

## **Emotional Intelligence and Mentoring Provided**

An important part of the mentorship process is the mentoring functions that mentors provide to protégés: *psychosocial support*, in which they provide acceptance and friendship, and confirm the protégés' behaviors; *career support*, in which they act as coaches to the protégés, protect the protégés from adverse organizational forces, provide challenging assignments, sponsor advancement, and foster positive exposure and visibility; and *role modeling*, in which their attitudes, values and behaviors guide the protégés (Scandura & Ragins, 1993).

Building strong social networks is one of a number of protégé outcomes associated with formal mentoring relationships (Sosik, Lee, & Bouquillon, 2005). Mentors use their social networks to enhance protégé career-related outcomes. These developmental networks can further enhance a protégé's visibility by offering exposure to others within the organization, as well as enhancing the mentor's pool of knowledge (Scandura & Ragins, 1993).

Thus, both mentors and protégés must be amenable to the social exchange and interpersonal aspects of the mentoring process, and mentors' and protégés' emotional intelligence should contribute to the provision of mentoring functions.

Allen (2003) reported positive associations between mentors' other-oriented empathy and career and psychosocial support mentoring functions. Sosik and Megerian (1999) reported positive relations between managers interpersonal orientation and subordinates' ratings of managers' display of transformational leadership behaviors, including role modeling, coaching and mentoring.

Likewise, individuals with secure attachment style, who are less anxious for and avoidant in interpersonal relationships, are more likely to demonstrate willingness to serve as a mentor (Wang, Noe, Wang, & reenberger, 2009).

Although the other-oriented empathy and secure attachment style are regarded as dispositional tendencies, these tendencies may be better modulated to give final shape to manifest proper emotional responses in providing various mentoring functions, if high emotional intelligence exists (Gross, 1998; Kafetsios, 2004).

For example, coaching often requires mentors to impart negative feedback to their protégés, and mentors' ability to make the comments

in skillful ways seems critical to minimize protégés' negative emotional fallout (Cherniss, 2007).

From this standpoint, mentors' emotional intelligence also appears important to serve as role models for their protégés, because the protégés would model themselves on not only how the mentors skillfully deal with unpleasant events at work but also how they provide negative feedback to others in acceptable manners. Finally, protecting protégés from adverse organizational forces is also likely to require their mentors to effectively cope with the anxiety associated with advocating for protégés who lack power and status in organizations (Cherniss, 2007).

Protégés' emotional intelligence also plays an important role to facilitate mentors' provision of mentoring. According to the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotion (Fredrickson, 1998), positive emotional responses in stressful situations may elicit social support and strengthen social bonds, because they appear to broaden individuals' momentary thought-action repertoires and build their enduring social resources, such as friendships and social support. As such, individuals with high emotional intelligence have been described as satisfied with their social exchange, drawn to occupations that require personal interaction, and are likely to receive higher levels of social support than those with low emotional intelligence (J. D. Mayer et al., 2008).

Therefore, emotionally intelligent protégés are more likely to make proper emotional expressions and receive higher levels of mentoring, because they are adept at conveying enthusiasm for the developmental relationships and their appreciation for the mentoring social support (Young & Perrewe, 2000).

Furthermore, emotional intelligence can enhance a protégé's perception of mentoring provided by identifying emotional content in the voice and face of the mentor. Media richness theory (Daft & Lengel, 1986) suggests that such additional information enhances perceptual processes. Protégés can benefit from using emotional information to facilitate cognitive activities required for appreciating mentoring provided (J. D. Mayer et al., 2008), understand what emotions mean regarding mentoring functions such as friendship, acceptance, and confirmation (Sosik & Lee, 2002), and understand and manage emotions over time as the mentoring relationship progresses through its phases (Bouquillon et al., 2005; Kram, 1985).

### **Trust and Mentoring Provided**

Interpersonal trust appears particularly important in formal mentor–protégé relationships, because serving as a mentor in formal programs involves not only various benefits but also many potential costs, such as demands on time and energy, disloyalty from opportunistic protégés, and bad reputation due to poor protégé performance (Ragins & Scandura, 1999).

Therefore, the mentors would not fully engage in the risky role of providing mentoring, unless they trust their protégés or earn the protégés' trust. A rationale for this reasoning is that interpersonal trust increases one's confidence that the other will also behave cