mentoring relationships contribute significantly to adult development and to career development. Levinson (1978) states, "The mentor relationship is one of the most complex and developmentally important a man can have in early adulthood" (p. 97). Managers are being encouraged to become mentors to better serve their employees and organizations, and young aspiring career persons are being encouraged to seek mentors who might help them climb the corporation or professional ladder that leads to success. Mentors are described as teachers, guides, counselors, hosts, persons with qualities worthy of emulation, sponsors and persons who help younger persons attain their goals and dreams (Levinson, 1978). But the descriptions of mentors, mentees<sup>1</sup> and the many aspects of the relationships that exist between them are incomplete.

The purpose of this study was to describe mentor/mentee relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for a professional role. In this study, the mentor was a person who was perceived by him/herself or another person to have had significant influence on the professional and/or personal growth and development

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<sup>1</sup> The term mentee was coined by Levinson (1978) to refer to the recipient of mentoring.



of another person. The mentee was a person who perceived him/herself or was perceived by another person to have had his/her professional and/or personal growth and development significantly influenced by another person. A professional role was defined as one that required particular knowledges/skills that are usually acquired through formal education.

This study has also attempted to describe from a holistic perspective, mentor/mentee relationships among persons engaged in or preparing for professional roles. A holistic perspective as it relates to mentor/mentee relationships refers to the totality of the relationship. This perspective assumes that to independently study individual features or aspects of mentor/mentee relationships and to combine the findings may not necessarily result in capturing the totality of the relationship as perceived by the persons who engage in it. In an attempt to capture the totality of mentor/mentee relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for professional roles, four broad areas of inquiry served to guide this study. They were:

1. How do mentors and mentees describe the overall qualities of their relationship?
2. How do mentors and mentees describe themselves and each other?
3. How do mentors and mentees describe the development of their relationships?
4. How do mentors and mentees describe the significance of their relationships for themselves and for their

mentor or mentee?

The areas of inquiry were intended to be general so they would be inclusive enough to describe the totality of mentor/mentee relationships but yet specific enough to provide some direction for the study.

### Problem Area

Levinson's (1978) study of the lives of forty men reported in The Seasons Of A Man's Life served as the initial inspiration for this study. From his interviews with men ages 35 to 45, he identified "forming mentor relationships" as one of four major tasks for young adults. Men in his study credited their mentors with helping them enter into and advance within careers or professions and in helping them gain a greater sense of self-confidence, independence and autonomy. Levinson observed that the mentors played a vital role in aiding mentees into the adult world and in helping them to attain general success in life. George E. Vaillant (1977) in his study of the Grant Study men, who had been followed in a longitudinal study for thirty-five years, also noted the significance of mentor relationships on the overall success of men's lives. Although neither Levinson or Vaillant suggest that mentor relationships can occur only within a work or career context, the examples they offer of these relationships most frequently involve a work or career context. Their studies suggest that adult and career development for men are closely related.

As might be expected, researchers in management and career development also cite the potential impact mentor/mentee relationships have on entry into and advancement within a career or profession.

Women are being encouraged to "seek mentors" in their attempts to climb the corporate ladder (Harragan, 1977; Welch, 1980; Hechinger, 1979; Hennig and Jardim, 1976). With mentors, women are told, their chances of corporate success are "multiplied one-hundredfold" (Harragan, 1977). Mentors have been identified as possible make or break factors for women striving for career success (Hennig and Jardim, 1976).

The advice given to women seeking career success is based on the "old boy network" and the "protégé-sponsor" system that have been well known and in use for years to advance young men in business and the professions (Epstein, 1971; Becker and Strauss, 1956; Hall, 1948). A classic example of the "old boy network" or a "protégé-sponsor" system has been evident among male physicians. Male physicians who have taught in residency programs have traditionally taken special care to assist the most promising of young physicians. If any of the doctors in training were able to demonstrate outstanding performance and show strong potential for continued success, they would be invited to join in practice with one of the senior physicians. With continued nurturing of the senior physician, the young doctor may have become peripherally involved in teaching. Eventually, with the help of the senior physician, the young physician became a full colleague within the practice, the residency program and the profession. The once younger doctor was then a veteran ready to assume leadership when the senior partner retired. He was prepared to repeat the tradition with younger physicians. In this classic example of mentoring, the mentees have been described as generally benefiting

from their relationship with a mentor. Mentors have been attributed with significantly influencing the professional advancement of the mentees.

In addition to the possible impact of mentor/mentee relationships on adult development and career development, Levinson (1978) suggests they contribute to social change. From his comments, it can be surmised that if in fact we have greater numbers of persons who engage in supportive relationships from which they can explore and venture, all of mankind is apt to benefit. Indeed, in a society which is fast moving (Toffler, 1974); in a society in which persons are increasingly isolated from one another (Fromm, 1955; Toffler, 1974; Fleming, 1975); in a society in which friendships are few if at all (Sadler, 1969; Maccoby, 1976; Levinson, 1978); in a society which has shifted its focus from one of goals to roles (Glasser, 1972); and in a society in which the individual has become of primary importance, there seems to be a tremendous need to explore relationships that offer hope for both individuals and society.

### Methodology

The methodology for this study is based on the grounded theory methodology described by Glaser and Strauss (1965), (1966), (1967) and Glaser (1978). Grounded theory is a general methodology for generating theory. Theory that emerges from this methodology is systematically obtained, analyzed and grounded in the data itself. The theory is derived from data rather than being deduced from an existing body of theory.

Grounded theory is especially suited for descriptive studies such as this on a topic for which little prior study or formal theory exists. Grounded theory provides the flexibility and latitude that's needed to develop initial hypotheses from which formal theory and verification can occur later. The end product of this study is a set of conclusions derived from the descriptions offered by the participants of the study.

A basic premise of grounded theory is that theory is an "ever-developing entity not a perfected product" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 32). Because the study's conclusions are based on data rather than existing theories, they are not likely to be completely refuted by more data or replaced by another theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). However, the conclusions that have emerged from this study are expected to provide a basis for further studies. Subsequent studies can then add to, expand or refine the conclusions of this study.

#### Definition of Terms

Terms used throughout the report of this study are defined as follows:

Study participants . . . Persons who were interviewed in this study as mentors and/or mentees were referred to as study participants.

Mentor . . . A mentor was a person who was perceived by him/herself or by another person to have had significant influence on the professional and/or personal growth and development of another person.

Mentee . . . A mentee was a person who perceived him/herself or was perceived by another person to have had his/her professional and/or

personal growth and development significantly influenced by another person.

Professional role . . . A professional role was one that required particular knowledges/skills usually acquired through formal education.

### Assumptions

Three assumptions were made in this study. The first assumption was that the definitions of mentor and mentee were accurate and represented mentors and mentees as they actually existed. Criteria have not been established to identify persons as mentors and mentees. Study participants were regarded as mentors and mentees if one or both persons of each pair agreed they had assumed a mentor and/or mentee role as defined for this study. The second assumption was that the relationships between the study participant pairs were unique or somehow different from other relationships they engaged in. It was assumed that as persons were asked if they had engaged in a mentor/mentee relationship that they could distinguish this type of relationship from other types of relationships. A third assumption was that the study participants could describe their relationships. It had to be assumed that the study participants not only experienced the relationships but were also able to describe qualities of the relationships, qualities of themselves and their counterparts in the mentor/mentee pair, the development of the relationships and the significance of the relationships for themselves and their counterpart mentors or mentees. These assumptions were necessary to identify study participants and served as the basis for gathering data.

### Limitations of Study

Limitations were imposed on the study by the nature of the study participants. All of the study participants were engaged in or pursuing professional roles. The study was limited to persons in professional roles not because it was assumed that other persons do not engage in such relationships but because persons who assumed professional roles and engaged in mentor/mentee relationships could be more readily identified. The terms mentor and mentee are not generally known or well understood. But, the literature in adult development and career development suggested that there is a growing awareness of mentor/mentee relationships among business and professional persons. Thus, persons in professional roles or those preparing for professional roles seemed to represent a population in which mentors and mentees could be most readily identified. Although the search for study participants was not confined to a specific professional group, the majority of the study participants were engaged in a helping profession. At the time the study participants initially engaged in a mentor/mentee relationship, ten were physical therapists in a clinical setting, three were students in a physical therapy curriculum, one was a social worker in a hospital setting, four were faculty members at a university and four were practicing lawyers.

The findings may be skewed in favor of professional impact because the study participants were engaged in relationships related to their professional roles or the preparation for their professional roles. Because the study participants may have identified with their professional roles, there may have been a greater likelihood of their

describing the professional significance rather than the personal significance of their relationships. However, since this study represents an initial attempt to describe mentor/mentee relationships from a holistic perspective, it seemed appropriate to begin with a small, well defined group of persons to study. Although the use of a smaller study group prohibits making broad generalizations about mentor/mentee relationships, it does increase the likelihood of more accurately describing mentor/mentee relationships among persons engaged in professional roles or preparing for professional roles.

Another area of limitation relates to the study participants' ability and willingness to describe the relationships. The study did not include persons who may have experienced a similar relationship but were unable to describe the relationship orally because of a physical impairment. Nor, did it include descriptions of relationships among persons unwilling to share an account of their relationships. Even though the study participants agreed to describe their relationships, it is unknown to what degree they revealed what there was to disclose about their relationships. Other information could have been potentially shared that either the study participants were unwilling to share or unable to express. The amount of information gathered depended upon the study participants' willingness and ability to describe their relationships.

The participants were confined to pairs of persons who had engaged in mentor/mentee relationships. Pairs of mentors and mentees were chosen to obtain a more complete description of a relationship and to make a wider variety of comparisons. However, this precluded



learning about the possibility of mentor/mentee relationships that might not involve active two-way interaction.

Qualitative studies using interviews to gather data are subject to concerns about both reliability and validity. Reliability has been managed by using a single interviewer (the researcher) and following four pre-established areas of inquiry. Careful documentation was made of all aspects of each interview session. Replication was not expected nor consistent with the open-ended interview approach that was appropriate for a grounded theory methodology. The intent of this study was to learn about mentor/mentee relationships from the perspective of mentors and mentees who were engaged in or preparing for professional roles. If mentor/mentee relationships among this group of persons possess a consistent quality, this consistency can be expected to emerge from the voluntary descriptions given by the study participants.

Validity is also a concern for qualitative studies. Data derived from interviews are subject to questions of validity. The interviewer was careful to recapitulate all the interviews and obtain confirmation or correction of the descriptions given by the study participants. Other validity indices for qualitative studies were also met. However, the intent of this study was not to verify hypotheses or a set of findings. A grounded theory methodology was used to generate descriptive data that can serve as the basis for hypotheses or theory building. The validation can come later if appropriate.

### Significance of the Study

The literature in adult development and career development served to identify mentor/mentee relationships as a topic worthy of study. But, the existing literature while providing a glimpse into this relationship leaves a multitude of questions unanswered. For example, do the relationships labeled "mentoring" by researchers and the popular media refer to the same type of relationship? Do all mentors share similarities? Do all mentees share similarities? Why are persons who serve in identical roles to mentors not regarded as mentors? Do mentors gain as much as mentees from engaging in these relationships? Can all persons potentially engage in a mentor/mentee relationship? Are there developmental pre-requisites for engaging in mentor/mentee relationships? How do mentor/mentee relationships begin? Do they change over time? How? How are mentor/mentee relationships similar to each other? How are they unique from each other? Should mentor relationships be arranged? Should mentor/mentee relationships be actively sought or should they be allowed to evolve spontaneously? What external factors foster or inhibit the development of mentor/mentee relationships? What criteria should we use to identify mentors and mentees? Do mentors and mentees regard each other as friends. If so, why do we call a person "mentor" instead of "good friend"? What distinguishes mentor/mentee relationships from other types of relationships? These questions represent just a few of the many questions that one might ask about mentor/mentee relationships.

The many unanswered questions are evidence of our current incomplete descriptions of mentor/mentee relationships. Because the descriptions do not clearly delineate mentors and mentees from non-mentors or non-mentees, studies such as this must make assumptions about persons being mentors and mentees. Perhaps this study can begin to identify the criteria that distinguish mentors and mentees from persons who do not serve in those roles. As criteria are established, the references to mentors, mentees and mentor/mentee relationships may become more consistent in their usage.

A more complete description of mentor/mentee relationships could also be of value to adult educators, counselors, and managers in all types of work settings. Persons are beginning to translate the incomplete descriptions into programs to promote career success and organizational success. Young persons are being encouraged to seek mentors and managers are being urged to assume mentor roles. However, it is still uncertain if mentor/mentee relationships can be "arranged" or if educators, counselors or managers can arrange the environment to foster or inhibit the occurrence of mentor/mentee relationships. A study such as this may add to our understanding of how mentor/mentee relationships begin and develop, and help to identify environmental factors that may foster or inhibit the establishment of a mentor/mentee relationship.

A more complete description of mentor/mentee relationships may also add to our understanding of relationships that occur during adulthood and thus contribute to our understanding of adult development. Adult development is closely linked to the interactions between

persons. Erikson's (1950) stages of human development are all based on an individual's interactions with other persons. There is reason to believe that mentor/mentee relationships are a type of relationship somehow unique from other relationships that occur during adulthood. We can benefit from understanding how mentor/mentee relationships are distinguishable from other relationships. Perhaps, their unique qualities will also lead to a better understanding of adult development.

And last, this study may serve to demonstrate the utility of grounded theory methodology in developing hypotheses related to adult development. This study may serve to show how rigor can be applied to descriptive research and yet allow theory to emerge that is well grounded in data. This study purposely limits quantitative analysis to a minimum in an attempt to capture the qualitative aspects of mentor/mentee relationships. It is believed that qualitative findings hold the most promise for helping us to gain a more holistic understanding of mentor/mentee relationships.

Although the findings of this study are limited by the types and number of study participants, they nonetheless expand our current understanding of mentor/mentee relationships. The expectation of this study was not that it be conclusive but that it provide us with a firmer foundation from which to gain a better understanding of mentor/mentee relationships. It is hoped that this study would serve to inspire continued research on mentor/mentee relationships and on the related implications as they have emerged from the findings.

### Organization of the Remainder of the Study

Chapter II reviews the literature with the intent of supporting the assumptions made in this study and providing background information. Chapter III describes the grounded theory methodology and the exact procedures followed in this study. Chapter IV presents the major findings of this study and a discussion of the findings and methodology. Chapter V offers conclusions of this study, implications and recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to describe mentor/mentee relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for a professional role. The review of the literature was drawn from two primary sources. The first source was the literature in adult development. Levinson's (1978), The Seasons Of A Man's Life, brought mentor relationships to the attention of this researcher. Levinson's work represents a descriptive study that attempts to describe adult development from a holistic perspective. That is, he describes many developmental tasks and influences that impact the adult development process. He attempts to provide a description of adult development from a global or total perspective rather than only concentrating on one or two aspects. This study's focus on mentor/mentee relationships and its attempt to describe the relationships from a holistic perspective was inspired in part by Levinson's work.

The second source that contributes to this review is the literature in career development and management. Career development models and proposed strategies for women to succeed in business and management provide a rich source of information related to mentor/mentee relationships. This literature provides insight into the significance of these relationships for persons engaged in or pursuing professional roles.

Together the literature of adult development and career development fulfill the intent of this review. Both areas of study support the assumptions this study is based upon. The two sources of literature also provide a basis for discussing the relevance of the findings of this study and for suggesting their implications. Finally, the combined review of literature in adult development and career development sets the stage for attempting to describe from a holistic perspective, mentor/mentee relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for professional roles.

The review of the literature will be presented in two parts. The first part of the review is intended to support the assumption that the persons who participated were mentors and mentees because their professional and/or personal growth and development had been significantly influenced by another person and/or because they believe they have significantly influenced the professional and/or personal growth and development of another person. The major research and reports describing the significance of mentor/mentee relationships will be presented.

The second part of the review is intended to support the second assumption that mentor/mentee relationships are unique or special in quality. The major research and reports describing the unique or special qualities of mentor/mentee relationships will be presented.

#### Support for Significance of Mentor/Mentee Relationships

The literature in both adult development and career development describe the significance of mentor/mentee relationships for

mentees and mentors. This part of the review will be presented in two parts. First, the significance of mentor/mentee relationships for mentees will be addressed. Second, the significance of mentor/mentee relationships for mentors will be addressed.

### Significance of Mentor/Mentee Relationships for Mentees

One of the major works that describes mentor/mentee relationships is that of Daniel J. Levinson (1978) in The Seasons Of A Man's Life. As Levinson studied the lives of forty men between the ages of 35 and 45, he identified the "forming of mentor relationships" as one of four major tasks that occur during the novice phase of a man's development. He describes the novice phase as including the transition from adolescence to early adulthood, entering the adult world and making an age thirty transition that may continue to the mid thirties.

Levinson describes a variety of functions a mentor can serve that relate to the significance of the relationship for the mentee. Levinson writes:

He may act as a teacher to enhance the young man's skills and intellectual development. Serving as sponsor, he may use his influence to facilitate the young man's entry and advancement. He may be a host and guide, welcoming the initiate into a new occupational and social world and acquainting him with its values, customs, resources and cast of characters. Through his own virtues, achievements and way of living, the mentor may be an exemplar that the protégé (mentee) can admire and seek to emulate. He may provide counsel and moral support in times of stress (p. 98).

Levinson states that although teaching and sponsoring are of value, the function of a mentor that is the most developmentally crucial for the mentee is "to support and facilitate the realization of the



(mentee's) Dream" (p. 98). He describes the Dream as a young man's sense of himself in the adult world. It represents all the exciting possibilities he imagines as goals or aspirations for himself. While initially the Dream may be vague, Levinson describes it as becoming more well defined as a young man develops. Of the mentor's role in facilitating the realization of the mentee's Dream, Levinson writes:

He (mentor) fosters the young adult's development by believing in him, sharing the youthful Dream and giving it his blessing, helping to define the newly emerging self in its newly discovered world, and creating a space in which the young man can work on a reasonably satisfactory life structure that contains the Dream (p. 99).

The mentor/mentee relationship also was noted by Levinson to contribute to the personality development of the mentee. During the relationship or after it has terminated, Levinson states the mentee may integrate admired qualities of the mentor within himself. Levinson believes the internalization of the mentor figure(s) is a major source of development in adulthood. Although Levinson's study is limited to the lives of men, he suggests female mentees can benefit from a relationship with a male mentor who has integrated the masculine/feminine polarity. This type of mentor, he states, would be a source of moral support and a model of a person who is both feminine and achieving for the female mentee to identify with.

According to Levinson, as the young man becomes able to define himself within the adult world, he becomes better able to listen to his inner voices and learn from himself. He believes the mentor's support and nurturing provides a backdrop for the mentee's continued growth during adulthood. Levinson notes the culmination of the mentor/mentee relationship in achieving the Dream, ultimately results

in the mentee emerging as a mentor to a younger person.

In earlier writings, Levinson et al. (1974) suggested that the absence of mentoring relationships during a man's 20's or 30's can result in developmental impairments. Levinson subsequently writes in The Seasons of a Man's Life, "Poor mentoring in early adulthood is equivalent to poor parenting in childhood: without adequate mentoring a young man's entry into the adult world is greatly impaired" (p. 338).

Although the focus of Levinson's discussion on mentoring relates to the positive consequences of mentor/mentee relationships, Levinson notes negative consequences may also result from the relationship. According to Levinson, the mentee will not grow and benefit when the mentor attempts to make the mentee in his own image or exploits the mentee to enhance his own fame or fortune. The hazard described by Levinson is the mentor who fearful of being surpassed by the mentee engages in destructive forms of discipline and control. At the other end of the spectrum, Levinson describes the mentor who devotes himself to the mentee with "excessive altruism," thus creating an imbalance for both the mentor and mentee.

Levinson also notes that cross-gender mentor/mentee relationships may have negative impact on the mentee when the mentor is male and the mentee is female. Levinson states that when a male mentor becomes sexually involved with a female mentee that this may lead to hurt and negatively impact her growth and development. Even if the male mentor/female mentee are not overtly involved sexually, the value of the cross-gender relationship can be limited if the female mentee is regarded, ". . . as attractive but not gifted, as a gifted woman

whose sexual attractiveness interferes with work and friendship, as an intelligent but impersonal pseudo-male or as a charming little girl who cannot be taken seriously" (p. 98). Levinson notes the negative impacts of cross-gender mentor/mentee relationships may be mutually generated and not simply the result of mentor actions.

Although Levinson makes an occasional reference to a female mentee or female mentor, he admits there are limitations to his descriptions because they are drawn from only men who participated in his study. Nonetheless, his descriptions strongly support the assumption that mentor/mentee relationships have significant impact on male mentees and most likely on female mentees regardless of the mentor's gender.

George E. Vaillant (1977) in Adaptation to Life describes the lives of ninety-five men who have been followed in the longitudinal Grant study for thirty-five years. Like Levinson, Vaillant has studied a variety of developmental tasks and influences impacting adult development. Part of his descriptions focus on the careers of his study participants.

Vaillant labels a period of adult development as "Career Consolidation" during which the man (usually) in his thirties concentrates his efforts on building a career. He states, "during Career Consolidation one important inner change is the acquisition, assimilation, and finally the casting aside of non parental role models or mentors" (p. 218). He notes that men with relatively unsuccessful careers either had not discovered mentors until their early 40's or had only had mentors during adolescence. So, Vaillant not only suggests that mentor/mentee relationships can have a positive influence on career

success but he also suggests the timing of the relationship determines whether the potential significance of the mentor/mentee relationship will be positive for career success.

A third person who refers to the significance of mentor/mentee relationships within the context of adult development is Gail Sheehy (1976) in her book Passages. In her descriptions of the predictable crises or passages that a person manages during adulthood, Sheehy writes about mentor/mentee relationships as described to her by some of the 115 persons she interviewed and as gleaned by her from the work of Levinson, Gould and others. Unlike Levinson and Vaillant, Sheehy interviewed women as well as men. She notes few mentors are available for women and that many women she interviewed did not know what she meant by mentors when she mentioned them. However, Sheehy states that, almost without exception, all of the women she interviewed who had gained recognition in their careers had been nurtured by a mentor. She notes the mentor/mentee relationship is significant in not only gaining support and encouragement but also in accessing the unpublished job market.

Sheehy states there is often an erotic interest in a male mentor/female mentee relationship. She cites traditional examples of a male/female partnership such as producer/star; professor/graduate student; doctor/nurse; and director/actress. She warns, "The kicker is that the relationship of guide and seeker gets all mixed up with a confusing sexual contract" (p. 190). She draws our attention to the difficult situation a woman may find herself in when her male mentor provides the single source of professional, emotional and sexual

nourishment. She notes this situation rarely occurs for men. She refers to Levinson's work when she states the mentor and the loved one are generally two different people for men. This distinction highlights the various influences on adult development.

Levinson's, Vaillant's, and Sheehy's studies are unique in that each describes mentor/mentee relationships within the context of a study that addresses adult development from a variety of developmental tasks and influences that may impact the total process. As a part of the total adult development process, each author describes work or career as one of the integral components. The remainder of the studies to be reported focus only on the significance of mentor/mentee relationships for the mentee within the work or career component of adult development.

In The Managerial Woman, Margaret Hennig and Anne Jardim (1976) describe the career development of twenty-five successful women in management. All twenty-five women identified "the good boss" as the critical make or break factor that influenced their career successes. The successful women were described as "immeasurably sustained" by their relationships with their bosses. Although the women did not label their bosses as "mentors", the bosses undoubtedly functioned as mentors and are referred to as mentors, godfathers or coaches in the discussion by Hennig and Jardim. The women in Hennig and Jardim's study described their bosses (or mentors) as sales agents for them inside and outside of their companies. They described their bosses as using their reputations to gain respect and acceptance for them. The bosses were described as acting as buffers between the

women and opponents. The women felt their self-confidence grew as a result of the support and encouragement provided by their bosses. As a result of this support, the women felt able to take on new responsibilities, new tests of competence and new positions. They attributed their relationships with their bosses as providing support, encouragement, strength within the company and the opportunity to learn from their expertise.

Hennig and Jardim were so impressed with the impact of the relationships between the successful business women and their bosses that they recommend aspiring career women should, ". . . look for a coach, godfather or godmother, a mentor, an advocate, someone in a more senior management position who can teach her, support her, advise her, critique her" (p. 191).

Like Levinson and Sheehy, Hennig and Jardim also note the negative consequences of mentor/mentee relationships on a mentee. Hennig and Jardim note that women pursuing careers must learn to circumvent the stereotypes associated with traditional male/female roles. In addition, they consider sexual involvement with a mentor detrimental to both a woman's career and to the mentor/mentee relationship. Hennig in a newspaper interview states when women cultivate a relationship with a male mentor that they "have to be meticulous about presenting it as a working relationship" (Detroit Free Press, September 30, 1980, p. 2C, Col. 2, 3).

Fitt and Newton (1981) reported their findings from interviews with thirty women who had risen to positions of responsibility within a variety of industries. In their article, "When the mentor is a man

and the protégée a woman" which appeared in Harvard Business Review, they reported that twenty-four of the thirty women in their sample had engaged in mentor/mentee relationships. The mentors were attributed with giving their "implicit stamp of approval" and ensuring that the women received credit for their work so they (mentees) could build their own reputations.

Fitt and Newton also interviewed thirteen men who were currently or previous mentors. They summarized the mentor's roles as launching and supporting the careers of female mentees. The mentors described themselves as helping to give the female mentees confidence. They did this by letting her know they were behind her and cheering her on. The mentors also described their role in providing an opportunity for the female mentee to prove herself. The male mentors used their status to help build the female mentee's reputations. At this point they counseled the women as they taught them the ropes. If the mentors were in a high enough position of authority, they were reported to launch the career of the female mentees by helping them to develop a career track.

Fitt and Newton's findings suggest that mentor/mentee relationships can have a positive influence on career development for female mentees. However, they too cite possible risks and tensions that may result from such a relationship. The female mentee runs the risk according to Fitt and Newton of becoming closely tied to a mentor who is unpopular or loses at organization politics. The male mentor's loss they report becomes the female mentee's loss if her reputation and career are associated with a loser.

Both the male mentor and female mentee they report run the risk of being perceived to have a close sexual association. In their sample, three relationships were reported in which an affair had ensued. Fitt and Newton reported sexual tension appeared to exist in several of the relationships described to them. However, the persons interviewed didn't see this risk as a particular problem if both the male mentor and female mentee handled themselves and the relationship professionally.

Harragan (1977) in Games Mother Never Taught You describes the problems and organizational climate women find themselves in when they pursue corporate careers. Her descriptions are based upon discussions with working women who shared similar work related problems. At the conclusion of the book, Harragan describes men who are supportive and "non-neurotic" in their professional relationships with women. She labels these men as mentors and suggests to women, "If you can find one of them, you are very lucky. Your chance of winning the game of corporate politics has just multiplied one-hundredfold" (p. 380-81).

Jacqueline Thompson (1976) describes how some business women are exploring the benefits and the risks of the patronage system as they attempt to move through the corporate hierarchy in "Patrons, Rabbis, Mentors--Whatever You Call Them, Women Need Them, Too", MBA. Based on her interviews with business women, Thompson identified a need for business women to seek the psychological and tactical support that can be provided by a mentor. She suggests that most business women are not inculcated with the same determination to succeed as their male counterparts. The mentor's support, according to Thompson,



can encourage the business woman mentee to be more aggressive in her career pursuits. Thompson also states that a mentor can help the female mentee in a corporate setting by grooming her and deflecting possible sources of interference.

Thompson reports that the women she interviewed had all benefited from mentor/mentee relationships in their career pursuits. With one exception, the women interviewed had male mentors. She states the female mentees credit their own merit with attracting a mentor but that their promotions were credited to their relationships with mentors.

Thompson also notes the potential risks that exist in a male mentor/female mentee relationship. She identifies the risk to both mentor and mentee if the relationship evolves into a sexual-business relationship. The male mentor may be concerned about having his motives called into question. The female mentee runs the risk of losing her mentor's respect and being regarded in stereotypic male/female roles. The end result, she reports, is less likelihood of climbing the corporate ladder.

Kathryn H. Moore (1979) presented a paper for the National Conference of the American Association for Higher Education on "Mobility and Mentoring: Indications from a Study of Women Administrators." Moore looked at the career patterns of top women administrators and compared them to traditional male career models. Specifically, she sought to determine if women possess comparable educational and work experiences as men and if women exhibit comparable kinds of career mobility as men who have achieved executive

positions.

Of her sample of eighty-nine women, just under half of them had mentor relationships. Only two of the women in her sample described a classic corporate model in which a protégé follows a mentor. Both of these occurred within a religious community. Moore noted that academic women who she believed had greater opportunity for mentor relationships had the least number of mentor/mentee relationships among the eighty-nine women who completed her questionnaire. Moore stated the women without mentors attributed their success to having the right position and previous experience from which to progress rather than to a person.

However, Moore admits she may have skewed the responses to job-related persons and may have limited the acknowledgement of various types of sponsoring relationships because of the definition of mentor used in her study. She defined a mentor as "an individual who facilitates career advancement by 'teaching the ropes', coaching, serving as a role model, and making important introductions" (p. 15). As such, she limited the possible functions of a mentor and confined the relationship to the professional realm. Although slightly less than half of her respondents reported having a mentor relationship, this group noted the significant role of a mentor in their career advancement.

Carol Michael (1980) interviewed twelve academic administrative women, twelve business women and seven women from dentistry, medicine and law in a pilot study to determine the nature and extent of mentorship among these groups of women. She reported that twenty-five of

the thirty-one women interviewed reported having a mentor. Nearly all of the women who had had mentors believed that having such a relationship was important for success in their profession. The most frequently described contribution of the mentor was her/his encouragement. She reported that most of the women, who had had mentors and some who had not, advised young women to try to initiate such relationships.

The August 1980 issue of Training/HRD reports on a TRAINING '79 sponsored program on mentors led by Richard C. Grote and Kaye Stine. Thirty professionals ages 28 to 65 participated in the training session. All thirty participants were reported to have had mentor relationships that they regarded as instrumental in their careers. Most of the participants said their mentors had either a "substantial" or "extraordinary" effect on their careers. Grote and Stine reported a variety of responses that were given by the participants in describing the impact of their mentors on their careers. These included the mentors serving as role models, providing emotional and professional support, boosting self-confidence of mentees, making opportunities for mentees, promoting mentees within the organization, accepting mentees as persons and making mentees part of an informal network. Grote and Stine summarized the significance of mentor/mentee relationships for mentees as "critical to career success."

Susan M. Cameron (1978) reports in "Women In Academia: Faculty Sponsorship, Informal Social Structure and Career Success" her study of a possible relationship between sponsorship and career success among university male and female faculty. She measured career success by

publication rate, number of grants received, rate of professional collaboration and degree of professional network involvement. She identified a number of variables that might influence a person's degree of career success as measured by these outcomes. One of the variables found to be a strong predictor of career success was a young person's participation in a research project team. Typically, the young person was given the opportunity to work on the research project by a more senior, eminent sponsor.

Martha Frost (1978) describes the significance of role models or mentors in her study, "Role Models and Career Salience In Older Female College Students In Psychology." She reported from her interviews with twenty female undergraduate and twenty female graduate students over age 35 that all the women described people who had strongly encouraged them to continue their education. Frost concludes, it is not so important to have a role model in a technical sense but rather a role model or person who functions more as a mentor by pushing one to realize his/her full potential. For the group of women studied, a person served as a mentor by giving them support to pursue former education even though to do so was not considered typical by their peer groups.

The literature in adult development and that concerned with career development strongly support the assumption that mentor/mentee relationships significantly influence the professional/personal development of mentees. Mentors are credited with enhancing a young man's progression through adult development from facilitating his entry into the adult world to realizing his Dream. Mentors are

described as fostering career development and career success in a variety of ways for both men and women. Although both positive and negative consequences of mentor/mentee relationships are cited, the positive consequences seem to be predominant. Many of the potential negative consequences are reported as avoidable.

#### Significance of Mentor/Mentee Relationships for Mentors

Levinson (1978) suggests the mentor/mentee relationship is as significant for the mentor as it is for the mentee. He states, "Being a mentor is one of the most significant relationships available to a man in middle adulthood" (p. 253). Mentoring is described by Levinson as one of the most special contributions a person in middle adulthood can make for society. Levinson describes mentoring as somewhat altruistic. The mentor is described as having a sense of obligation to do something for another person. He suggests that the mentor gains satisfaction from seeing younger persons grow and thrive. However, Levinson maintains the mentor is doing something for himself as well.

A mentor/mentee relationship according to Levinson allows the mentor to maintain his connection with the forces of youthful energy present in himself and in the world at large. He describes the mentoring role as part of the developmental process Erikson calls "generativity." Levinson states that a man as a mentor:

forms a growing awareness of the continuity of human life and the flow of generations. He feels a concern for the upcoming generation of young adults, who must in time be ready for the responsibilities of middle age. It leads him (mentor) to accept other burdens of his generation--exercising authority, providing leadership, making decisions that will have significant consequences for a widening circle of others (p. 254).

Levinson suggests that the self-rejuvenation and creative work of the mentor is furthered in a healthy mentor/mentee relationship.

Levinson notes there are hazards for mentors as well as mentees in these relationships. The mentor who attempts to make a mentee into an image of himself or his own choosing may according to Levinson become the recipient of a mentee's rebellion. A mentee rebellion is also described as a possible outcome when a mentor attempts to exploit the relationship to fulfill his own needs for fame and fortune or when the mentor engages in destructive forms of discipline or excessive control over the mentee. He describes the mentor who overindulges in devoting himself to his mentee as one who also may find himself hurt and disappointed if the mentee pulls away or is unsuccessful in meeting the mentor's expectations.

Levinson's work provides strong support for the significant influence of a mentor/mentee relationship for a mentor. His study is the only one to date that focuses on the significance of these relationships for mentors within the overall adult development process. The other studies to be cited describe the impact on mentors as related to career development or within a work setting.

Epstein (1971) describes the benefits to a sponsor (mentor) who has a protégé in her chapter that appears in The Professional Woman edited by Athena Theodore. She describes the benefits to the sponsors (mentors) as easing their transitions to retirement, providing them with a sense of continuity in their work and assuring them that their work will serve as the foundation for future work. She also suggests that the contacts with professional colleagues helps to

keep the sponsors (mentors) equipped to meet the highest standards of professional behavior.

Rivchun (1980) in her article "Be a Mentor and Leave a Lasting Legacy" describes several possible sources of significance of mentor/mentee relationships for mentors. She describes the mentor/mentee relationship as a friendship in which the mentor can benefit from the friendship and gain satisfaction from witnessing the mentee's professional advancement. In addition to these benefits, she suggests mentors have an opportunity to expand their learning as they teach mentees and respond to the mentees' questions. Rivchun describes mentoring as a demonstration of professional commitment that she believes will also cause others to regard the mentor highly.

Fitt and Newton (1981) report that the thirteen mentors they interviewed expressed a sense of responsibility in assuming mentor roles but that they also enjoyed being regarded as role models. Many stated they had a primary motive to engage in mentoring because of their desire to develop talent. Many mentors were eager to create a "top-flight organization."

Fitt and Newton also note possible negative consequences of mentor/mentee relationships for mentors. They remark if the protégés' (mentees') performances are unsatisfactory, the mentors' peers and superiors may question their judgement. This is an especially high risk for men willing to be mentors for women. Fitt and Newton state that female mentee mistakes tend to be more visible than those of their male counterparts. The male mentor also risks negative consequences if he is perceived as sexually involved with a female mentee.

As noted earlier in the review, three of the mentor/protégé relationships that comprised their sample had resulted in romantic affairs. Other persons interviewed reported that sexual tension existed but most did not perceive it as a thorny problem.

Grote and Stine (1980), prior to the training session they led on mentors, hypothesized that persons assume mentor roles in order to overcome deficiencies such as blocked career growth or other failures rather than for altruistic reasons. The thirty participants of the session who had all had mentors disagreed with this hypothesis. They suggested that although the mentors may not engage in mentoring relationships just for altruistic reasons that unsatisfied needs rather than failures may be the motive for persons assuming mentor roles.

Hennig and Jardim (1976) only allude to the possible benefits for a person serving as mentor in a mentor/mentee relationship. In their advice to young women aspiring to careers, they recommend women seek mentors. They suggest the young woman should present herself as someone worth investing in--as someone who can make a return on the help they receive. Although the benefits are not clearly delineated, their advice suggests that mentor/mentee relationships are significant for mentors as well as mentees.

Thompson (1976) also makes a fleeting reference to the significance of mentor/mentee relationships for mentors. She quotes a mentor she interviewed who speaking about mentees stated, "I wanted to put them in positions where they could strengthen my career" (p. 35).

The literature does tend to support the assumption that



mentor/mentee relationships may be significant for the professional/personal development of both mentors and mentees. Although the literature addresses the significance of mentor/mentee relationships for mentees to a far greater extent than for mentors this is not regarded as evidence that the benefits are far greater for mentees than mentors. Perhaps the benefits for mentees are just more immediately obvious. The limited number of references to the impact of mentor/mentee relationships on mentors suggests that little attention has been given to this aspect of mentor/mentee relationships.

#### Support for Unique Quality of Mentor/ Mentee Relationships

The second assumption made in this study was that mentor/mentee relationships have a unique or special quality about them that sets them apart from other relationships one experiences within a work setting. The primary uniqueness of a mentor/mentee relationship is generally expressed in the literature as a personal quality. The personal quality of mentor/mentee relationships is described in terms of the feelings of mentors and mentees for each other and in terms of the roles the mentor serves in behalf of mentees.

The Woodlands Group (1980) in their article "Management Development Roles: Coach, Sponsor and Mentor," distinguish mentor/mentee relationships from other types of relationships in a work setting. According to them the mentor/mentee relationship is characterized by feelings of "caring" between the mentor and mentee which are not present in other types of relationships in work settings. They describe what they consider the prevailing sense of humaneness and

intimacy that exists in a mentor/mentee relationship. The closeness they suggest contributes to disclosure of values and feelings between mentors and mentees. They describe the feelings of caring as expressed as affection, respect and gratitude by the mentee. They describe the mentor's caring as similar to that of parents.

The Woodlands Group describes the mentor's role as being more than a coach, who teaches subordinates how to learn specific sets of tasks, or a sponsor, who acts as a press agent for subordinates, but rather it is that of a "trusted counsellor and guide" implying all that the mythological definition might imply. They suggest the mentor is more concerned with a mentee's growth and development than with an organization's needs. The mentor, they say, would advise a mentee to leave an organization if it meant better facilitating the mentee's growth and development.

Bolton (1980) in her discussion in "A Conceptual Analysis of the Mentor Relationship in the Career Development of Women," also distinguishes mentor/mentee relationships from other types of relationships that exist in a work setting. Although she describes the functions of apprenticeships and mentor relationships as both serving to enhance the development of a person during their career novice stage, she regards the relationship between mentor and mentee as more personal than that between an apprentice and a superior.

Grote and Stine (1980) also distinguish mentor/mentee relationships from other types of relationships. The thirty participants who were part of Grote and Stine's workshop on mentors had all had mentors. The participants were reported to describe the needs fulfilled by

mentors and sponsors as similar but described their roles as being significantly different. They described mentors as being concerned about the individual growth of mentees as well as helping to improve mentees' skills and expertise. Sponsors the participants said are respected for their savvy while mentors are respected for their wisdom.

Grote and Stine reported that their participants described their mentors' influence as both personal and professional. They expressed the personal influence as supportive, emotionally and professionally, as boosting the mentees' self-confidence, and as providing perspective for the mentee as a person.

Michael (1980) in her pilot study reports most of the thirty-one women she interviewed described their relationships with their mentors as friendships. Most of the women described both professional and personal impact on themselves as a result of their mentor/mentee relationships. They frequently described their mentors as sensitive and supportive and persons who provided considerable encouragement.

Penny George and Jean Kummerow (1981) describe how a mentor can influence a mentee personally and professionally in their article "Mentoring for Career Women." Based on their experiences as psychologists, they describe how mentors can contribute to a mentee's self-understanding. The mentor, they say, can help a mentee objectively assess his/her strengths and weaknesses and emphasize positive features especially if the mentor is not the direct supervisor. George and Kummerow believe women tend to dwell on their own shortcomings more so than men. Thus, the mentor's role in assisting the mentee in self-understanding and boosting self-confidence is especially

helpful for women.

Fitt and Newton (1981) reported a similar impression made by a male mentor of women lacking self-confidence. They quote the male mentor as saying, "'Women frequently have less self-confidence than men about their ability to do a job well. She's better than she thinks she is. I am working to give her confidence. . . .'" (p. 56). Fitt and Newton also quote a mentee who as part of describing the mentor's role states it is, "' . . . caring, and reassuring . . . .'" (p. 58). Fitt and Newton describe the closeness of the mentor/mentee relationship as they discuss their findings about sexual tensions that might arise from the closeness between male mentor and female mentee.

Hennig and Jardim (1976) in their report of interviews with twenty-five women in top management positions state the women likened their relationships with their bosses to those with their fathers. The women described their relationships with their bosses as "deep and abiding friendships." Unmarried women were reported to describe their relationships with their bosses as "working marriages." The women interviewed described the relationships with their bosses as unique just as their relationships with their fathers had been unique. Their bosses were described as caring for them and recognizing them primarily for their intelligence and ability instead of just being regarded as a sex object.

This same combination of friendship and caring but being regarded for ability is expressed by Harragan (1977) in a quote of a woman executive who describes her mentors:

My best friends are men I've met in business. They are men I really like, you might even say love, because I can be honest and natural with them. They know I will never sleep with them and they know why, and accept that. If a man is genuinely interested in you, he will not want to destroy your self-esteem or your career. He will be the first to know that an office affair will debase you and he'd never have any part of that any more than you would (p. 380).

Levinson (1978) describes mentor/mentee relationships as love relationships. He describes their intensity as similar to that between parents and grown offspring or between sexual lovers or spouses. In Levinson's The Seasons Of A Man's Life, he includes case histories of four of the forty men he studied. The qualities cited repeatedly by the men in describing their mentor/mentee relationships include; commitment, respect, admiration, passion, intense feelings, involvement, affection, lovingness, tenderness and caring. Many of these feelings are expressed by a novelist, quoted by Levinson, who in describing his mentor says:

He was fourteen years older than I, and my feeling toward him was something like toward a dream father or older brother . . . Certainly the word "hero" is not an overstatement . . . But there was a side that was very loving and tender. It was one of the freest relationships I ever remember having with another man. And without wanting to make it sound queer, this punching and bear hugging, great admiration, great affection, I guess there was something like love (p. 178).

Although the literature describes a continuum of feelings associated with mentor/mentee relationships, the personal qualities of caring and concern between mentors and mentees for each other is consistently evident. The studies on mentor/mentee relationships to date have not been directed toward identifying qualities of the relationship. But, the description of a personal element appears



spontaneously and repeatedly in the quotes of those who have experienced mentor/mentee relationships.

### Summary

Two of the assumptions, upon which the methodology of this study rests, are substantially supported in the literature. All of the literature referring to mentor/mentee relationships either as a primary or secondary focus cites the significance of mentor/mentee relationships for mentees. The significance of mentor/mentee relationships for mentors is addressed to a lesser degree but certainly suggests the relationship may have significant impact on the mentor. The literature repeatedly refers to a personal element in a mentor/mentee relationship that is expressed as "caring" type feelings or personal concern as described by the roles mentors serve for mentees. In addition to their role in facilitating career development through teaching skills and knowledge, mentors are described as displaying a genuine interest that seems to supercede a strictly professional relationship. The assumptions grounded in the existing literature that first, mentor/mentee relationships are significant in the professional/personal growth and development of mentors and mentees and second, that mentor/mentee relationships possess a unique or special quality that sets them apart from other relationships one experiences within a work setting were the basis for this research effort.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe mentor/mentee relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for a professional role. This chapter begins with an overview of the primary principles and features of grounded theory methodology that serve as the basis for the methodology used in this study. The overview is followed by the rationale for using a grounded theory approach for this study. Finally, a detailed account is given of the methodology used in this study.

#### Grounded Theory Methodology--An Overview

The methodology for this study is based on the grounded theory methodology described by Glaser and Strauss (1965), Glaser and Strauss (1966), Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Glaser (1978). Following is an overall description of grounded theory and the specific steps employed in a grounded theory methodology as described and used by Glaser and Strauss.

#### Overall Description

Grounded theory methodology focuses on generating theory rather than on verifying theory. Theory generated from this methodology is systematically obtained and analyzed from data. Theory that



is generated by means of this methodology is derived from data rather than being deduced from an existing body of theory. Because the focus of a grounded theory approach is on generating theory rather than validating theory, the end product of a study using this approach is a theory or set of hypotheses that account for much of the relevant behavior noted in the area of study. Traditional means of validation can come later if appropriate.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) contend that theory based on data rarely can be completely refuted by more data or replaced by another theory. Grounded theory stands the test of additional data because it meets four essential criteria for a practical theory. To be practical according to Glaser and Strauss (1967) a theory must have fit and relevance, and must work. Glaser (1978) added the fourth criterion of being modifiable.

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Glaser (1978), a theory's fit refers to the categories or conceptual elements of the theory emerging from the data. This is in contrast to deductive forms of research in which data are considered in relation to existing theory or pre-established hypotheses. The emerging conceptual elements of the theory are analyzed to ensure they "fit" or are consistent with the data.

The criterion of work according to Glaser (1978, p. 4) refers to a theory's ability to "explain what happened, predict what will happen and interpret what is happening" in the area of study. This criterion is met through systematic gathering and analysis of the data.

Closely related to the criteria of fit and work is the criterion of relevance. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Glaser (1978), relevance relates to the worthiness of the research. The data substantiate the importance of the study by serving as the source for identifying major problem areas.

Glaser (1978) describes a theory's meeting the criterion of modifiability if it can evolve and change in response to expanded understanding of a problem area. Although core concepts of a theory may remain intact, specific aspects of a theory are expected to change with on-going investigation of a problem area.

The grounded theory approach is transcending in nature (Glaser, 1978). The scope of grounded theory extends beyond the major area of study and the existing theories related to the focus of study. Theory grounded in data integrates relevant variables from any source from which they emerge. This quality of grounded theory facilitates the expansion of a theory into a broader, more comprehensive theory. "Grounded theory is ideational; it is a sophisticated, careful method of idea manufacturing. The conceptual idea is its essence" (Glaser, 1978, p. 7).

#### Specific Steps in Grounded Theory Methodology

Although grounded theory differs from traditional research methodologies, it is a systematic, organized effort. The specific process to be followed in a grounded theory methodology according to Glaser (1978) is summarized in the following ten steps.

1. Identify a general problem area.

2. Review the literature in areas related to the substantive area of study.
- \*3. Collect research data.
- \*4. Concurrently (with #3) code and analyze data.
- \*5. Generate memos with as much saturation as possible.
- \*6. Decide what data to collect next.
7. Continue data collection, analysis, coding and memoing-- focusing on emerging core theory.
8. Write memos on data, memos on memos until saturation is achieved.
9. Sort memos to develop a theoretical framework.
10. Write and rewrite the report.

Problem Area. A problem area can be identified in a variety of ways. Most often it surfaces from readings or personal experiences. Generally, a number of questions are generated in a problem area. These questions serve as a basis for the research inquiry. While the questions focus the inquiry, they are not stated as pre-conceived hypotheses. This approach to problem identification is similar to that used in ethnographic research (Borg and Gall, 1979).

Review of the Literature. Glaser (1978) recommends initial readings in a substantive field different but related to the area of research. In orthodox use of grounded theory methodology, the investigator reads to broaden his/her base of knowledge and perspective.

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\* 3, 4, 5, and 6 comprise what Glaser and Strauss refer to as theoretical sampling.

Reading in the substantive area of study is begun when the newly emerging theory is sufficiently grounded by prior data collection, coding and analysis. The review of the literature is related to the emerging theory through integration of ideas. It becomes a part of the emerging and/or expanding theoretical framework. It does not provide the theoretical framework on which the research is conducted as in deductive research. Glaser and Strauss (1967) encourage the researcher to initially ignore the literature in the area being studied to avoid contamination by pre-conceived concepts or theoretical frameworks. The review of the literature in grounded theory is used to build theory rather than negate or confirm existing theory.

#### Theoretical Sampling.

Theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 45).

The collection of raw data, coding into conceptual elements (categories) and conceptual aspects of categories (properties), and analyzing of the codes, categories and properties are done concurrently. This joint collecting of data, coding and analysis is a key to generating theory. It provides the basis for constant comparisons. By comparing the data as they are collected, "the researcher creates more abstract levels of theoretical connections. In short, theory is gradually built up inductively from the progressive stages of analysis of the data" (Glaser, 1978, p. 39). Theoretical sampling serves as a means for monitoring the emerging conceptual framework instead of verifying preconceived hypotheses.

A. Collecting data The initial decisions for collecting data are based on the general subject or problem area. The types of data sought are not based on a pre-conceived theoretical framework. Beyond the initial decisions for collecting data, further data collection can not be planned in advance. Criteria for selecting groups should be related to the purpose and relevance of the research. Initially, groups are used that will most likely provide data and subsequent leads for collecting more data. Progressively, groups are selected that will help generate as many properties of the categories as possible and that will help relate the categories to each other and to their properties.

Non-comparable groups are not regarded as a problem by Glaser and Strauss. The key is not differences or similarities between groups, but the "ideational characteristics of groups that in turn delineate behavioral and attitudinal patterns" (Glaser, 1978, p. 44). Multiple comparison groups add richness and depth to the data.

B. Coding Coding is described as providing the link between data and theory. In the process of coding, the data are dissected into categories and properties. The categories and properties when fully saturated, that is when nothing new emerges, eventually provide the basis for a theoretical framework.

Glaser (1978, p. 57) suggests the coding be guided by the following set of questions: "'What are these data a study of?'" "'What category does this incident indicate?'" "'What is actually happening in the data?'" These questions help the researcher focus on the emerging conceptual patterns.

As coding progresses, all data can be classified as indicators of some category. Ultimately a total saturation of conceptual codes (theoretical concepts) occurs when all the data are incorporated into the conceptual codes (Glaser, 1978). Glaser (1978) describes the concept-indicator model which explains how a conceptual code is generated. This model is based on constant comparative analysis. The data, categorized as indicators, are compared to each other. Each indicator is compared to every other indicator. When a conceptual code is generated, each indicator is compared to the emerging conceptual code. The comparisons of indicator to indicator and indicators to a conceptual code provide a means of determining the consistency of meaning of the indicators or the variations they represent. Variations are not ignored but provide a means for adjusting the conceptual codes to more accurately represent "what is." Finally, conceptual codes are compared to each other. The conceptual codes, grounded in data, comprise a generated theory.

C. Analysis Analysis begins with coding and progresses with memo writing. "Memos are the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding" (Glaser, 1978, p. 83). Memos reflect the researcher's thoughts on indicators and codes, and/or the relationships between indicators and codes, and between codes.

In the beginning of the study, the memos are generated from the constant comparison analysis. Later, memos generate memos. Sorting, writing, and reading all result in more memo writing also. The memos build on one another until a well grounded theory emerges.

Core Categories As data are collected, coded and analyzed, several codes are generated. But it is important to identify the core categories or the "main themes." Glaser (1978, p. 95) recommends criteria to use in determining which categories are core categories. Among the criteria are:

1. It must be related to several categories and their properties more so than other categories.
2. "It must reoccur frequently in the data."
3. It will take longer to saturate a core category because it is related to many other categories.
4. "It relates meaningfully and easily with other categories."
5. It has "clear, grabbing implications for formal theory."
6. It is essential and vital to the analysis of the data.
7. It is a "highly dependent variable in degree, dimension and type. Conditions vary it easily." (p. 96)

Sorting Theoretical sorting of memos is the basis for formulating theory for its presentation to others. Sorting puts the dissected data back together. It is the ideas as they appear in memos rather than the raw data that is sorted. Theoretical sorting produces a generalized, integrated model by which to write the theory. The initial sorts are virtually the first draft of the manuscript.

Sorting is completed when theoretical completeness is reached. That is, the problem under study is explained with the fewest number of concepts and the greatest possible scope including as much variation as possible. The final result is an integrative, constructive contribution to the area of study. It is not expected it will be

total or all inclusive. It is expected the theory that emerges will continue to be enriched and modified.

### Methodology for this Study

#### Rationale

The purpose of this study was to describe mentor/mentee relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for a professional role. To accomplish this purpose, a methodology was developed for this study based on grounded theory methodology as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Glaser (1978).

Grounded theory is especially suited for generating descriptive hypotheses or theory (Yinger, 1978). It is also appropriate for studying substantive areas such as the nature of mentor/mentee relationships in which little prior study or formal theory exists. Grounded theory provides the flexibility and latitude that's needed to develop initial hypotheses from which formal theory and verification can occur later. In this study, the initial hypotheses are presented as conclusions of the study. Since this methodology is based on a constant comparative analysis of all the data, the conclusions of the study are grounded in the data. Conclusions grounded in data are likely to be of great practical use long before they are tested with traditional research rigor (Glaser and Strauss, 1965). In view of the current popular focus on mentoring in relation to career development, the need for a comprehensive description seems paramount. The practical aspects of this approach, therefore, are appealing and immediately necessary.



In addition, grounded theory methodology rests on the premise that theory is an "ever-developing entity not a perfected product" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 32). This on-going quality of grounded theory makes it especially appropriate for presenting an initial comprehensive description of mentor/mentee relationships. It is expected this study will precipitate more study on the topic.

Grounded theory has been demonstrated in studies by Glaser and Strauss (1965); Glaser and Strauss (1966); Yinger (1977); and Janesick (1977) as effective for generating theory or hypotheses in little known areas of study. The research reported on mentor/mentee relationships has been primarily descriptive to date. Descriptive research seems most appropriate for a relationship that has been described as dynamic, changing and subject to many variables.

### Problem Area

The problem area for this study of mentor/mentee relationships was identified through readings of adult development, career development, the popular media and through personal experiences. Several questions as stated in Chapter I served as the basis for this particular study. Four major areas of inquiry served to guide this study. These were:

1. How do mentors and mentees describe the overall qualities of their relationships?
2. How do mentors and mentees describe themselves and each other?

3. How do mentors and mentees describe the development of their relationships?
4. How do mentors and mentees describe the significance of their relationships for themselves and for their mentor or mentee?

Hypotheses were not stated at the initiation of this study. The study was designed to be open and receptive to all data that might be collected. The conclusions of the study are drawn from the data derived from the interviews with the study participants.

#### Review of Literature

The review of the literature provided a means of identifying what was already known about mentor/mentee relationships. The review also precipitated many questions that remain to be answered. The review provided background information upon which to base the assumptions made in this study and confirmed the need to conduct a descriptive study on mentor/mentee relationships. The review of literature did not serve as a basis for formulating hypotheses that would then be confirmed or negated as usually occurs in other forms of research. Instead, the review identified the problem area, confirmed a need for the study, helped to determine the areas of inquiry and provided support for the assumptions that were made in the study.

#### Data Sources

The data for this study were derived from personal interviews and demographic information sought from the study participants. Twenty-two persons were interviewed who were identified as potential

mentors and/or mentees. Three of the persons had multiple mentors and/or mentees. Thus the twenty-two persons represented fourteen mentor/mentee pairs. Demographic information was also collected on each person.

### Defining the Study Population

Glaser and Strauss (1967) recommend selecting a population that seems to be the most likely group to provide data related to the problem area. The most obvious group to seek data from for this study were persons who had engaged in mentor/mentee relationships. However, the potential population of mentors and mentees seemed broad and the study population needed to be more specifically defined. Levinson (1978) states he believes mentoring is quite rare even in educational institutions where you might expect it to be most prevalent. However, his accounts of mentor/mentee relationships and those referred to in the remaining literature all cite the association of mentoring with career development for mentees. Because mentor/mentee relationships do not seem to commonly occur and because they seem to be frequently found among career persons, the population of mentors and mentees was confined to persons engaged in or preparing for a professional role. A professional role was defined as one that required particular knowledges/skills that are usually acquired through formal education. This population seemed to represent the group most likely to engage in mentor/mentee relationships.

In addition to defining the study population as mentors and mentees engaged in or preparing for a professional role, other criteria were established for the study population. Each person to be

interviewed was:

1. 20 years of age or older.
2. Strongly influenced in his/her professional development by another person(s), and/or strongly influenced the professional development of another person(s).
3. Willing and available for a personal interview along with his/her counterpart (mentor or mentee).
4. Capable of articulating the nature of his/her mentor/mentee relationship.

These criteria were met with all of the study participants. The criterion for age was originally set for 25 years of age but was modified to 20 years of age. One mentee who was believed to be 25 years of age was instead 22 years of age when interviewed. This study participant's interview was included in the findings of this study. Since the criteria were established to not only define the study population, but to assist in identifying study participants, the modification in the age criterion did not seem to pose a problem for the research design. Although all the study participants met the age criterion at the time of the interview, they may have been younger than 20 years of age during the initial phase of their mentor/mentee relationship. Again, since the age criterion was set to help limit the study population and identify study participants, this was not considered to be a problem for the research design.

#### Identifying Study Participants

Initial contacts with perspective study participants resulted in identifying twenty-two persons who met the study population

criteria and who agreed to participate in the study. Although the search for the study participants was not confined to a specific professional group, the majority of the study participants were engaged in a helping profession. At the time the study participants initially engaged in a mentor/mentee relationship, ten were physical therapists in a clinical setting, three were students in a physical therapy curriculum, one was a social worker in a hospital setting, four were faculty members at a university and four were practicing lawyers. All but one of the persons initially contacted had identified themselves as a mentor and/or mentee or had been identified by someone else as a mentor and/or mentee prior to their being approached about participating in the study. The researcher was acquainted with all of the persons initially contacted prior to the initiation of the study. Descriptions of how the study participants were identified can be found in Appendix A.

Each of the initial contacts for identifying study participants were made by telephone. Since all of the persons initially contacted were known to the researcher, the conversations began with common greetings and salutations. These were followed by:

I'm calling you about the study I plan to conduct for my doctoral dissertation. The topic for my study is mentor/mentee relationships. I hope to be able to describe mentor/mentee relationships in terms of their qualities--that is the adjectives one would use to describe them, and in terms of the qualities of the mentors and mentees, how these relationships develop and what this type of relationship means to a mentor and a mentee. I plan to learn about these relationships by interviewing persons who might have had such a relationship.

All of the persons asked how mentors were defined and one person also asked how a mentee was defined. They were told: "I can't define a

mentor or mentee for you because the intent of the study is to be able to describe those persons and their relationships." At this point they were asked:

Can you think of a relationship you've had with another person that had influence or impact on your professional or personal growth and development? Or one in which you feel you have influenced or impacted another person's growth and development? As you think of all the relationships you've had, do any stand out in your mind?

Routinely, the person pondered for a moment. Some asked if the relationship had to be professional. They were told it could be either professional or personal or a combination of the two.

In all cases, the persons responded quickly about having engaged in such a relationship. After it was established that the person was or had been engaged in a relationship that had influenced their own or someone else's professional/personal growth and development, and the person agreed to participate, the study and their participation in it was explained to them. They were told the interviews would focus on the areas of inquiry that were earlier stated. The potential study participants were told the interviews would be audio-recorded in their entirety and that the interviewer would take a few notes. They were told to expect the interviews to last about one hour per relationship. Tentative dates for the interviews were set immediately when possible. However, these could not be confirmed until other members of the pairs were contacted about participating and their schedules co-ordinated.

The same information was shared with the persons identified by the initial contact persons. On occasion the initial contact person talked with the other member of the pair before the person was

contacted. Other times the persons were contacted without the members of the mentor/mentee pair having had prior conversations. Persons who were suggested as study participants by the initial contact persons were always told who had identified them as perspective study participants.

After interviews were scheduled for all of the study participants who agreed to participate, letters of confirmation were sent to them outlining the four study areas of inquiry and an overview of what they could expect during the interview session (Appendix B).

### Interview Protocol

Interview Schedule. The first pair of interviews were used as a pilot for this study. The interview protocol, the management of the raw data and concurrent analysis of the data were reviewed by the researcher and a member of the doctoral committee. The methodology was modified as deemed appropriate before proceeding with subsequent interviews and analysis.

Following the pilot study and adjustments in the methodology, the remaining interviews were conducted. The pilot interviews and remaining interviews of all fourteen pairs of mentors and mentees were completed within six weeks. Each mentor and mentee comprising a pair was interviewed separately. Each interview was conducted as though it were totally autonomous from any other interview. No references were made to interviews with mentor or mentee counterparts. Each member of a mentor/mentee pair was interviewed within thirty-six hours of each other. The close scheduling of interviews for mentor/mentee pairs helped to ensure reliability of the data obtained within pairs.

Interviews with a given pair or set of pairs that were related by a common mentor or mentee were conducted within blocks of time ranging from one to three days. Only members of one pair or set of pairs were interviewed during any block of time. This too helped to ensure reliability of the data. It was not possible to ensure this same degree of reliability between pairs because of the logistical limitations. However, all interviews were conducted within a six week time frame.

There were no pre-established times set for the length of each interview session. Each interview was estimated to require approximately one hour to complete. This assisted the study participants in planning their schedules. Thus, the time allotted for each interview depended upon the study participant's willingness to talk and the extent of their availability. The interviews required approximately one hour per interview of each mentor or mentee comprising a mentor/mentee pair. Persons with multiple relationships required forty-five minutes to one hour to describe each relationship. The shortest time spent for an interview was thirty-five minutes and the longest time spent was three and one-half hours.

Interview Format. All of the interviews were conducted by the researcher. A single interviewer was used to contribute to the reliability of the findings. Because the interviewer was the researcher, data collection, coding and analysis could be done concurrently.

The interview format was semi-structured using open-ended questions. The semi-structured format was maintained by using the



same first question for each mentor/mentee pair and pre-determined probing questions. The probing questions varied for given interviewees depending on their responses to the initial question. The probing questions were used to ensure gathering information under each of the areas of inquiry used in every interview. The semi-structured format had the advantage of offering a high degree of freedom to probe into answers and to adapt to different study participants and situations. This format also allowed the interviewer to deal with faulty memories and to ensure keeping the interview on track to meet the overall interview objectives.

Open-ended questions were used because of the several advantages cited by Stewart and Cash (1974) and Borg and Gall (1979).

According to these authors open-ended questions:

1. Allow the interviewee to do most of the talking while the interviewer listens and observes.
2. Help put the interviewee at ease because the interviewee can determine the nature and amount of information to be given.
3. Are more effective in learning about feelings and attitudes and the intensity of feelings and attitudes of the interviewee.
4. Are less likely to telegraph or lead the interviewee to respond one way or another.
5. Help enable the interviewer to determine the interviewee's frame of reference or stereotypes.

There are disadvantages as well which relate primarily to interviewer

skill and replication especially when several interviewers are employed. The disadvantages were not regarded as significant since the researcher served as the sole interviewer and because the researcher had considerable knowledge of and experience with interviewing.

The advantages outweighed the disadvantages for this particular study. Since the areas of inquiry for the interview related to describing mentor/mentee relationships, it was important for the study participants to be gently guided during the interview but still free to express their personal experiences as spontaneously as possible.

The approach that was used is similar to the critical incident technique devised by Flanagan as described by Borg and Gall (1979); Herzberg (1959); (1976) and used by Herzberg (1959). The critical incident technique involves studying one group by asking a group other than the one being studied to describe "critical incidents" that relate to the group under study. Herzberg (1976) reports the respondents of critical incidents tend to relate what actually occurs rather than what they think "ought" to occur.

In this study, it was important for the study participants to relate their actual feelings and reactions rather than providing responses of how they perceived they should feel or react. To minimize "ought" responses, the study participants were asked to describe a specific relationship and to provide descriptions of specific incidents characterizing their relationships. Although the descriptions given by the study participants were not confined to "critical incidents" of their mentor or mentee counterpart, the interviews did focus on

specific persons and actual events.

The interviews were audio recorded in their entirety. Audio recordings helped to minimize the distraction of a researcher taking copious notes and enabled the researcher to capture not only content but also emphasis and inflections. In addition to the audio-recordings aiding the collection of data, they were also valuable in making content analyses later. The audio-recordings provided a permanent record of the interviews that could be referred to at a later date if major themes emerged late in the analysis that were not apparent at the time of the interview. The audio-recordings also were the primary source for quotations that were used to describe the relationships and to support the conclusions of the study that are offered in Chapter V. The audio-recordings are also a permanent record of the verification of the findings reported and evidence of the reliability of the findings.

Notes were taken by the interviewer to record non-verbal communications that added to the verbage of the study participants, i.e., gestures and facial expressions and to record main themes of the interview content. The notes were taken in a cryptic fashion on an Interview Notes Worksheet (Appendix C).

The Interview Notes Worksheet was divided into four columns. Each column represents one of the four areas of inquiry. At the top of each column, the interviewer wrote the probing questions appropriate for the area of inquiry. This helped to ensure that the same general questions were asked under each area of inquiry. Since the study participants tended to give descriptions that fell under several

areas of inquiry simultaneously, the written probing questions helped the interviewer to keep the interview moving and on target. The Interview Notes Worksheet also facilitated the interviewer's ability to keep on track with the study participants and to later restate or recapitulate their descriptions. Because of the organization of the Interview Notes Worksheet the interviewer was better able to provide eye contact and show accepting behaviors (i.e., nods of heads, "uh-huh").

A. Interview Opening. At the beginning of each interview, the study participant was put to ease with casual conversation. A friendly, comfortable climate was established. Following this, the interviewer's opening comments served to:

1. Review the purpose of the study with the study participant.
2. Neutralize previous conversations between the interviewer and study participant and/or study participant's pre-conceived ideas about mentors.
3. Focus the interview on a specific relationship and actual incidents.
4. Prepare the study participant for the interview format.

Each interview began in the following manner:

As you know the purpose of my research is to gain an understanding of the overall nature of mentor/mentee relationships. I'm especially eager to learn about the qualities of the relationship--that is what are the types of adjectives you would use to characterize the relationship, yourself, and your mentor or mentee. I'm also interested in learning how your relationship began, how it developed or changed and how it ended or maintains itself. I also would like to learn about what the relationship meant (means) to you and what you think it means to (person's name).

Something like the following was stated to those study participants who had discussed the topic of study with the interviewer prior to the interview: "You have an idea about some of my thoughts on this matter from my readings and my personal experiences. Today, though I'm eager to learn about your perceptions and your specific experiences". For all study participants, the interviewer said,

You may have read about mentor/mentee relationships or talked about them with other persons, but I don't want you to concern yourself with whether you are or are not a part of a mentor/mentee relationship. I'll decide that. Instead, I'm just eager to learn about your relationship with (Person's Name). At this point, there are lots of conjectures about the nature of this relationship but this study is amongst the first to actually attempt to learn about the nature of the mentor/mentee relationship from the various points of view of persons like yourself who may have engaged in such a relationship.

For all study participants, the interviewer stated,

I will begin the interview by asking a very general question. I would like you to respond in terms of your specific relationship with (Person's Name) and share specific situations or experiences to describe various aspects of your relationship. As we go along, I will ask other questions that relate to the purposes of the study, so you don't have to worry about trying to remember them. I will audio record this interview in its entirety. I will use the recordings to obtain specific types of data which will be compared in a variety of ways. I will not report any of the findings with your name attached to them. If there were reasons for me to do so, I would seek your permission first. Do you object to my using the tape-recorder? Do you have any questions about what to expect? OK then, before we start the interview I'd like to ask you to fill out this form for me (Appendix D). This information will help me make various types of comparisons.

Each study participant was asked to complete a Demographic Information Sheet (Appendix D), that asked for the study participant's:

1. Sex
2. Age range

3. Position/career area
4. Role in relationship, i.e., mentor or mentee
5. Number of mentors and/or mentees

The Demographic Information Sheet also included an identification number that was assigned to each study participant to maintain anonymity and to assist in making comparisons. The numbers were assigned in the order the study participants were interviewed. Letters were combined with the numerals to differentiate mentors and mentees within a given pair and within sets of pairs that had a common mentor or mentee. Thus, the first person of the first pair was assigned #1a and the second person of the first pair was assigned #1b. All of the persons comprising a set of pairs, were assigned the same numeral but different letters, i.e., #7a, #7b, #7c, etc.

After the study participants completed the Demographic Information Sheet, the interviewer suggested the interview begin and informed them that the tape recorder was being turned on.

B. Interview Questions. The initial question was very general for all study participants. The interviewer attempted to keep the question as general and non-directive as possible to allow the study participants to begin where they felt comfortable. This also allowed them to respond spontaneously and share what they considered the most remarkable features of the relationship. Although the initial question was similar for each member of a given mentor/mentee pair, the initial question was altered from the first to the last pair of mentor/mentees interviewed.

The interviews for the first two pairs began as follows: "You

or (other member of pair's name) indicated you have influenced his/her professional and/or personal growth and development." OR "You or (other member of pair's name) indicated he/she has influenced your professional and/or personal growth and development." For each person this was followed by, "Would you please describe the relationship for me?"

The initial question was rephrased for the remaining interviews. The interviewer began each by stating "(mentor or mentee's name) has indicated he/she regards you as a mentor or mentee" or by stating "You have indicated (mentor's name) is your mentor," or "You identified (mentee's name) as a mentee." Each of these statements were followed by, "Why do you regard him/her as your mentor or mentee?" or "Why do you think he/she regards you as his/her mentor or mentee?"

The interviewer realized with the first two pairs interviewed that the initial question was so open-ended that it provided no direction at all. The question left the study participants floundering at the outset which made getting the interview moving more difficult. The revised version of the initial question seemed to facilitate the study participants' initial responses without leading them in any particular direction.

Since the interviewer expected some study participants to volunteer more information than others in response to the first general question, non-telegraphing, open-ended probing questions were prepared to gather additional information for each of the interview areas of inquiry.

AREA #1 Description of the qualities or characteristics of the relationship. The probing questions for the first two pairs under this area of inquiry were:

Probing question: "What adjectives would you use to describe your relationship?"

Probing question: "How did you feel toward (mentor or mentee's name)?"

Probing question: "How do you think (mentor or mentee's name) felt about you?"

Beginning with the interviews of the third mentor/mentee pair, another probing question was added.

Probing question: "How is this relationship different from other relationships you have or have had?"

This question was added because, without being asked, the first two pairs implied the relationship was unique in nature. It was determined the answers to this question would contribute to our understanding of mentor/mentee relationships. By adding this question to the list of probing questions it was assured of being addressed by all study participants.

AREA #2 Description of the qualities/characteristics of the mentors and mentees.

Probing question: "How would you describe (mentor or mentee's name)?"

Probing question: "What do you most like about (mentor or mentee's name)?"



Probing question: "What is it about (mentor or mentee's name) you like least?"

Probing question: "What qualities do/did you bring to the relationship?"

The first, second and fourth probing questions for this area of inquiry were asked of all the study participants. The probing question "What is it about (mentor or mentee's name) you like the least?" was revised for the second mentor/mentee pair to, "Is there anything about (mentor or mentee's name) that you find troublesome?" This question was revised to ascertain if any specific qualities or characteristics interfered with a mentor/mentee relationship. As the question was stated initially, it might not have been possible to ascertain if the least liked qualities or characteristics were considered a problem by the study participants.

By the time of the interviews with the third mentor/mentee pair, the interviewer began to ask the mentees, "Are there qualities your mentor has that you wish you had or that you would like to develop?" This question was added as it began to become apparent from the interviews with the first two pairs that mentees seem to be attracted to mentors because of qualities they sought to emulate. Also at the time of the interviews with the third mentor/mentee pair, both mentors and mentees were asked how the other member of the pair was different from themselves. Half-way through the study, this was revised to ask "How are the two of you alike or different?" Again, the responses of the study participants resulted in adding and revising this question. Their responses suggested it was not only

important to discover differences between mentors and mentees but similarities as well.

AREA #3 Description of the development and evolution of the mentor/mentee relationship.

Probing question: "How did your relationship begin?"

Probing question: "When did your relationship begin?"

Probing question: "Has the relationship changed over time?"

If so, how?"

Probing question: "Did the relationship end? If so, how?"

The last probing question under this area of inquiry was revised for the second mentor/mentee pair to; "What is the status of your relationship now?" The revised version was less telegraphing and more open-ended in structure.

AREA #4 Descriptions of the significance of the relationship for the mentor and the mentee.

Probing question: "How has this relationship influenced your professional growth and development?"

Probing question: "How has this relationship influenced your personal growth and development?"

Probing question: "Generally, what has this relationship meant to you?"

By the time of the interviews with the third mentor/mentee pair, the first two probing questions were combined to ask, "How has this relationship been significant for you either professionally or personally?" The study participants tended to combine their responses about the influence of the relationship on their professional and

personal development. The study participants didn't think in two separate categories of influence. Also at this time, a probing question was added. "How do you think this relationship was significant for (mentor or mentee's name)?" It was determined it would be helpful to learn how each member of the mentor/mentee pair perceived their influence on the other person. The third probing question was dropped at the time of interviewing the fourth mentor/mentee pair. It was regarded as redundant.

Probing questions (summarized in Appendix E) were used only as needed to satisfy an area of inquiry. Some persons answered the probing questions voluntarily without specifically being asked the question. The interviewer referred to the notes and the probing questions at the top of each area of inquiry column on the Interview Notes Worksheet to ensure that none of the aspects covered by the probing questions were omitted. The interviewer did not, however, assume any circumstances or events related to a mentor/mentee even if the interviewer had prior knowledge of them. The interviewer conducted each interview as though she had no prior knowledge of the study participants.

The interviewer used the generally accepted interview technique of pausing after statements made by the study participants to allow them to add more to their responses. Frequently, the study participants needed just a few moments to reflect or collect their thoughts before proceeding without further questions from the interviewer. If it was judged by the study participant's comments or pause that he/she had nothing further to add, the interviewer restated part

of his/her previous response and pursued either the same area of inquiry or another by asking a probing question.

Throughout the interview, the interviewer used restatements which were brief repetitions of the study participants' responses to ensure perceiving the study participants' responses and intents as they intended them to be. This technique helped to ensure some degree of validity of the findings. It frequently resulted in the study participant offering more information. Restatements also helped to keep the interview moving within an area of inquiry or moving from one area of inquiry to another. The areas of inquiry were not addressed in any particular order. The study participants were allowed to take a lead in responding to the areas of inquiry. The restatements and probing questions provided a means of obtaining the data desired as well as establishing an interview flow. The interviewer attempted to facilitate the study participants' thoughts and event associations through frequent restatements. For example, most of the study participants began their descriptions by relating how they had met their mentor or mentee counterpart. The interviewer would then probe the area of how the relationship developed. Inevitably in the course of the study participants' descriptions of how the relationship developed they would cite at least one way in which the relationship had been significant for them. The interviewer would then restate what they had related about the development of the relationship and use what they had said about the significance of the relationship to move to that area of inquiry. For example the interviewer would say, "As you described how your relationship with (mentor's name) has developed you

also mentioned that (mentor's name) provided you with a lot of support and really boosted your self-confidence. How else has this relationship been significant for you?"

At the completion of the interview when all of the areas of inquiry had been pursued, all of the responses under each area of inquiry were recapitulated one at a time, area by area. The study participant was then asked to confirm the recapitulation, revise it or add more information to the area of inquiry. Throughout all of the interviews, the interviewer noted the information gathered by probing questions, restatements and final recapitulations by drawing lines between the segments of information recorded on the Interview Notes Worksheet. This notation helped the interviewer to assess her interview techniques.

The latter interviews were expected to be more polished and possibly more productive as the study progressed. The interviewer expected to profit from the interview experiences and analysis over time. While this may be perceived as an area of concern, it also represented a strength of the grounded theory methodology. The intent of the study was to glean as much information about mentor/mentee relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for professional roles as possible. Data or insights that added to this understanding were welcome at any point. The method of analysis that was used precluded a single bit of datum from skewing the conclusions of the study. If significant data had not been gathered because of inappropriate or insufficient probing questions initially, core categories that might have emerged from such data were expected to

emerge at a later point. Other sources of data could also have been sought but it was not deemed necessary. This study was not intended to be all inclusive. The study represents an initial attempt at describing mentor/mentee relationships for persons engaged in or preparing for a professional role. It is expected many studies will follow and add to the findings of this study.

C. Interview Closing. At the close of each interview, the interviewer reiterated from previous correspondence and conversation how the interview content was to be handled. The study timeline was shared with the study participants. Each study participant was told he/she would receive a summary of the results if he/she wished at the completion of the study and research report.

The study participant was thanked and the interview session ended.

D. Interview Follow-up. Letters of thanks were sent to each study participant within two weeks following the interview (Appendix F).

### Management of Interview Data

#### Schedule

- A. Within one to two days following each interview (Appendix L);
  - 1. A summary of the interview content was written from memory and notes.
  - 2. Impressions about the procedures were recorded.
  - 3. Impressions of the interviewer's and study participant's behavior were recorded.
  - 4. A description of the context of the interview was written which included;

- a. Date and time of day of the interview.
  - b. A description of the setting in which the interview was conducted.
  - c. The climate of the interview session, i.e., hurried, interruptions, relaxed.
  - d. Incidents that might have impacted session, i.e., illness, earlier happy or sad event.
- B. Before interviews were conducted with the next mentor/mentee pair or set of mentor/mentee pairs, the management of the data for the previous pair or set of pairs was completed. This included:
1. Completing the data worksheets (described in detail later) from the Interview Notes Worksheet and the interview summaries. It was noted that information recorded on the Interview Notes Worksheet was not always placed in the most appropriate area of inquiry or belonged in more than one area of inquiry. The information was placed on the appropriate data worksheets as it was transcribed from the interview notes and summaries.
  2. Listening to the audio-recording of the interview session and adding quotes or pertinent data to the data worksheets. It was noted the key factors had usually been recorded on the Interview Notes Worksheet or in the interview summaries. The audio-recordings on occasion added to the details of the descriptions and

enabled the transcriptions of quotations that were not easily recorded during the interviews. The key descriptions and quotations were tagged for future reference by noting the recorder counter number for each item.

Both items 1 and 2 were completed for a given person of a pair before doing any part of the same tasks with another member of a pair.

3. Writing memos on:
  - a. Further impressions of content, context or interviewer/study participant behavior.
  - b. Methodology.
  - c. General themes that were emerging and various factors related to the themes.

Memos were written at any point during the management of the data. All thoughts, observations and impressions were recorded as they occurred to the interviewer.

For the sets of mentor/mentee pairs in which a single person was a mentor and/or mentee to more than one person, the interview data were processed pair by pair. For example, for a study participant who had three mentors interviewed, a single mentor's interview was processed and then the mentee's corresponding interview was processed and this continued pair by pair. The interviews were processed by pairs rather than processing all the mentors' interviews and then later all of the single study participant's interviews related to his/her role as a mentee to the persons who served as his/her mentors. The



management of the data pair by pair was done to better capture a more total picture of the relationship.

Data Worksheets. Although predetermined categories or criteria for each category were not established as is the case in traditional content analysis, the notes on the Interview Notes Worksheets, the summaries, and audio-recordings of the interviews were transcribed according to the study areas of inquiry. Data worksheets were used to filter out key words, phrases, and events from the interviews so that they could be more easily managed for analysis. Each interview was transcribed onto individual data worksheets. Five data worksheets were used. These appear in Appendices G, H, I, J, K and were labeled;

1. Qualities-Relationship - to describe qualities of relationship.
2. Mentors and mentees - to describe qualities/characteristics of mentors and mentees.
3. Activities - to describe activities mentors and mentees engaged in together.
4. Development - to describe events that triggered the relationship's beginning, changes, and its termination.
5. Significance - to describe the relationship's actual and perceived meaning to the study participants.

The data worksheets were designed to facilitate analysis of the data. All of the data worksheets had the study participant's identification number, role (i.e., mentor and/or mentee), sex and age range in the upper right hand corner. The worksheets were color coded. These two

features aided the multiple comparisons that were made.

By half-way into the study, it was determined the activities data worksheet was of little value. The information recorded on this worksheet was more appropriately and meaningfully recorded on another data worksheet. Typically, the activities were relevant to the development, significance or quality of the relationships.

### Validity of Data

The validity of the data derived in this study was of genuine concern. Janesick (1977) cites validity as a central issue in a qualitative study. Validity concerns the accuracy of the data collected. Glaser and Strauss (1967) state validity is not a problem in the traditional sense when the focus of a study is on generating theory or hypotheses rather than validating theory or hypotheses. They contend that the accuracy of the evidence or specific facts per se are not of primary concern. What is important, they state, are the conceptual categories generated from the data. They suggest that multiple comparisons of all available data will result in theory or hypotheses that are truly representative of the circumstances or phenomena being described. They would contend that we often focus so strongly on specific aspects of the data that we never do appreciate the total picture, or we end up with a distorted view of the overall circumstances or nature of what it is we are attempting to study. Although the grounded theory methodology, as described by Glaser and Strauss, seemed appropriate for serving as the methodological foundation for this study, the design of this study did attempt to maintain some degree of rigor for supporting the validity of the derived data.

In most ethnographic research, the researcher attempts to meet subjective adequacy such as that recommended in Homan's indices (1950) and cited by Janesick (1977). Janesick cites Homan's indices as:

1. Spending as much time as possible with persons being studied.
2. Conducting the research in the same place the persons being studied work and live.
3. Observing the subject in as many social contexts as possible.
4. Speaking the same language as the subjects.
5. Achieving as great a degree of intimacy with the subjects as possible through multiple contacts.
6. Obtaining a confirmation of the meanings of the observations from the subjects being observed.

The index for language was met for all study participants. The interviews were conducted at the study participants' place of work or at their homes except for four persons who were interviewed at conference sites. Sixteen of the twenty-two study participants were known to the interviewer prior to the study. The indices related to time and social context were not applicable to this study.

A most critical index for validity in this study was the consistency between the notes taken during the interviews and the initial analysis, and the intentions and perceptions of what the study participants expressed during an interview. This index relates to Homan's confirmation of meaning. This measure of subjective adequacy was met by recapitulating every area of inquiry in its entirety. The study

participants were asked to confirm, revise or add to the recapitulations. Without exception, the study participants confirmed the interviewer's recapitulations both as they related to content and in terms of the interviewer's affective interpretation of the content. This measure of validity was especially important because the interviews represented a single encounter and because the interviewer was not well acquainted with all of the study participants. Confirmation of meaning more than any other index of subjective adequacy ensures accuracy of the data derived in this study. The interview recapitulations enabled the interviewer to verify the interview notes and the interpretations of the notes with the study participants and yet still remain open and non-directive in obtaining the information.

#### Reliability of Data

Reliability concerns the replicability and consistency of the findings. According to Janesick (1977), qualitative studies are not as concerned with reliability. There are no standardized instruments or statistical tables to rely on for the descriptions that emerge from qualitative studies. In fact, to impose categories prior to the research, would violate the tenets of descriptive methodology (Janesick, 1977; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978).

This study attempted to address reliability in several ways. First, all of the interviews were conducted by a single, experienced interviewer. Second, time frames for conducting the interviews were established and abided by. Each member of a mentor/mentee pair was interviewed within thirty-six hours of each other and all interviews were conducted within six weeks.

Third, the interview format provided consistency in positioning the study participants at the opening of the interview and in gathering information representing the same areas of inquiry. Identical demographic information was obtained for all study participants. All of the interviews began with a similar general question. Probing questions for each area of inquiry were established and consistent for a given pair or set of pairs although they were revised during the study.

Finally, careful documentation was made of all aspects of each interview session. The audio-recordings provided a permanent record of the interview sessions. It would be expected that similar data would be derived in another study following the procedures outlined in this study's methodology.

#### Coding and Analysis of Data

Coding and analysis of the data began with writing initial summaries immediately following the interviews and transcribing the information gathered during the interviews onto the data worksheets. Memos were written at a variety of times during the data collection and subsequently up to and during the writing of the dissertation. Memos were written whenever a thought, idea or impression came to mind that related to the study. The memos are the written evidence of the researcher's internal coding and analysis of the data.

After managing the data for the interviews with the first mentor/mentee pair, the interview summaries and data worksheets were reviewed. There was a temptation to begin analyzing in terms of similarities and differences under each area of inquiry. After this

was discussed with the researcher's advisor, this system of analysis seemed potentially limiting. As subsequent interviews were conducted, "main themes" began to emerge. The major findings seemed to build a case for themselves. Toward the completion of the interviews some findings were beginning to seem "tight" in the sense of standing up to a variety of variables and circumstances. The earlier temptation to focus on similarities and differences was no longer present when enough data were available to begin appreciating the "bigger picture."

As the interviews progressed, analysis did not proceed in as structured a fashion as originally anticipated. In planning this study, it was expected formal comparisons between pairs, mentor to mentor, mentee to mentee, all mentors to all mentors and all mentees to all mentees would be made. Although these types of comparisons were made, they were made in relation to a category or main theme rather than among areas of inquiry or groups of persons.

The data worksheets and memos were routinely reviewed. These reviews often triggered more memos. These reviews also resulted in revising the initial interview question and probing questions. The memos were grouped according to category or property. The memos were dated so that it could be noted how the findings gradually evolved into main themes or conclusions of this study.

As analysis proceeded, repeated references were made to the data worksheets and memos. These reviews continued to trigger more memos. Increasingly, the main themes began to emerge from the data. Quantitative accountings of the qualities of the relationships described by the study participants were not computed. This form of

coding and analysis did not seem to capture the nature of the mentor/mentee relationships that had been described by the study participants.

The memos provided a means of assimilating many forms of data into meaningful wholes. It was realized that individual datum or categories of data per se were not very useful in attempting to describe mentor/mentee relationships. The memo writing helped to express in a culminated fashion the information shared by the study participants, the feelings they expressed and the impressions that resulted from their descriptions of mentor/mentee relationships. To analyze only the words expressed by the study participants without consideration for the feelings and context of the relationships would have resulted in an incomplete description of the relationships.

When the main themes or core categories seemed well saturated, the memos were sorted according to the main themes. The sorting provided basis for developing an outline for Chapter IV, Presentation of Findings and Discussion. The memos along with information obtained from a review of the literature was then sorted again to provide an outline for Chapter V which includes conclusions of the study, implications and recommendations for further study.

In summary, analysis began with the first interview and for this study ends with the writing of the last word. It involved reviewing data worksheets, and writing impressions of the information, feelings and contexts of the relationships as related to the interviewer by the study participants. Rereading of data worksheets and memos continued to trigger more memos. Gradually, main themes emerged

that seem to reflect the nature of mentor/mentee relationships among persons engaged in or preparing for a professional role. The memos were then sorted according to main themes. The sorting provided an outline for Chapters IV and V.

Although the methodology attempts to address questions of validity and reliability, it most certainly will be subjected to criticism for lack of traditional rigor. However, the presentation of findings, discussion and conclusions of the study, implications and recommendations for further study presented in the following two chapters should significantly contribute to the understanding of mentor/mentee relationships among persons engaged in or preparing for professional roles. Further studies that might add to the descriptions offered in this study are welcomed and encouraged.



## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe mentor/mentee relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for a professional role. The descriptions given by the study participants provide an overall picture of mentor/mentee relationships among this population. Characteristics related to mentor/mentee relationships were identified through the compilation of demographic information and by means of multiple comparison analysis of the interview data.

The findings and discussion will be presented in ten sections: (1) Description of Study Participants, (2) Overall Qualities of Mentor/Mentee Relationships, (3) Mentor Characteristics, (4) Mentee Characteristics, (5) Factors Related to the Development of Mentor/Mentee Relationships, (6) Significance of Mentor/Mentee Relationships, (7) A Detailed Description of a Mentor/Mentee Pair, (8) Variations in Findings, (9) Summary and Discussion of Mentor/Mentee Relationship Findings, (10) Summary and Discussion of Methodological Findings.

#### Description of Study Participants

##### Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

Demographic information was obtained on each study participant. The information obtained from the study participants included their age range, career area, position held at time of interview, their

role(s) within each relationship (i.e., mentor and/or mentee) and the total number of persons they identified as having been mentors and mentees in relation to themselves. This information is summarized in Table 1.

The findings in Table 1 show that four male mentors and seven female mentors were interviewed. Six male mentees and six female mentees were interviewed. One study participant was interviewed as a mentor for relationships with two mentees. Another study participant was interviewed as a mentee with a single mentor and as a mentor to three mentees. A third study participant was interviewed as a mentee to three mentors. Three of the mentor/mentee pairs consisted of males only and seven of the mentor/mentee pairs consisted of females only. Four pairs were mixed sexes with one being a male mentor and female mentee and the others being female mentor and male mentee. Mentors ranged in age from 31-65 years. Mentees ranged in age from 20-40 years. The average range of age difference for mentor/mentee pairs was 8-16 years.

Table 1 also includes previous mentor or mentee relationships recalled by the study participants. Five mentees had not had relationships with mentors other than those who were study participants. One mentor had not had a previous mentor. All of the mentors had had mentees other than those who were study participants. Five of the mentees had reported having previous mentees while seven reported they had not had mentees in relation to themselves. Table 2 shows that female mentors and mentees reported a greater number of relationships with mentors and mentees than did their male counterparts. The seven female

Table 1  
Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants\*

Study Participants	Mentor	Mentee	Male	Female	20-24 yrs.	25-30 yrs.	31-35 yrs.	36-40 yrs.	41-45 yrs.	46-50 yrs.	51-55 yrs.	56-60 yrs.	61-65 yrs.	Previous Mentors	Previous Mentees	Physical Therapists	University Faculty	Lawyers	Social Worker
1a	X	X	X				X			X				X			X		
1b	X			X								X		X	X	X			
2a		X		X				X						X	X	X			
2b				X				X						X	X			X	
3a	X	X	X									X							
3b			X																
4a	X	X	X					X		X				X	X			X	
4b	X		X											X	X				
5a	X	X	X			X								X	X	X			X
5b			X											X	X	X			
6a	X	X	X	X			X												
6b		X	X																
6c		X	X			X	X							X	X	X			
7a		X		X		X								X	X	X			
7b		X		X										X	X	X			
7c		X		X	X									X	X	X			
7d	X			X										X	X		X		
7e	X	X		X				X	X					X	X		X		
8a	X			X								X		X	X	X			
8b	X	X	X	X			X							X	X	X			
8c	X		X							X				X	X	X			
8d	X	X		X		X								X	X	X			

\*Demographic Characteristics were derived from the Demographic Information Sheet--Appendix D.

mentors collectively reported having fifteen mentors and thirty-two mentees. The six female mentees collectively reported having nineteen mentors and nineteen mentees. The four male mentors collectively reported having eleven mentors and thirteen mentees. The six male mentees reported having ten mentors collectively and no mentees.

Table 2  
Study Participants' Recall of Their  
Own Mentors and Mentees\*

Study participants	Number of mentors Recalled	Number of mentees Recalled
Female Mentor study participants	14-15	29-32
Female Mentee study participants	19	18
Male Mentor study participants	10-11	13
Male Mentee study participants	10	0

\*Data derived from Demographic Information Sheet--Appendix D.

The primary career areas represented by the study participants were higher education, physical therapy, law and social work. Table 1 characterizes the career areas or roles for the study participants at time of the interviews. Three of the study participants (7a, 7b, 7c) were students in a physical therapy program during most of the time they engaged in mentor/mentee relationships described in this study. The members of mentor/mentee pairs were within the same career areas except for one pair which represented physical therapy and social work. The specific positions held within the career areas were

diverse within the mentor/mentee pairs and between mentor/mentee pairs. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the demographic characteristics of the study participants.

#### Vignettes of Mentor/Mentee Pairs

The demographic characteristics summarized in Tables 1 and 2 provide partial descriptions of the study participants. Vignettes of study participant pairs are also presented to describe the initial meetings and beginnings of mentor/mentee relationships. A synopsis of each pair is included with their sex, age at time of interview, and their roles in relation to each other when they initially met and when their mentor/mentee relationships began.

Pair #1 consisted of a female mentor and a male mentee. The mentor was in her mid to late forties and the mentee in his early to mid thirties. The mentor was an associate professor at a major university focusing on communications and adult education while concurrently being responsible for staff development through the Agriculture and Natural Resources Education Institute for persons working within the co-operative extension service. She was part of an interview team who interviewed the mentee for a position as a graduate assistant. The mentee's previous academic work had been in the areas of American Studies and journalism. He was beginning a doctoral program and intended to work as a graduate assistant within the Agriculture and Natural Resources Education Institute for just a couple of years. From the first encounter at the interview, the relationship began. The relationship evolved into that of a mentor/mentee, the mentee's responsibilities expanded, and his stay with the

university exceeded his original expectations.

Pair #2 consisted of a female mentor and a female mentee. The mentor was in her early to mid sixties and the mentee in her mid to late thirties. The mentor was the Director of Physical Therapy for a major medical center in the midwest for several years. The mentee first met the mentor as a physical therapy student. The mentee completed an affiliation in the mentor's department. At the time of her affiliation, the mentee was impressed by the mentor. Upon completion of her affiliations, the mentee worked in the east for about 1 1/2 years. Then, she decided to return to the midwest medical center where she had affiliated. She returned with the mind set of building her career at that facility. She was hired as a staff physical therapist by the mentor who continued as director of the department. The first four years of their relationship was described as a typical director/staff type relationship. During the four years, the mentee was promoted to supervisor and then to clinical coordinator. By the end of the four years in which the mentee had had an opportunity to assume increasing levels of responsibility and demonstrate her abilities, the mentor chose her as a person to nurture and eventually replace her as Director of the Physical Therapy Department.

Pair #3 consisted of a male mentor and a male mentee. The mentor was in his mid to late fifties and the mentee in his mid to late thirties. The mentor was a senior partner in a blue ribbon law firm in Flint. The mentee was a native of Flint. Like his mentor, he was a graduate of the University of Michigan law school. The mentee served as a law clerk in the law firm the summer before he

graduated. The following year the mentee was offered a position in the law firm. The mentor sat with him for his very first case and thereafter counseled the mentee on the law and its strategies. They became law partners and described themselves as friends.

Pair #4 consisted of a male mentor and a male mentee. The mentor was in his mid to late forties and the mentee in his mid to late thirties. Their story is told in detail later in the chapter.

Pair #5 consisted of a male mentor and a male mentee. The mentor was in his early to mid thirties and the mentee was in his mid to late twenties. The mentor was a social worker who was Director of a chronic pain program at a major rehabilitation center in western Michigan. The mentee was a physical therapist in the same facility. The position for a physical therapist on the pain team became available about six to eight months after the mentee began working at the rehabilitation center. The mentee was asked by the pain team collectively to join them in the pain program. The mentee was asked because he was potentially available and interested (the team didn't have many persons to choose from at the time), but also because the mentee demonstrated a concern for objectivity and seemed to function professionally within a behavioral perspective. The mentee was reluctant to join but as he learned more about the program he consented to join the pain team. Their relationship was described as growing from strictly professional to social and personal as well.

Pair #6b consisted of a female mentor and a male mentee. The mentor was in her mid to late thirties and the mentee in his early to mid thirties. The mentor was Chief of Physical Therapy at a major

eastern medical center. The mentee was a physical therapy student who sought help from the mentor for a class project. He was impressed with the mentor's being supportive and helpful. The mentee later affiliated at the mentor's facility as a physical therapy student and subsequently was asked to join the staff by the mentor. The mentee has followed in the mentor's footsteps as each has progressively moved along a career path in administration. The relationship was described as evolving from strictly professional to very personal as well.

Pair #6c consisted of a female mentor (the same mentor as in pair #6b) and a male mentee. The mentor was in her mid to late thirties and the mentee in his mid to late twenties. The mentor was Chief of Physical Therapy when the mentee affiliated in the department as a physical therapy student. The mentee interviewed for a staff position about a year later. The relationship began to flourish about four years after the mentee had joined the staff. By then the mentor had shifted positions two or three times and the two persons began to go to graduate school together. The mentor created positions to meet the mentee's unique set of skills and expertise. The relationship was described as evolving from strictly professional to a close personal relationship as well.

Pair #7a consisted of a female mentor and a female mentee. The mentor was in her mid to late thirties and the mentee in her mid to late twenties. The mentor was a new faculty member in a physical therapy curriculum in a major mid western university. This was the mentor's first academic experience. Prior to this she had worked in a clinical setting. The shift in settings coincided with a shift from



her serving in a religious order to serving as a lay person. The mentee was a new student in the physical therapy program. She entered the program with concerns about her ability to perform adequately because she had just completed a bout with encephalitis. Each person sought support from the other as the relationship began and grew. The relationship was described as evolving from a traditional student/faculty relationship to one of colleagues and friends.

Pair #7b consisted of a female mentor (same person as in #7a) and a female mentee. The mentor was in her mid to late thirties and the mentee was in her mid to late twenties. The mentor was a well established faculty member in a physical therapy program in a major midwestern university. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, she was responsible for coordinating clinical experiences for the students. The mentee was a physical therapy student. The mentor served as her advisor. They worked together on activities for a student club and later became close when the mentee's best friend became very ill. Their relationship was described as evolving from a traditional student/faculty relationship to that of friend/friend.

Pair #7c consisted of a female mentor (same mentor as in pairs #7a and 7b) and a female mentee. The mentor was in her mid to late thirties and the mentee in her early twenties. The mentor was serving her last year as a full time faculty member and clinical coordinator for a physical therapy program at a major midwestern university. The mentee was a physical therapy student in the program. The mentee knew her mentor just as a faculty member during her junior year. During her senior year, the relationship was described as evolving into more

than a student/faculty relationship. The mentee had a problem in relation to a university policy that was very personal and very upsetting. Together the mentor and mentee worked it through. The relationship evolved into a friend/friend type of relationship.

Pair #7d consisted of a female mentor and a female mentee (the mentee was some person who served as a mentor in pairs #7a, 7b, and 7c). The mentor was in her early to mid forties and the mentee was in her mid to late thirties. The mentor was an Assistant Professor and Chairperson for a department within the College of Education at a major midwestern university. The mentee was an Instructor in a physical therapy program at the same university. The mentor had asked for assistance from the physical therapy program to develop a series of medical lectures appropriate for College of Education students. The mentee was the person assigned to provide the assistance. Early on, the mentor sensed the mentee's frustrations and encouraged the mentee to pursue a doctoral degree. The mentee entered a doctoral program and the mentor served as her advisor. The mentee obtained her doctorate and now works with her mentor. The relationship was described as evolving from a strictly professional relationship to a close personal relationship.

Pair #8a consisted of a female mentor and a female mentee. The mentor was in her mid to late fifties and the mentee in her early to mid thirties. The mentor was Director of Physical Therapy in a southwestern Michigan general hospital. She also was serving as President of a professional voluntary organization. The mentee was a recent physical therapy graduate and working in a major rehabilitation

center. The mentee accompanied her boss to a meeting of the professional organization. The mentee observed the mentor in action and was impressed that the mentor went out of her way to talk with her. During the conversation, the mentee expressed an interest in becoming involved in the organization. The mentor immediately took the mentee up on the offer. Since that first meeting, the mentor and mentee have worked together within the professional organization. The relationship was described as evolving from a strictly professional relationship to one that was also social and personal.

Pair #8c consisted of a male mentor and a female mentee (same mentee as in pair #8a). The mentor was in his mid to late forties and the mentee in her early to mid thirties. The mentor was Director of Physical Therapy in a major rehabilitation center in the mid-west. The mentee was a student in a physical therapy program. The mentor taught electrotherapy to the mentee's class in her senior year. Later that year the mentee affiliated at the mentor's facility. Upon completing her affiliations, the mentee applied for a position in the mentor's department. He hired the mentee as a staff physical therapist. The relationship grew as the mentee was promoted to supervisor. When the mentee left the rehabilitation center, the relationship continued within the professional organization (which this mentor introduced the mentee to). The relationship was described as evolving from strictly professional to personal also.

Pair #8d consisted of a female mentor and a female mentee (the same mentee as in pairs #8a and 8c). Both the mentor and the mentee were in their early to mid thirties. The mentor was a clinical

supervisor in a physical therapy department in a major rehabilitation center. The mentee was a physical therapy student engaged in pre-clinical affiliations at the rehabilitation center. The mentor was the mentee's clinical supervisor. Upon completing her affiliations, the mentee joined the staff of the rehabilitation center. The mentor was her supervisor. The relationship evolved from student/teacher to employee/supervisor to colleagues, to friends to best friends.

Each vignette provided a description of study participant pairs and the circumstances in which their relationships began. Next, the major findings will be presented. These findings represent the characteristics and factors found in the mentor/mentee relationships as described by the study participants.

#### Overall Qualities of Mentor/Mentee Relationships

Several characteristics were identified that represent the overall qualities of the mentor/mentee relationships described by the study participants. The following characteristics were present in every mentor/mentee relationship:

1. Friendship
2. Professional and personal
3. Informal
4. Comfortable
5. Open
6. Accepting of differences
7. Trust
8. Commitment
9. Caring

10. Mutual sharing
11. Mutual respect
12. Mutual admiration
13. Mutual satisfaction
14. Compatibility

#### Mentor Characteristics

Several characteristics were found to be held in common by the mentors in this study. These included:

1. Willingness to enter the relationship
2. Willingness to give of themselves in the relationship
3. More advanced in career development than mentee
4. Self-confidence
5. Interdependence

#### Mentee Characteristics

Several characteristics were found to be held in common by the mentees in this study. These included:

1. Willingness to enter the relationship
2. Willingness to give of themselves in the relationship
3. Novice in career development in relation to mentor
4. Emulated mentor qualities

#### Factors Related to Development of Mentor/Mentee Relationships

Several factors related to the development of the mentor/mentee relationships were identified. These included:

1. The relationships began both intentionally and without intention.

2. The relationships began both spontaneously and gradually.
3. Mentors and mentees worked on tasks or problems together.
4. Mentors and mentees were in close proximity to each other.
5. Mentors and mentees spent time together.
6. Mentors and mentees interacted informally.
7. The relationships occurred within work and personal contexts and sometimes within a social context also.
8. The relationships progressed to a peak and subsided.
9. As mentor/mentee relationships terminated they shifted to another type of relationship.

#### Significance of Mentor/Mentee Relationships

The mentor/mentee relationships were found to be significant professionally and personally for both mentors and mentees.

Mentors described the professional significance of the relationships as related to:

1. Making career or position changes possible.
2. Intellectual stimulation.
3. Advice sought from or offered by mentees.
4. Mentees serving as sounding boards.

Mentees described the professional significance of the relationships as related to:

1. Gaining skills, knowledges and insights from mentors.
2. Intellectual stimulation.
3. Advice sought from or offered by mentors.

Mentors described the personal significance of the

relationships as related to:

1. Better understanding themselves.
2. Better understanding their feelings.
3. Gaining emotional support.
4. Receiving satisfaction from mentees' success.

Mentees described the personal significance of the relationships as related to:

1. Identifying career or life goals.
2. Gaining self-confidence.
3. Overcoming insecurities.
4. Gaining emotional support.

The findings reported reflect the various types of significance described by the study participants. Though all study participants reported many of the types of significance, both professional and personal, not all of them reported all of the types of significance reported in these findings.

Table 3 summarizes the findings that characterize the overall qualities of mentor/mentee relationships, the mentors, the mentees, the development and the significance of the relationships as described by the study participants.

#### A Detailed Description of a Mentor/Mentee Pair

A detailed description of one mentor/mentee relationship described in this study will now be presented. This case study represents the major findings from the interviews with the fourteen mentor/mentee pairs.

TABLE 3  
Summary of Characteristics and Factors Found in Mentor/Mentee Relationships as Described by Study Participants

Overall Qualities of Mentor/Mentee Relationships	Mentor Characteristics	Mentee Characteristics	Factors Related to the Development of Mentor/Mentee Relationships	Significance	
				Mentors	Mentees
Friendship Professional/Personal Informal Comfortable Open Accepting of differences Trust Commitment Caring Mutual sharing Mutual respect Mutual admiration Mutual satisfaction Compatibility --similar personalities --similar interests --similar values --similar expectations --similar backgrounds --complimentary differences	Willingness to enter relationship --approachable --available --lower barriers Willingness to give of self --act in mentee's behalf --supportive --nurturing --share expertise, experience and insights More advanced in career development than mentee Self-confidence --not threatened by mentee Interdependence --sharing --exchange --value mentee's opinions --mutuality	Willingness to enter relationship --receptive to advice and teaching --seek advice and counsel Willingness to give of self --listen --express opinions --provide feedback Novice in career development in relation to mentor Emulate mentor qualities	May or may not be intentional Spontaneous or gradual Work on tasks or problems together Close in proximity Amounts of time spent together Informal interactions Occur within work and personal contexts and sometimes social context Progresses to peak and subsides Shifts to another type of relationship	Professional Make career or position changes possible Intellectual stimulation Advice from mentees Sounding board ----- Personal Better understand self Better understand feelings Emotional support Satisfaction from mentee's success	Professional Gain skills, knowledge, insights Intellectual stimulation Advice from mentors ----- Personal Identify career and/or life goals Gain self-confidence Overcome insecurities Emotional support



Taylor Moore graduated from Law School at Wayne State University in June of 1969. His first job following graduation from law school was serving on the administrative staff for the dean of WSU Law School. He held this position for about one year when he decided to return to Flint with his new wife. Taylor had grown up in Flint and his parents continued to reside there. Taylor's father was the managing editor of the Flint Journal (the only major newspaper in town) which had contributed to Taylor's familiarity with Flint and the persons who comprised the community. Taylor had decided to use his law expertise in the area of banking. In 1970, he applied for a position as a trust administrator at Genesee Bank in downtown Flint, Michigan.

Ernest Fife was the Vice-President and Senior Trust Officer who managed the trust department on the 12th floor of the Genesee Bank Towers. He was between six and fifteen years senior to Taylor. Ernie's family had been very prominent within the Flint Community. The Fife family roots in Flint go back to the founders of General Motors. The Fife family has owned a considerable amount of real estate and its members have been among the outstanding community leaders in Flint. Ernie interviewed Taylor and hired him as a trust administrator to work under him in the trust department.

Ernie described his initial relationship with Taylor as similar to that he had with a half-dozen others. Taylor was given the same routine tasks according to Ernie that any law graduate from Wayne State University would assume. However, from very early on, Taylor stood out from the rest. His particular personality and demonstration

of initiative singled him out from the others. Ernie described Taylor as, "My kind of person." Ernie stated he was attracted to the "Type A" qualities in Taylor. Ernie described Taylor as a person who works very hard to achieve a goal. Taylor "takes risks," "takes the initiative" and is "willing to go out on a limb." "I happen to like people who take initiative." Ernie also described Taylor as a person who was "willing to accept greater degrees of responsibility," who showed "commitment" and "consistently performed well." "What he does, he does correctly." Ernie summed up his description of Taylor's qualities with, "Taylor always delivers."

Concurrently, Taylor was impressed with Ernie. Taylor stated he accepted Ernie soon after beginning his work at the bank because of his intellect and success. Taylor appreciated early in his relationship with Ernie that Ernie possessed qualities that he wished to develop. He was somewhat in awe of Ernie's photographic memory and impressed with Ernie's "amazing capacity to synthesize information." In addition to Ernie's intellect, Taylor sought to emulate Ernie's work ethic and effectiveness as a manager. The very qualities that attracted Taylor to Ernie seemed from Taylor's observation, to intimidate other persons. Taylor credited Ernie's keen intellect and their shared work ethic as key elements that contributed to the relationship's development.

Taylor described his relationship with Ernie as comfortable from its beginning. Taylor said, "I never felt like only an employee or a low employee. He treated me well." (As an aside, Taylor had had a negative work experience prior to joining the bank.)

Not long after Taylor joined the trust department, Taylor and Ernie began to engage in what Taylor called "barbed humor." Taylor had graduated from Michigan State University as an undergraduate and Ernie was a graduate of the University of Michigan. Together they began a fun pep rally between the rival schools which involved all of the staff in the trust department. Ernie described the rally as an event all the staff enjoyed and as effective in reducing tensions among the staff. The rally continues to be an annual event ten years later.

A year or two after Taylor joined the bank, Ernie had his trust administrators participate in a career path exercise. Up to this point, Ernie was attracted to Taylor and impressed with his track record. But, Taylor's response to the career path exercise added to Ernie's regard for Taylor. Taylor had set high goals for himself and again showed the qualities of risk taking and initiative that had caught Ernie's attention from the beginning.

About this same time it seems, Taylor realized he was being singled out by Ernie. He felt as though he was being groomed. Taylor said, "Ernie identified me as someone he could work with. He tutored me, not openly but as a hidden agenda." Taylor felt as though Ernie was putting "special efforts" into him. Increasingly, Taylor and Ernie spent more and more time together. Ernie began to invite Taylor to participate with him in activities outside of the bank but related to bank business. The time they spent traveling together to make public appearances, for example, allowed them ample opportunity for informal discussions. Both Taylor and Ernie commented on the amount

of time they spent talking with each other informally. Ernie stated he offered challenges for Taylor he would not have offered unless he had seen a future for Taylor at the bank. Ernie sensed a willingness on Taylor's part to be trained and Ernie was willing to train him. About this Ernie said, "Taylor was willing to train and the more he was willing to train, the more I was willing to work him." Ernie's grooming of Taylor was also what Ernie considered a responsibility as a manager. "One of my prime responsibilities is to make sure the place will run when I'm not here." Taylor perceived this same sense of responsibility and concurred with Ernie when he said, "Ernie believes as I think is appropriate, the first job of a manager is to find a replacement."

Prior to feeling singled out, Taylor had become aware of Ernie's methods of evaluating members of the trust department staff through what Taylor described as "sneak testing." Taylor stated he "looked out for the torpedos" from early on and rarely got caught by one. His colleagues were not always so lucky. In fact, Taylor wondered if maybe some really capable persons hadn't left the department out of fear and frustration due to Ernie's sneaky tactics. At any rate, Taylor did not regard Ernie's sneak testing as an appropriate means of evaluation nor as a very appropriate way for managing persons. Taylor discussed his disapproval of the sneak testing openly with Ernie. This type of open, frank discussion did not seem to hinder their relationship in any way. Both Ernie and Taylor talked about how they tolerated differences in each other. As Ernie said, the differences, ". . .in no way upset the relationship." "We were

able to be open without it in any way affecting the day to day operation."

As the relationship grew, the mutual trust and respect grew. Soon the openness and frankness led to a quality of confidentiality. Ernie commented that he could share "privy info" with Taylor and know it would be handled appropriately. "It never came home to roost. I felt I could trust him as much as he thought he could trust me."

Five years after Taylor joined the trust department Ernie recommended that Taylor be promoted to Vice-President and Senior Trust Officer. Taylor was promoted and Ernie moved to the position of Senior Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer. Ernie recommended Taylor's promotion to the head of the trust department even though Taylor was junior to other persons considered for the position. Taylor was given the promotion because he demonstrated the qualities associated with the traditional work ethic of working hard--overtime if necessary, taking risks, taking the initiative, accepting responsibility and consistently performing well. Delivering on the performance was the key factor in Ernie's decision to recommend a promotion for Taylor.

Ernie described another man who began working in the trust department before Taylor. Ernie indicated the man was actually on a better track for being promoted than Taylor because his responsibilities demanded that he work more closely with Ernie than Taylor's did. This man had also been groomed by Ernie and given many opportunities to grow just as Taylor had been given. A relationship existed between the other man and Ernie that was similar to that between him and Taylor

in the beginning. But, as Ernie put it, ". . .he didn't produce." The other man did not live up to Ernie's expectations for performance. The other man was passed over for the promotion and eventually resigned to go elsewhere.

As Ernie groomed Taylor and the other man, he was genuinely concerned about leaving his clientele who he had worked with for the past twelve years with another less experienced person. He had been reluctant to make a move within the bank because of his ethical concerns for properly serving the bank clientele requiring the trust department's services. He wanted to be certain that his clients would continue to be served in a manner he felt they were worthy of. Taylor was a person he felt he could trust with his clientele. He had increasingly come to value Taylor's opinion and on occasion sought Taylor's advice. He felt confident that Taylor could manage the position most ably.

Taylor's ability to assume Ernie's position made it possible for Ernie to move to another position in the organization. This was important to Ernie because he was beginning to feel stale and tired as Vice-President and Senior Trust Officer. He had been in the trust department for twelve years and felt a need for a change. Taylor represented Ernie's ticket out of the trust department by making Ernie available for a move to another position.

The relationship between Taylor and Ernie did not go unnoticed by the other staff. After Taylor was promoted to assume Ernie's duties and Ernie "moved downstairs," a man who worked with Ernie discussed Taylor's relationship with Ernie with another man. Taylor

related the man as asking how Taylor had,

worked the relationship out. How did he learn to live with Ernie." Taylor went on to say, "The reason I mention that is I gather that the individual downstairs had identified that there was a unique kind of relationship there that he had not been able to establish. He wanted to know how to work it out. So that, I guess what I'm suggesting is that not having a label to attach to it such as mentor/mentee relationship the fact that some kind of unique relationship existed was perceived by others.

Ernie has continued to serve in what both he and Taylor consider a mentor's role but perhaps to a lesser degree than when Taylor was being groomed to assume Ernie's position. When Taylor was promoted, he joined the management committee that is primarily responsible for banking operations. On the committee both he and Ernie have equal votes and are equals within the organizational structure. The relationship has evolved according to Taylor from a primarily one way relationship in which he was the student and Ernie the instructor to a two-way relationship in terms of helping each other. More and more Ernie seeks advice from Taylor as much as Taylor seeks it from Ernie. But, Taylor still regards Ernie in a mentor's role.

Ernie continues to provide privileged information to Taylor to help minimize Taylor's isolation on the twelfth floor. (Taylor is the only member of the management committee who's office is on the twelfth floor. The other committee members have offices on the first floor of the bank.) Ernie expressed how he keeps Taylor apprised of the bank's business when he said,

I'm not at all afraid to deal with information that maybe (Person's Name) who is the CEO is not ready to give him.

I will give to him knowing that I have complete confidence that it will sit until the time is right which may come and may never come.

Ernie commented that Taylor could understand why he couldn't talk about certain things and he never pushed. Ernie said he interacts more with Taylor than any other member of the management committee. His relationship with Taylor continues to be significant for him because Taylor's continued success allows Ernie to consider retirement with what he describes as "a clean conscience." Although Taylor has successfully followed in Ernie's footsteps, Ernie has not at anytime felt frightened or threatened by Taylor.

The fact that he might want my job was not a threat. I thought he might not be too swift because he might not know what he was buying into but, if he wanted it, he should sure have it . . . I was receptive and the quality I might have brought was my own self-confidence.

Taylor has continued to function successfully in his position as Vice-President and Senior Trust Officer. Taylor attributes much of his success to Ernie. "(Ernie) identified for me how to succeed." Ernie has been and continues to be a role model for Taylor. As Taylor reflects upon his relationship with Ernie, he can identify how he has conformed to some degree to both Ernie's work habits and personality. Prior to his working with Ernie, Taylor would not have characterized himself as a "driver-driver type." Taylor felt the tendency was probably there to be a driver-driver but that it was his exposure to Ernie that made those qualities surface and develop within himself.

Both Taylor and Ernie regarded each other as friends but not social friends. Both expressed their belief that they should separate work from social relationships. All of their interactions occurred



within their work context. On occasion they went to basketball games together or to an office party. But, the social activities they engaged in were always in the context of their work. They took clients to a basketball game or hosted a party for the staff. Taylor and Ernie did not socialize just to socialize. Taylor described the context of their friendship when he said,

So, I guess what I'm saying is, I don't say that we don't have a social friendship because we couldn't have one. We don't have one because there has never been any effort made to establish one.

Later he said,

I'm concerned about his welfare like you would be for a friend. I suspect after he retires--OK that if I was in the same state he was, I would go visit him. We would become social friends if we weren't working together. The material for a social friendship is there but it isn't being utilized. And, it isn't being utilized by design.

As Taylor and Ernie each thought about their relationship, they noted how their personalities were compatible and how their philosophies fit. The relationship was close with mutual respect, mutual trust and mutual caring as expressed by their concern for each other. Ernie captured the uniqueness of their relationship as he described different types of relationships that might occur in a work setting. Some he likened to buying and selling a product. The mentee would attempt to sell his product to a mentor and if a better product came long, "so what." He went on to say,

In the relationship between Taylor and myself there is no price. If somebody else were to come along and do--perform better than Taylor, and I were to develop a relationship with that person--there is no price. I have no problem going to Taylor and sitting down and saying 'eh you know you and I have been together for a goodly number of years and we've always been open, and I'm going to continue to

be open. And, even though I know I'm taking a risk at this, I want you to understand that in my relationship with Jim that he's doing some things that you really aren't doing and that's significant to me. You just need to understand and we need to talk about it to make sure we're all together.' If you bought in--if you get a better deal you get a better deal. Trade in the old model for the new. So you don't really have a relationship. But you have a purchase and sale. And in the sense of the word, it's the difference between living with a person and marrying him. There's a commitment . . . . It has to happen. It can't be intentional, arranged in that sense.

Taylor doesn't expect Ernie to be his mentor forever. But, he intends to take advantage of his opportunity to work with Ernie. Taylor likes being with Ernie and appreciates what he still can learn from him. Ernie doesn't expect to be Taylor's mentor forever either. He implies a shift in the relationship as he contemplates retirement. Taylor looks forward to their being "good friends" someday.

This detailed description of a mentor/mentee relationship represents the major findings of this study. It illustrates the roles, the qualities, the meaning of the relationships and the manner in which they develop. Next, the variations of these findings are presented.

### Variations in Findings

Many of the findings were consistent for all mentor/mentee pairs interviewed. Some findings varied from pair to pair. The most significant variations in findings will be presented. Partial descriptions of specific mentor/mentee relationships will be used to illustrate the variations.

### Spontaneous Versus Gradual Beginnings

A few of the relationships of the mentor/mentee pairs were described as more spontaneous in their beginnings than was the relationship between Taylor and Ernie. For example, pair #1, the university professor and the graduate assistant, described an immediate liking for each other. During the mentee's interview for the graduate assistant position, he was immediately impressed with the mentor's questions and described the encounter as spontaneous and like "magic." The mentor also responded to the first encounter very positively. She comments, "I knew right away he was person for job." As she put it, there was a, "Chemistry that was pretty good."

Other relationships began more gradually than the one between Taylor and Ernie. The mentor and mentee pair #6c had worked together in a major eastern medical and rehabilitation center about 3-4 years before the mentor said she began to pay more attention to the mentee. She was drawn to him because of good reports she was receiving on his performance. When the mentee first joined the mentor's staff as a physical therapist, he told the mentor he would only be a physical therapist for awhile and then planned to retire early to be with his family and be more actively involved in his community. This did not fit the mentor's role expectations. The mentee wasn't demonstrating a commitment to his profession. The mentor reported that the mentee eventually changed his attitude toward his profession. She now describes him as very committed to his profession. The mentee concurred that his attitude had changed. As he related how his relationship and that of another mentee had started with the mentor, he stated that

initially the opportunity for the relationship had been extended to many persons. But he and the other mentee were willing to take advantage of it. In addition, he stated both himself and the other mentee made a greater commitment to the mentor's standards of practice. This the mentee said, "made a difference."

The mentor/mentee relationship began about 1-2 years after the mentor had first begun to pay special notice to the mentee. At that time, the mentor and mentee began to attend graduate school together. They traveled back and forth by car 1 1/2 hours per week. The travel enabled them to talk at length in an informal manner. Out of these conversations, they both state a very close relationship evolved.

#### Following in Footsteps of Mentor

Not all mentees followed in their mentors' footsteps as Taylor did in Ernie's. The mentee in pair #6c chose a very different career path from his mentor. Although the mentee worked closely with the mentor, the mentee chose a career path focusing on education instead of a career path in administration as his mentor had chosen. In fact, the mentor created a special position for the mentee to allow him to utilize his special set of skills and expertise. The mentor quoted herself as saying to the mentee, "Why don't you want to do what I've done?" The mentor described the mentee's decision to not follow in her footsteps as a bit distressing.

#### Compatibility-Complimentary Differences

Each of the mentors and mentees within the pairs had many qualities and interests in common. Some pairs, however, were

compatible because they were complimentary rather than similar. Pair #6c demonstrated how extreme differences made each person compatible with the other. The mentee summarized their differences as:

<u>Mentor</u>	<u>Mentee</u>
Systematic	Intuitive
Variable	Consistent
Political	Principled
Interdependent	Independent

These differences, the mentee said, were valued by both himself and the mentor. These differences contributed to their functioning as what he called, "a very successful team." He believed the complimentary qualities contributed to their joint productivity. He didn't feel either person could be as successful singly as the two of them were jointly.

#### Intentional Versus Unintentional Relationships

The mentors in several of the pairs intentionally groomed their mentees as Ernie groomed Taylor. However, this was not true for all of the mentor/mentee pairs interviewed. The mentors in both pairs #3 and #5 had not thought of themselves as mentors to the mentees until they were asked to participate in the study.

The mentor and mentee in pair #3 were both lawyers working in the same law firm. As stated earlier the mentee was assisted in his first trial by the mentor and subsequently counseled and advised by the mentor on how to manage his cases. The mentor was described as, from the beginning, treating the mentee as a member of the law firm and as an "adult human" unlike other senior partners in the law firm.

The mentor described himself as serving as an intermediary between the old partners and the mentee. He was willing to spend a lot of time with the mentee discussing cases and law firm business.

Although the mentee regarded the mentor as his mentor, the mentor was surprised to learn he was regarded as a mentor to the mentee. The mentor stated that he didn't regard himself as a mentor because he didn't feel he had educated the mentee much. He went on to say that he seriously questioned having had any impact of significance on anybody.

The mentee suggested that the mentor might not perceive himself as the mentee's mentor. He said this was because most persons thought another senior partner in the law firm was his mentor. The mentee indicated he spent a lot more time with the other senior law partner and that he was given more cases by him to handle than by his mentor. However, in addition to his mentor "exemplifying the best," being accessible and being his teacher, the mentee said, "I would like to be more like (Mentor)."

The mentee sought to emulate not only the skills and expertise of his mentor but his "human" qualities as well. The other senior law partner who was brilliant and regarded as the mentee's mentor was not "a lot of human being" like the man the mentee regarded as his mentor.

The social worker (mentor for pair #5) who directed a chronic pain program had also not thought of himself as a mentor to the man who served as the physical therapist on the pain program team prior to participating in the study. He had not groomed the mentee in an organized fashion although as he reflected on the relationship he

realized he had involved the mentee in more and more projects. He had even talked with the mentee informally about the possibility of the mentee assuming the directorship of the program someday. He had, however, regarded his relationship with the mentee as different from that he had with other team members. Although the director had worked with the other team members over a longer period of time (3-4 years) as compared to the mentee (2 years), the mentor stated he was closer to the mentee than to any of the other team members. He attributed this special closeness to their "personalities clicking in a unique way." He also stated the personal closeness and mutual interest in each other were key factors that distinguished this relationship from those with other team members.

#### Contexts of Relationships

All of the mentor/mentee relationships were described as occurring within work and personal contexts. Some of the relationships were also described as occurring within a social context.

The mentor in pair #5 described his relationship with the mentee as one of friendship. At work, they sought each other out for lunch. He didn't regard themselves as socially close nor best personal friends but good friends at work who occasionally did things together socially. The mentor commented that the social aspect of the relationship was comfortable and growing but that it was not the basis of the relationship. He stated that he attempts to keep work and personal lives separate and that he tends to talk about work with the mentee even when they are in social situations. However, he stated, his relationship with the mentee had more of a mix of the social and

work along with a "personal interest" than did his relationships with any of the other team members.

The mentee described the relationship as one that has grown from strictly professional to social as well. He described his feeling toward his mentor as a, "strong feeling of friendship." The mentee also commented that the social aspect of the relationship was growing. Increasingly, he said they were engaging in social activities that were not only work related but separate from the work situation. In the past, they had played on the hospital softball team together. Now they played racquetball weekly and occasionally went out to listen to local musicians on the weekend. The mentee noted that he and his mentor were concerned about each other as persons both at work and away from work. He also noted that increasingly they were becoming concerned and interested in the other significant persons in each other's lives.

#### Shift to Another Type of Relationship-- A Stormy Transition

Typically, the mentor/mentee pairs interviewed for this study either anticipated or were in the process of making a smooth transition from the mentor/mentee relationship to another type of relationship that they described as "more personal than professional," "more social than professional," as "close colleagues" or as "good friends." One of the mentor/mentee pairs, however, who was in the process of making the transition at the time of the interview illustrated a somewhat stormy transition.

The mentor had been Chief of Physical Therapy Services at a



major medical and rehabilitation center in the eastern United States. The mentee had affiliated at the facility as a physical therapy student. The mentor offered him a position on the staff when he graduated. The mentor subsequently made a number of moves within the medical center from Chief of Physical Therapy Services to the Associate Director of the Multipurpose Arthritis Center. Her position changes moved her from clinical practice as a physical therapist to a full-time administrative role. Concurrently, as the mentor made position changes, she promoted the mentee to fill the positions she was leaving. Often the mentee was promoted over other persons who had had more experience than the mentee.

The relationship had begun nine years previously. Within the first year, the mentor and mentee began to spend a lot of time talking together about work, their profession and life in general. The mentee held the mentor in high regard and truly appreciated her for her clinical expertise, and the support and encouragement she provided for him. He stated, "I would spend as much time with her as I could." In turn, the mentor said:

(I) liked what he (mentee) represented, what he was doing, the respect that the department was gaining, that I didn't have to maintain, that I was watching him maintain. I started looking for staff members who brought the same professionalism to the job. And even though they brought that characteristic, they didn't bring the something that (Mentee) or between us that made me want to give of myself as I did to (Mentee).

The mentor and mentee worked closely together for eight years. They shared a commitment to their profession and the same high standards of practice. Both commented on how they worked as a team. They were responsible for the rehabilitation programs both within the

medical center and for those that were part of outreach efforts within the community. The mentor sold the program and the mentee delivered the program.

During their separate interviews, they each described the relationship as "professional and personal" with a social aspect as well. The mentor described the personal aspect of the relationship as, "knowing what each other is going through personally or in relationships." The mentor stated it was hard to separate the personal and professional aspects of the relationship because she knew the mentee so well and yet there were times when the work situation demanded the separation be made. She commented, "I have to really fight with myself knowing (Mentee's) weaknesses, not to capitalize on those. Knowing from a communications point of view, I can overwhelm him."

In addition to following in the mentor's footsteps within the medical center, the mentee was also following a similar track to that of the mentor within a professional organization. They both had served in similar or identical positions within the state organization and within a national special interest group. At the time of the interview, the mentee had assumed the presidency of the state organization. For the first time, the mentee was in a delegatory position in relation to the mentor. Up to this point, the mentor had been senior to the mentee or the two had functioned as equals. Both the mentor and the mentee commented on the mentor's competitive response to the shift in roles. The two of them had talked about it and they were both surprised by it.

At the time of the interview, the mentor had moved to a new

position she had created for herself and the mentee had assumed her previous position. The mentee reported that his mentor had created positions for herself like this several times and had as a result "paved the way" for him.

The mentor was at this point concerned about the mentee being closely identified with the mentor both in terms of his career track within the medical center and within the professional organization. She believed the mentee's pursuit of similar activities to her's within the professional organization were wrong for him. She was actively supporting and encouraging the mentee to engage in activities that were in no way related to her. She didn't want to see him fail.

After the most recent change in positions, the mentor was physically removed from the mentee and responsible for a program only peripherally related to the rehabilitation services. The mentee, according to the mentor, continued to contact the mentor on almost a daily basis. The mentor stated she sensed that although the mentee sought her counsel that he was not as receptive to her teaching. The mentor stated, "I still have a tendency to promote teacher role and (Mentee) resists it. He doesn't want to be taught anymore--he wants to be respected for what he does."

Concurrent with the mentor's move away from the mentee and the mentee's being appointed to her previous position, a second mentee to the mentor was playing a greater and greater role in the mentor's life. Although the relationship between the mentor and second mentee had existed for a year or two, it was now intensifying. Many of the "confidential" conversations saved exclusively in the past for the

first mentee were now being shared with the second mentee either exclusively or in addition to the first mentee. The first mentee reported he began to feel some isolation.

The mentor anticipated a change in the relationship from mentor/mentee to another type of relationship when she was to move out of the rehabilitation services and the mentee was to become Administrative Director of the rehabilitation services. The mentee reported that the mentor predicted to him that the relationship would fall apart prior to their position changes. The mentee, however, intended to continue seeking support of the mentor even if they no longer were going to be close physically or operationally. Just prior to the position changes the mentee quoted his mentor as saying, "Well (Mentee) this is it. We are now on an even-keel. I'm no longer your mentor. I have brought you as far as I can. I think that you need to stand on your own." The conversation that accompanied this statement from the mentor revolved around terminating the relationship. The mentee said he perceived it as simultaneously representing a "new horizon and a wake." The mentee said he has never felt satisfied with the abrupt termination of the mentor/mentee relationship. The mentee didn't feel as though he could just suddenly end the relationship as it had existed. He was willing to accept a change but not so drastic a change.

The mentee stated he feels a big void both for himself and for the mentor. He regards the termination as resulting in a mutual loss of support which he believes both he and his mentor especially needed during their position changes. The mentee was feeling uncomfortable

about assuming the mentor's position and firmly establishing his own identity. For the first time, he was going to be supervising the "other" mentee part of the time. The mentee was also going to be faced with handling all aspects of the service without the mentor close at hand. Concurrently, the mentor he thought was feeling a bit reticent about leaving the rehabilitation service. She had built it up from nothing to a very prestigious rehabilitation center and now she was leaving it behind.

The mentee was especially upset because he felt as though when he was finally in a position to reciprocate his mentor's help by helping her with her struggles related to changes in her professional identity, that he was being denied the opportunity to do so. He felt guilty and inadequate because his mentor was seeking counsel from persons other than himself. He felt as though she had given him a mixed message. On the one hand she said it was over, but on the other she seemed to look forward to talking with him. The mentee reported that if he didn't contact her on a regular basis his mentor would inquire as to why she hadn't heard from him. For the mentee, it was difficult he said to separate the professional and personal aspects of the relationship. He said, "I regarded her as I would a family member and she placed guilt on me as a family member would. She cashed in her chips so to speak."

In spite of the changes in the relationship, the mentee stated his feelings toward the mentor are basically unchanged. He describes those feelings as somewhere between parenting and love, "probably closer to parenting than marriage. I feel alot of the same feelings--

hurt--as you would in marriage, but not romantic. I feel with her." The mentor states she continues to care for the mentee a great deal and wants to see him succeed. She views their relationship as more collegial now and as one in which they help each other.

The demographic characteristics, the summary of the major findings and the detailed accounts of mentor/mentee relationships have been presented in an effort to describe the main characteristics of the relationships and also to convey a holistic appreciation for the relationships. One case study and parts of others were selected for presentation to illustrate the major findings that emerged from analysis of all the mentor/mentee pairs interviewed.

#### Summary and Discussion of Mentor/Mentee Relationship Findings

The findings of this study based on demographic information and personal interviews with mentor/mentee pairs engaged in or preparing for professional roles have been presented. This section will include a discussion of the demographic characteristics summarized in Tables 1 and 2 and discussion of the overall qualities of mentor/mentee relationships; mentor characteristics; mentee characteristics; factors related to the development of mentor/mentee relationships; and significance of mentor/mentee relationships as described by the study participants and summarized in Table 3.

#### Discussion--Demographic Characteristics

The demographic information summarized in Table 1 tends to support Levinson's (1978) observation that mentors are typically 8-15 years older than mentees. Levinson (1978) also suggests that persons

need to be mentored to become mentors. All of the mentors in this study except one had had mentors themselves.

It is interesting to note in Table 2 that female mentors had twice as many mentees as male mentors and that female mentees reported having mentees while male mentees reported having no mentees. This study did not address this finding but many factors might account for the difference.

#### Discussion--Overall Qualities of Mentor/Mentee Relationships

The overall qualities that were consistently found to characterize the relationships of the mentor/mentee pairs in this study are summarized in Column 1 of Table 3.

The qualities of "friendship," "professional/personal," "informal," "mutual sharing," "mutual respect," "mutual admiration" and "mutual satisfaction" will be discussed later in this chapter in conjunction with other findings.

The "compatibility" between mentors and mentees seemed to be responsible for both attracting mentors and mentees to each other and for fostering the continuation of the relationships. The compatibility resulted from having similar personalities, interests, values, expectations or backgrounds. Although it wasn't true for every mentor/mentee pair in this study, it was not uncommon for mentor/mentee pairs to share similar personality traits, similar career interests, similar interests unrelated to their careers, similar values and similar expectations for themselves and others.

In a few instances, compatibility resulted not only from

similarities but from complimentary personalities and interests.

Together the mentor's and mentee's personality traits combined to make them an effective team. On a few occasions a personality trait of one member of the pair was perceived as a weakness by the other. But, the weakness often added to the purpose of the relationship or helped to foster growth in the other member of the pair. Although compatibility did result from the complimentary nature of the differences between some mentors and mentees, these pairs still held values and other interests in common.

The characteristic of compatibility combined with the mentors' and mentees' willingness to give of themselves in a relationship seems to be the basis for "commitment," "trust," "openness," "acceptance of differences" and "caring" that also were found to characterize mentor/mentee relationships in this study. The "commitment" between the members of mentor/mentee pairs was expressed as time, effort and energy expended in each other's behalf. The pairs frequently referred to their relationships as investments. The commitment was also expressed as a concern for each other even in anticipation of their roles changing and the mentor/mentee relationship between them ending. "Trust" of each other was expressed by their willingness to share confidential information or inner thoughts or opinions with each other. All of the mentor/mentee pairs described their relationships as "open." Each member of the pair stated he/she felt comfortable talking with the other. The mentor/mentee pairs stated they didn't hesitate to share their views with each other. Many of the pairs described how they were "accepting" of each other's different points of view. The



differences of opinion or differences in management strategies cited by the study participants were reported as not making any difference to the relationship or how each regarded the other. All these qualities seemed to result in mentors and mentees "caring" for each other beyond just the work situation or career context. The mentor/mentee pairs expressed their caring for each other by describing their relationships as "warm," "caring," "personal," "close," "loving" or "special." Their concern for each other was expressed as extending beyond the work situation or career context.

#### Discussion--Mentor Characteristics

The characteristics consistently found among the mentors in this study are summarized in Column 2 of Table 3. The "willingness" of mentors to enter the relationships was described as their being "approachable," "available" and "lowering barriers of status." Although the willingness was perceived by the mentees, mentors did not necessarily enter the relationships intentionally.

Mentors demonstrated their "willingness to give of themselves" by acting in behalf of the mentees. Mentors were described as "paving the way," "tooting their (mentee's) horns," or otherwise helping mentees prepare for their careers or advance within their careers. The mentees commented on the support and encouragement they received from their mentors. The mentees felt as though the mentors cared about them as people and were willing to help them grow.

All of the mentors in this study were described as "more experienced" or more advanced in their career development than the mentees at the time the relationships began. This did not necessarily

imply that a mentor was a mentee's direct supervisor or that the mentor was appreciably older than the mentee. The mentor was, however, in a higher level of authority and further along in career development. Because the mentors had progressed further than the mentees in their careers, they had experiences, expertise and insights to share with the mentees that were considered valuable by the mentees. Although none of the study participants made reference to their mentors' credibility, The Woodland's Group (1980) suggests that if a mentor does not have more experience and insight than the mentee, the mentor's advice might not be considered credible or valid by the mentee. Because the mentors were in higher levels of authority, they were able to take actions that resulted in themselves and mentees working together and/or that helped the mentees progress along a career track. In this study, all of the mentors selected or actively sought out the mentees to fill a position, work on a special project or assist in handling a specific problem.

The quality of "self-confidence" seemed to allow a mentor to nurture a mentee without feeling threatened or competitive with the mentee. Both mentees and mentors mentioned that mentors could foster and enjoy mentee success with no feeling of threat. It seemed that the self-confidence enabled the mentors to interact with mentees in a manner that was beyond themselves. The mentors' actions were often not in response to immediate personal concerns or needs. Instead the mentors' self-confidence seemed to enable them to act unselfishly in the mentees' behalf. Frequently, mentors were credited with helping mentees gain self-confidence. It seemed to be important for mentors

to be self-confident themselves in order to help another person gain self-confidence. The mentees sensed the quality of self-confidence in their mentors and were attracted to the mentors in part because of it.

Closely linked to the quality of self-confidence was the characteristic of "interdependence" that was found to be common to all mentors in this study. The mentors were comfortable relating to other persons in a mutual manner regardless of similar or different levels of status, authority or roles. The mentors' high level of self-confidence may well have contributed to the characteristic of interdependence. The ability to trust also seems to be implicit in the quality of interdependence. The quality of interdependence was expressed by both mentors and mentees as they described how they functioned as a "team." It was also described in accounts of "mutual exchange" and "mutual sharing."

#### Discussion--Mentee Characteristics

The characteristics consistently found among the mentees in this study are summarized in Column 3 of Table 3.

The characteristic of the mentees being "less experienced" or novice to the mentors in career development resulted in the relationships beginning as sets of relationships (i.e., supervisor/employee, teacher/student, senior/junior) in which the mentor assumed a more senior role in relation to the mentee. The mentees seemed to allow themselves to be dependent upon the mentors initially as they learned the ropes and established themselves within their careers. The dependence could be characterized as "leaning" on the mentors or

looking to the mentors to show the way. The mentees placed themselves in a learner or student role in relation to the mentor and allowed themselves to be taught and guided. The element of dependency, however, gradually lessened until the mentees were demonstrating interdependence with their mentors.

The compatibility between mentors and mentees in conjunction with the mentors being more advanced in career development seemed to be the basis for the mentees desiring to "emulate" their mentors. The mentees sought to strengthen personality traits, strengthen skills or strive for similar goals that they perceived in their mentors. Some of the mentees in connection with their comments on emulating their mentors stated their mentors not only represented types of persons, skills or accomplishments they sought to emulate but that the personality traits, skills and accomplishments the mentors represented were perceived as attainable by the mentees. It seems persons do not choose to emulate others who exemplify qualities or accomplishments deemed beyond reach by the person desiring to emulate them.

#### Discussion--Factors Related to the Development of Mentor/Mentee Relationships

The factors consistently characterizing the development of mentor/mentee relationships as described in this study are summarized in Column 4 of Table 3.

The findings from this study provide a basis for describing three contexts in which mentor/mentee relationships occur. The three contexts can be described as:

1. Work context in which mentor/mentee pairs are engaged together in activities that are task or problem-oriented.
2. Social context in which mentor/mentee pairs are engaged together in activities that are entertaining or non-task oriented.
3. Personal context in which mentor/mentee pairs care for each other as a person beyond the context of a work or social role.

The mentor/mentee pairs in this study described the beginnings of their relationships as focusing on tasks or problems that were of mutual interest or concern. At this stage the relationships were described as strictly "professional" and occurred only within a work context. However, although the relationships were beginning, they were not regarded as mentor/mentee relationships at this stage.

Relationships were then described as evolving from an exclusive focus on only the work context to include some "social" elements in the work context. The social element was closely related to the work context and was often described as occurring only because of a necessity related to work (i.e., taking out clients) or because the work setting sponsored a social event.

The relationships were then described as evolving to include the "personal" context. At this stage, the relationships occurred within both the work context and the personal context. The relationships continued to focus on tasks or problems but the persons engaged in the relationships also cared for each other as persons beyond the work context. At this stage, the relationships were finally regarded

as mentor/mentee relationships.

Depending on the philosophies of the mentors and mentees about mixing business with pleasure, some of the mentor/mentee relationships evolved to a stage in which they occurred within all three contexts; work, personal and social.

The intensity of the relationships seemed to vary over time and within the contexts in which they occurred. The relationships seemed to become more intense when the mentors and mentees spent greater "amounts of time together" within either the work or social contexts. Over time the mentors and mentees described greater amounts of time spent in "informal" interactions. The informal interactions seemed to foster the development of the relationships within the personal context. The intensity of the personal context varied considerably. For some, the personal context was described as "caring" while for others it was described as "love." The amount of time spent together seemed to relate to the proximity of mentors and mentees to each other. "Close proximity" seemed to relate to fostering the development of the relationships and the intensity of the relationships.

The descriptions of the mentor/mentee relationships seem to suggest that whether they develop "spontaneously" or "gradually" or "with" or "without intention" that they do progress to a "peak" and then "subside" in intensity. By the time the mentee and mentor begin to regard each other as "equals" or "colleagues," the mentor/mentee relationship seems to subside. Mentors and mentees don't seem to expect their relationships to maintain the same status. They expect

the relationships to change. In this study, the mentors and mentees anticipated their relationships "shifting" from that of "mentor/mentee" to one of "colleagues" or "close friends."

The shift from a mentor/mentee relationship to another type of relationship seems to relate possibly to a variety of factors. As the mentee advances in career development and becomes more equal with the mentor, a relationship may continue but not as mentor/mentee. If circumstances separate mentors and mentees so that they no longer share a work context, are separated by distance, unable to spend time together or unable to interact informally, the mentor/mentee relationship can be expected to lessen in intensity and possibly terminate.

With the termination of a mentor/mentee relationship, the termination of any type of relationship could also occur. The findings from this study would suggest a complete termination would most likely occur if the mentor and mentee were no longer compatible. Marked differences in value systems could be surmised as most likely to contribute to a total termination of a relationship.

#### Discussion--Significance of Mentor/Mentee Relationships

The characteristics consistently found to describe the significance of mentor/mentee relationships are summarized in Columns 5 and 6 of Table 3.

Mentor/mentee relationships seem to fill mutual needs. Much of the existing literature leaves one with the impression that mentor/mentee relationships are definitely of more value to mentees than they are to mentors. This does not seem to be the case. Whether intentional or not, the mentees and mentors in this study seemed to

enter their relationships in an effort to satisfy a variety of needs. Their needs related to careers or work were obvious and openly discussed. Other needs that were being filled did not become apparent to them until their relationships began to evolve. Some study participants didn't appreciate the full significance of their relationships until they were asked to describe them. Without exception though, the mentor/mentee relationships fulfilled needs for both mentors and mentees. It appeared that although it was evident the mentors and mentees used each other that they did not perceive themselves as being used or manipulated. It seems that when both the mentor and mentee perceive their needs as being satisfactorily met that neither of them feel as though they are being used or manipulated. However, one could expect that when only one person in the relationship is having his/her needs met that the other person might feel a sense of dissatisfaction, and then feel used or manipulated. Perhaps when either a mentor or mentee no longer has needs being met, this also might serve as a basis for shifting or ending the relationship. This is not necessarily negative in connotation, but rather a sign of needs having been sufficiently fulfilled or of changing needs being inadequately fulfilled.

Although the study participants did not state it as such, it seemed that the truly significant aspect of mentor/mentee relationships was how they contributed to the personal growth and development of the mentors and mentees in combination with the professional or work related significance. Levinson (1978) alludes to this personal significance for mentees as he describes how mentors help mentees realize their Dreams. Part of the mentor's role, he says is to convey



to the mentee, "you're O.K.." However, the Dream is generally interpreted as representing the achievement of career goals or success. It seems that a mentee's attainment of career success is only an outcome representing the personal growth and development that has occurred as a result of the relationship. What appears as the greatest personal significance is the affirmation or reaffirmation that the mentor and mentee are cared for and deemed worthy by another person. This in turn contributes to the mentor's or mentee's caring for him/herself and own sense of worth.

William Glasser (1972) in *Identity Society* provides the basis for this supposition. He identifies love of self and others; and worthiness as perceived by self and by others as the two critical factors leading to a successful identity. Love in this context refers to caring for self and others. The mentor conveys a sense of caring and worth by showing he/she values the mentee. The mentor cares enough to give of him/herself. The mentor cares enough to spend time with the mentee, to nurture the mentee, groom the mentee and share his/her accumulated experiences and insights with the mentee. The actual actions taken by the mentor in the mentee's behalf are probably not as significant to the mentee as the mentor's willingness to take actions in the mentee's behalf. The mentor accepts the mentee as a person even when they hold differences of opinion.

The mentor conveys to the mentee a sense of worth by supporting and encouraging the mentee in his/her pursuits. The mentor also conveys an appreciation of the mentee's worth by confiding in the mentee either by seeking advice or sharing confidential information. As a

result of the relationship, the mentee gains a sense of being cared for as a person. The mentee also perceives him/herself as engaged in worthwhile pursuits.

In turn, the mentee conveys a sense of caring and worth to the mentor. The mentee cares enough to spend time with the mentor and to listen and help the mentor. The mentee seems to convey "I care for you not just because of what you can do for me but because you're a special person." The mentee like the mentor is accepting of differences between them.

The mentee conveys a sense of worthiness to the mentor by seeking and following his/her advice, showing a willingness to learn from the mentor, following in his/her footsteps or otherwise emulating the mentor. Mentors probably have to have developed secure identities founded in love and worth to even be capable of assuming mentor roles. A mentee may, however, reaffirm a mentor's sense of being cared for and his/her sense of being worthy. Together it seems mentors and mentees form mini mutual admiration societies that contribute to or reinforce successful identities.

### Summary and Discussion of Methodological Findings

#### Methodological Findings

Findings related to the methodology are presented that may be of interest and that may impact the descriptive findings of mentor/mentee relationships as presented in this study. First, many of the study participants had difficulty completing the questions on the Demographic Information Sheet (Appendix D) that asked them to identify

the total number of mentors and mentees they had had relationships with. All of the study participants were readily able to identify their mentors, usually without hesitation. One study participant listed 50 mentors initially, but revised this to four after completing the interview. He had taken a wild guess to begin with and decided that although many persons had influenced his life that not all of them were mentors.

Identifying mentees, however, was much more difficult for all of the study participants. Many of the study participants responded to the question with, "It's hard to know who you've had an impact on. They (other persons) don't always let you know that you have influenced them or how you have influenced them." Even though nine of the eleven mentors interviewed were certain about the other member of their pair being a mentee, they all had to think a moment or two about how many mentees they had had. Most of the mentees felt uncertain about whether they had had mentees themselves. Only five of the mentees identified having mentees. Of the five, only two seemed to be certain about the number they indicated. The others made statements like, "I have no idea," "I'll just put down (number)". These remarks suggest the count on mentees from the mentee study participants may not be accurate.

Repeatedly the study participants stated that they had not given their relationships much thought prior to the interviews. The restatements and recapitulations were noted to help the study participants recall various aspects of their relationships. In almost every case, as documented in the study, the recapitulations resulted

in additional information being offered.

Related to little prior thought being given to the relationships, it was noted that almost all of the study participants experienced what could be referred to as "Ahas." The "Ahas" represented a discovery or realization by the study participants about their relationships that had never been apparent to them before. In this same vein, it wasn't unusual for study participants to comment that they had never shared their feelings toward their mentor or mentee with that person. Most of the relationships seemed to exist without the study participants identifying them as mentor/mentee relationships to each other and without much exchange of feelings or meanings between the mentor/mentee pair.

Last, the study participants began the descriptions of their relationships by offering a chronological sequence of how their relationships developed. They began their descriptions with how they met and tended to relate incidents thereafter in a chronological sequence. The responses to other areas of inquiry were meshed with the chronological sequences used to describe the relationships.

#### Discussion of Methodological Findings

Although the findings are not generalizable to all possible mentor/mentee relationships, it was interesting to note the high degree of similarity between the descriptions offered by the study participants. This may suggest that the findings of this study will be applicable to mentor/mentee relationships in other populations. Or, it may suggest that this study population was uniquely homogeneous and quite distinct from other groups of persons.

Measures were taken to derive data that reflected the mentor/mentee relationships studied. The study was designed to satisfy concerns related to reliability and validity as appropriate for a descriptive study employing a grounded theory methodology. The recapitulations used during interviewing provided a means for verifying the information and the interviewer's perceptions of the information obtained from the study participants.

The use of restatements and recapitulations are recommended during interviewing to not only verify the information gathered but to assist the study participants in recalling information being sought. The cryptic note taking in conjunction with the audio-recordings allowed the interviewer to maintain eye contact and provide accepting behaviors during the interviews. The notes provided cues for the interviewer to make restatements and recapitulations but it was necessary for the interviewer to totally immerse herself in the interview process. Total concentration was required to capture the actual content and its affective component while simultaneously recalling and synthesizing the study participants' responses in preparation for restatements and recapitulations.

When personal interviews are used to derive data, variations in the amount and content of data gathered from the study participants can be expected. For this study three factors may have impacted the amount and content of data gathered. First, some of the study participants were known to the interviewer while others were not. The interviewer did not note any differences in the amount of information or content of information disclosed as related to familiarity with the

study participants.

Second, the mentor/mentee pairs were at various stages in their relationships so that the degree of interaction and proximity to each other varied among the pairs. The relationships were very intense and on-going for some mentor/mentee pairs. Other relationships were less intense at the time of the interviews because circumstances had separated the mentor and mentee from each other. It might be expected that persons would be able to provide more vivid descriptions of an intense, on-going relationship. On the other hand, persons might appreciate aspects of a relationship in retrospect that aren't apparent at the time they occur.

Third, variations in the amount and content of data derived may be due to persons' levels of comfort with disclosure. Some of the study participants seemed more comfortable than others with describing personal aspects of the relationships. It was noted many study participants were reluctant to respond to how they felt about their mentor or mentee counterparts. Often their responses related to qualities found in the other person, to overall qualities of their relationships or to their roles with each other rather than to adjectives that might have expressed their feelings about each other or the relationship.

The concern does exist that the feelings and qualities of the relationships that were related to the interviewer in this study have not been conveyed in this report as they were shared. This is due in part because the relationships have been described by using quotations and paraphrasing. What is missing are the facial expressions and

voice inflections that contributed to the study participants' descriptions. It should be realized that words alone do not capture the tears, laughs, Ahas, excitement and warmth that were conveyed to the interviewer during the interviews.

A validated theory on mentor/mentee relationships is not the end product of this study. Instead, a practical theory, grounded in data subjected to multiple comparative analysis, is offered for immediate consideration. The conclusions of this study add to the current understanding of mentor/mentee relationships and provide a basis for further studies. The final test for the validity of these conclusions rests with confirmation by persons who have engaged in mentor/mentee relationships.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to describe mentor/mentee relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for a professional role. Four areas of inquiry served to guide this study. These were:

1. How do mentors and mentees describe the overall qualities of their relationships?
2. How do mentors and mentees describe themselves and each other?
3. How do mentors and mentees describe the development of their relationships?
4. How do mentors and mentees describe the significance of their relationships for themselves and for their mentor or mentee?

This chapter presents the conclusions that are drawn from the findings of this study. Implications are drawn from the conclusions and recommendations are made for further research on mentor/mentee relationships.

#### Conclusions

The following three conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study regarding mentor/mentee relationships among persons engaged in or preparing for a professional role:



1. The establishment and continuation of mentor/mentee relationships depends on the presence of a combination of characteristics common to mentors, characteristics common to mentees, characteristics common to mentor/mentee pairs, and environmental factors.
2. Mentor/mentee relationships contribute to the professional and personal growth and development of both mentors and mentees.
3. Mentor/mentee relationships are distinguishable from other types of relationships.

### Implications

Implications for the presence of a combination of characteristics common to mentors, characteristics common to mentees, characteristics common to mentor/mentee pairs, and environmental factors necessary for the establishment and continuation of mentor/mentee relationships. This study has suggested that organizations can not simply pre-arrange mentor/mentee relationships. The notion that a manager can serve as a mentor to any employee under his/her supervision does not seem either appropriate or likely to meet with success. If a manager is unwilling to engage in a mentor/mentee relationship in spite of the requests of an organization, a relationship is destined to never begin. It seems clearly evident that even if a manager is willing to serve as a mentor his/her willingness alone is insufficient for initiating a mentor/mentee relationship. Potential mentees (employees) must possess pre-requisite characteristics, the manager and employee need to be compatible, and environmental factors

favoring the establishment of a relationship all have to be present as well.

Likewise, this study has suggested a person should not expect to initiate a mentor/mentee relationship after only deciding to enter such a relationship with a person identified as a potential mentor. Again, the potential mentee and mentor must singly and together possess pre-requisite characteristics and the environment needs to favor such a relationship.

Although this study has suggested that organizations should not attempt to arrange mentor/mentee relationships, it seems organizations can facilitate the establishment and continuation of mentor/mentee relationships. Given the pre-requisite characteristics of potential mentors, mentees, and mentor/mentee pairs, organizations can manage their environments to favor mentor/mentee relationships. Organizations can provide opportunities for persons to meet and/or work together who might be able to form a mentor/mentee relationship. Organizations can design schedules so that potential mentor/mentee pairs not only have an opportunity to work in close proximity but are able to spend ample amounts of time together. Organizations might benefit from asking managers and employees to choose persons they would like to work with on projects. Organizations also need to consider where the offices of potential mentors are located in relation to persons who might be mentored. If one or more floors separates the more advanced from those less advanced in their careers, the opportunity for the initiation of mentor/mentee relationships is probably less.

Organizations should also provide opportunities for persons to interact informally during and after working hours. Consideration should be given to the opportunities for potential mentors and mentees to interact during coffee breaks and lunch. Executive dining rooms and executive bathrooms minimize the opportunities for more senior persons to interact informally with less senior persons. Organization sponsored athletics (softball, volleyball), health promotion (physical fitness programs, smoking cessation program), and social events (picnics, golf outings) all provide opportunities for informal interactions that may contribute to the development of mentor/mentee relationships.

This study has suggested that all persons may not be capable of engaging in mentor/mentee relationships. Levinson (1978) noted that people differ widely in their capability for evoking and sustaining mentor/mentee relationships. He noted that mentoring relationships were more the exception than the rule. Since mentor/mentee relationships seem to represent a close, caring relationship, one might surmise from Erik H. Erikson's work that mentors and mentees need to be at a certain stage in adult development before being capable of entering a mentor/mentee relationship. Mentees may need to be able to successfully manage Erikson's stage of intimacy vs. isolation. Mentors may need to continue successfully managing intimacy vs. isolation and also be able to participate in activities representative of what Erikson describes in his stage of generativity.

Implications for mentor/mentee relationships contributing to the professional and personal growth and development of both mentors

and mentees. Mentor/mentee relationships that occur within a work setting are likely to contribute to work satisfaction for both mentors and mentees. These relationships seem to result in mentors and mentees feeling cared for and developing or reinforcing a sense of being engaged in worthwhile tasks. These two factors are frequently cited as contributing to work satisfaction (Herzberg, 1976; McLean, 1975).

A second implication is for overall success in life. There is general agreement that high levels of self-esteem contribute positively to overall success in life. It seems apparent that mentor/mentee relationships contribute to higher levels of self-esteem through the support, caring and sense of worth mentors and mentees convey to each other. Many of the researchers in adult development concur that emotional support provided during adulthood plays a significant role in persons successfully managing the developmental tasks of adulthood.

A third implication is that just as mentor/mentee relationships can have very positive influences on mentors and mentees, it is possible they can have negative influences as well. The very factors that contribute to high levels of self-esteem or successful identities can contribute to low levels of self-esteem and unsuccessful identities. Withdrawal of love and rejection by another person can be devastating to an individual. Both mentors and mentees are potentially subject to rejection and to their counterparts withdrawing from the relationship.

Implications for mentor/mentee relationships being

distinguishable from other types of relationships. This study has suggested that a spectrum of supportive relationships exist. The support may range from a person being minimally assisted by another person to being mentored as described in this study. All types of supportive relationships can be beneficial but not all such relationships that occur among persons engaged in or preparing for professional roles within a work context can be regarded as mentor/mentee relationships.

A spectrum of mentor/mentee relationships also seems to exist. The intensity of these relationships can be expected to vary among mentor/mentee pairs and within mentor/mentee pairs over time. The degree of caring among mentors and mentees may range from special concern or interest in each other to mutual love. The degree of personal and professional impact and the exact nature of the impact resulting from engaging in a mentor/mentee relationship can also be expected to vary among mentor/mentee pairs.

This study has also suggested that mentors and mentees actively engage in a relationship. Levinson (1978) suggested that mentees can regard persons they have known only casually or whom they've never met as mentors. In order for mentor/mentee relationships to develop and impact the persons engaged in the relationships as described in this study, the mentors and mentees must actively interact with each other. Persons who are described as influencing other persons without active two-way interaction might be regarded as inspirational, heroes or role models. They are not according to this study, however, mentors.

Further research is suggested in response to the following questions that have been generated by this study:

1. Would the same findings and conclusions drawn from this study be derived from studies with other study populations?
2. Do mentor/mentee relationships exist outside of work settings?
3. Do the nature of mentor/mentee relationships differ as related to the sex of mentors and mentees? Are females more likely to engage in a mentor/mentee relationship if given the opportunity than males?
4. Do persons need to have successfully managed stages of adult development to be eligible to participate in mentor/mentee relationships?
5. Does the participation of persons in a mentor/mentee relationship contribute to their overall adult development?
6. Are there correlations between levels of self-esteem and participation in a mentor/mentee relationship? Do positive mentor/mentee relationships impact self-esteem positively? Do negative relationships impact self-esteem negatively?
7. Is there a correlation between engaging in mentor/mentee relationships and work satisfaction? productivity?

### Summary

The purpose of this study was to describe mentor/mentee relationships among persons engaged in or preparing for professional roles. The findings of this study resulted in three conclusions. The conclusions emerged from multiple comparative analyses of the data derived from interviews with twenty-two persons who had engaged in one or more mentor/mentee relationships.

It was concluded that characteristics common to mentors, characteristics common to mentees, characteristics common to mentor/mentee pairs and environmental factors collectively contributed to the establishment and continuation of mentor/mentee relationships. The characteristics found to be common to mentors included a willingness to give of themselves in a relationship, an advanced stage of career development in relation to mentees, self-confidence and an inter-dependent approach to relationships with mentees.

The characteristics found to be common to mentees included a willingness to give of themselves in a relationship and a less advanced stage of career development in relation to their mentors. The characteristics found to be common to mentor/mentee pairs included compatibility between mentors and mentees and mentors and mentees relating to each other in sets of relationships (teacher/student) in which the mentor was in a senior role to the mentee. Compatibility was found to exist between mentors and mentees by their sharing similar interests, personality traits, backgrounds, values or expectations. Compatibility was also found to be achieved through complementary differences but mentors and mentees still shared similar

values. The combination of the mentors' and mentees' willingness to give of themselves in a relationship and their compatibility seemed to be responsible for the qualities of commitment, trust, openness, acceptance and caring that also were found to characterize mentor/mentee relationships. Close proximity of mentors and mentees, amounts of time spent together and opportunities to interact informally were identified as environmental factors impacting mentor/mentee relationships. Changes in any of these characteristics or factors can be expected to change a mentor/mentee relationship to another type of relationship or result in its termination.

It was also concluded that mentor/mentee relationships contributed to the professional and personal development of both mentors and mentees. The most significant aspect of mentor/mentee relationships seems to be the caring and sense of worth mentors and mentees conveyed to each other. The caring and sense of worth conveyed by mentors and mentees to each other has been suggested to have helped to establish or reaffirm successful identities. This contribution to personal growth and development in combination with professional growth and development characterized the mentor/mentee relationships studied. Last, it was concluded that mentor/mentee relationships can be distinguished from other types of relationships. Mentor/mentee relationships were described as friendships that occurred within the combination of work and personal contexts or within the combination of work, personal and social contexts. The combined professional and personal significance of the relationships distinguished them from other friendships that occurred within the same combination of contexts.



Although the conclusions of the study have been presented individually, the reader is encouraged to consider them collectively. This study has added to our understanding of mentor/mentee relationships. It provides a basis from which to engage in further studies that will add and refine our understanding of mentor/mentee relationships. Perhaps as we continue to add to our understanding of mentor/mentee relationships we will also gain greater insight into the adult developmental process.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### DESCRIPTIONS OF IDENTIFYING STUDY PARTICIPANTS



## APPENDIX A

### Descriptions of Identifying Study Participants

The mentor in pair #1 identified herself as a mentor to a person she had worked with in a university setting. The mentor was aware of the researcher's planned study and volunteered herself and her mentee after talking with her mentee about their relationship.

In pair #2, the mentee identified herself as a mentee and disclosed her mentor's name during a casual conversation with the researcher eight months prior to the interviews. The conversation related to the topic the researcher planned to study for her doctoral dissertation.

The mentee of pair #3 introduced the researcher to his mentor upon the researchers first meeting them both six months prior to the study as, "This is (Person's Name) my mentor." Neither of the persons were aware of the researcher's study topic at the time. In fact, the researcher was being introduced to them both for the first time as potential business partners of her husband. The researcher immediately responded with, "It's interesting you should introduce (Person's Name) as your mentor. I plan to do a study on mentor/mentee relationships. Perhaps you would consider participating in my study." They both responded affirmatively.

The researcher is good friends with the mentee and his wife of pair #4. During a discussion about the researcher's dissertation

topic, the mentee's wife identified him as a mentee and stated who she believed his mentor was. Later when the researcher called the mentee to ask if he felt anyone had had a significant influence on his professional/personal growth and development that was unique from other relationships, he replied yes. He contacted his mentor before disclosing his name to the researcher. His mentor was not whom the mentee's wife had identified as the mentor.

The mentee of pair #5 was identified while talking with a man who the researcher worked closely with in a professional organization. The man was inquiring about the researcher's study. He identified a person he believed could be a mentee but remarked that his current position kept them apart. The researcher knew the mentee and he struck the researcher as a person capable of having close relationships with other persons. The researcher called the mentee to inquire if he felt his professional/personal growth and development had been significantly influenced by another person. He identified three persons, two of whom were out-of-state. His mentor was not the man who initially mentioned the mentee's name to the researcher but instead was another person in his work setting.

The mentor of pairs #6a and #6b was involved in the same professional organization as the researcher. Via the grapevine the researcher learned the mentor was also planning to study mentor/mentee relationships. The researcher contacted her to inform her of the researcher's intent to study mentor/mentee relationships and suggested they confer. The mentor sent a sample of a questionnaire she planned to use in her study for the researcher to critique. During a

telephone conversation related to the questionnaire, the researcher asked if the mentor had had a mentor. She replied, "No, but I have two mentees." Circumstances subsequently allowed the researcher to meet with all three persons at a professional meeting.

In a conversation with a woman the researcher knows well, another woman was identified as a person who had probably had many mentees because of her role in a university setting. The potential mentor was a person the researcher also knew well. When the potential mentor was contacted by the researcher she identified three mentees and a person who served as her mentor (pairs #7a, 7b, 7c and 7d).

The mentee of pairs #8a, 8c, and 8d was the only person contacted initially regarding participation in the study who had not previously identified herself or been identified as a potential mentor or mentee by someone else. The researcher chose to contact her because our close association professionally gave the researcher reason to believe she had had at least one mentor. The researcher had noted the potential mentee's willingness to be close to other persons and to be caring and concerned for others. She was eager to learn and seemed to have close relationships with older more experienced persons who seemed to be helping her. She identified five mentors but only three were eligible and/or available to participate in the study.

## APPENDIX B

### LETTER OF CONFIRMATION



## APPENDIX B

### Letter of Confirmation

March 11, 1981

Dear

I really appreciate your willingness to talk with me about your mentor/mentee relationship with (Person's Name). This is to confirm our interview for Monday, March 16, 1981 at 1:00 p.m.

I will focus the interview on four areas of inquiry: 1) the qualities/characteristics of the relationship, 2) the qualities/characteristics of the mentor and mentee, 3) how the relationship developed, and 4) the significance of the relationship for you and (Person's Name). I will audio record the interview in its entirety. I will also take a few notes. The information I gather during the interview will remain confidential.

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this research endeavor. I look forward to talking with you on the 16th.

Most sincerely,

Beverly J. Schmol1

## APPENDIX C

### INTERVIEW NOTES WORKSHEET

APPENDIX C

Interview Notes Worksheet

Identification # \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor \_\_\_\_\_ Mentee \_\_\_\_\_

Qualities- Relationship	Qualities Mentor-Mentee	Development	Significance

## APPENDIX D

### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SHEET

## APPENDIX D

### Demographic Information Sheet

Identification # \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor \_\_\_\_\_ Mentee \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE complete or check appropriate choice for items 2 through 6

1. Identification # (completed by interviewer)

2. Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

3. Age range

25-30 \_\_\_\_\_ 51-55 \_\_\_\_\_

31-35 \_\_\_\_\_ 56-60 \_\_\_\_\_

36-40 \_\_\_\_\_ 61-65 \_\_\_\_\_

41-45 \_\_\_\_\_ 66-70 \_\_\_\_\_

46-50 \_\_\_\_\_ 71-75 \_\_\_\_\_

76 or over \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is your career area and position within your career area?

Career area \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

5. Mentor \_\_\_\_\_

Mentee \_\_\_\_\_

6. How many mentors have you had? \_\_\_\_\_

How many mentees have you had? \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## APPENDIX E

### Interview Questions

#### Initial Set of Questions

Opening Question . . . You or (other member of pair's name) indicated you have influenced his/her professional and/or personal growth and development.

OR

You or (other member of pair's name) indicated he/she has influenced your professional and/or personal growth and development.

Followed by:

Would you please describe the relationship for me?

#### Probing Questions

##### Area #1

1. What adjectives would you use to describe your relationship?
2. How did you feel toward (mentor or mentee's name)?
3. How do you think (mentor or mentee's name) felt about you?

##### Area #2

1. How would you describe (mentor or mentee's name)?
2. What do you most like about (mentor or mentee's name)?
3. What is it about (mentor or mentee's name) you like least?
4. What qualities do/did you bring to the relationship?

##### Area #3

1. How did your relationship begin?

2. When did your relationship begin?
3. Has the relationship changed over time? If so, how?
4. Did the relationship end? If so, how?

Area #4

1. How has this relationship influenced your professional growth and development?
2. How has this relationship influenced your personal growth and development?
3. Generally, what has this relationship meant to you?

Revised Set of Questions

Opening Question . . . (mentor or mentee's name) has indicated he/she regards you as a mentor or mentee.

OR

You have indicated (mentor's name) is your mentor.

OR

You identified (mentee's name) as a mentee.

Followed by:

Why do you regard him/her as your mentor or mentee?

OR

Why do you think he/she regards you as his/her mentor or mentee?

Probing Questions

Area #1--The following question was added:

4. How is this relationship different from other relationships you have or have had?

Area #2--Question #3 was revised to:

3. Is there anything about (mentor or mentee's name) that you find troublesome?

The following questions were added:



5. Are there qualities your mentor has that you wish you had or that you would like to develop?
6. How are the two of you alike or different?

Area #3--Question #4 was revised to:

4. What is the status of your relationship now?

Area #4--Questions 1 and 2 were combined to:

1. How has this relationship been significant for you either professionally or personally?

The following question was added:

4. How do you think this relationship was significant for (mentor or mentee's name)?

## APPENDIX F

### LETTER OF THANKS

## APPENDIX F

### Letter of Thanks

March 25, 1981

Dear

Thank you so much for granting me an interview to describe your mentor/mentee relationship with (Person's Name). I appreciate your taking the time out of your schedule to talk with me.

Very definite patterns relating to mentor/mentee relationships are emerging. It's very exciting. Your interview certainly contributed to these patterns. I will share a summary of my findings with you at the completion of the study.

Again, thank you for allowing me a glimpse into part of your professional/personal life.

Most sincerely,

Beverly J. Schmoll

## APPENDIX G

### QUALITIES-RELATIONSHIP DATA WORKSHEET

## APPENDIX G

### Qualities-Relationship Data Worksheet

Identification # \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor \_\_\_\_\_ Mentee \_\_\_\_\_

F \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_

Age range \_\_\_\_\_

Descriptions of relationship by interviewee--key words or phrases

## APPENDIX H

### MENTORS AND MENTEES DATA WORKSHEET

## APPENDIX H

### Mentors and Mentees Data Worksheet

Identification # \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor \_\_\_\_\_ Mentee \_\_\_\_\_

F \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_

Age range \_\_\_\_\_

Descriptions given of mentors and mentees by interviewee. Key words and phrases.

Mentors

Mentees

## APPENDIX I

### ACTIVITIES DATA WORKSHEET



## APPENDIX I

### Activities Data Worksheet

Identification # \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor \_\_\_\_\_ Mentee \_\_\_\_\_

F \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_

Age range \_\_\_\_\_

Activities a mentor/mentee engaged in together--key events.

## APPENDIX J

### DEVELOPMENT DATA WORKSHEET

## APPENDIX J

### Development Data Worksheet

Identification # \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor \_\_\_\_\_ Mentee \_\_\_\_\_

F \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_

Age range \_\_\_\_\_

Key events

1. Beginning

2. Interim--changes

3. Termination

## APPENDIX K

### SIGNIFICANCE DATA WORKSHEET

## APPENDIX K

### Significance Data Worksheet

Identification # \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor \_\_\_\_\_ Mentee \_\_\_\_\_

F \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_

Age range \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning of relationship to interviewee and perceived meaning for  
other person in pair.

Mentor

Mentee

## APPENDIX L

### CONTEXT AND PROCEDURE SUMMARY NOTES

## APPENDIX L

### Context and Procedure Summary Notes

#4a  
2/13/81

Interview began at 9:00 a.m. and ended shortly after 10:00 a.m.

It was conducted in the mentee's office which is located in a large bank.

Well appointed, relaxed, comfortable atmosphere.

Sat in comfortable side chairs facing each other.

Had a cup of coffee.

The interview was unhurried and uninterrupted.

Before the interview we talked about each of our little girls being sick and getting ready for ski week-end we were going to begin that evening.

I followed interview protocol as outlined. There were no deviations.

I know this person extremely well--we've been friends for years.

This person was concerned about a lack of definition of what a mentor or mentee is. He made reference to what that definition might be--numerous times. I attempted to keep him just talking about his relationship with mentor. I told him definitions didn't matter, that the purpose of the study was to describe relationships. I was concerned his concern about whether his relationship does or does not fit a definition may have inhibited him some. I feel as though I was able

to counter this pretty effectively. I followed the initial question and probing questions as outlined. I did usual closing.

At end he mentioned, that I had summarized his comments very well, caught the essence of them. He enjoyed interview.

Prior to interview he talked at length about ease of identifying a mentor as compared to identifying a mentee. It was his impression it's far easier to identify mentors--you know who's had impact on you as compared to who you think you've had impact upon. Later in interview he had no doubt about his mentor being a mentor but wondered if mentor perceived himself as mentee's mentor.

#4b  
2/14/81

The interview was conducted on 2/13/81 at 11:00 a.m. and lasted until 12:15 p.m.

The interview was conducted in the mentor's office. We sat kitty-corner to each other--at the corner of a desk. It was a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere. It was unhurried and no interruptions.

We were introduced by the mentee who escorted me to his office. We engaged in light hearted talk about U of M and MSU. He offered me a cup of coffee. I declined but invited him to get one for himself. I set up the tape recorder and so forth. When he returned with coffee he spoke of fun mock rally that they had in the trust department between MSU and U of M loyals. He said in fact this played a role in establishing relationship between himself and mentee. They would have fun together.



Again I felt at ease and well prepared. I feel very much in control during interviews. Can't recall a single anxiety producing moment thus far--seems enjoyable for interviewees--and I'm having a ball!

I think I come across consistently very professional. I dress in a suit or shirt/blouse/sweater. I carry a brief case and have everything prepared in advance--well organized.

I have followed the interview protocol very closely. This time also which sets the stage and lets the interviewee know what to expect.

This interviewee seemed most willing to participate from the outset. Interesting to note his non-verbals. He began with his arms crossed across his chest. About ten minutes into interview he uncrossed arms,--put them on arms of chair, fiddled with a pin and increasingly used gestures. By the end, he was leaning back and putting his arms behind his neck. He really opened up.

Even when formal questioning was completed, he still talked about possibility of mentor/mentee relationship in different settings--comparing bank with GM. Thought I might find different types of mentor/mentee relationship--one as in bank where mentor would groom a mentee for his/her own position. He expected at GM this grooming would not occur--instead look for persons to make mentor look good. At best mentee might be able to follow mentor--or if lucky get promoted to another plant, division, etc. But, not likely to follow in mentor's footsteps. He shared this from his observations as a banker who handles business for top management at GM.

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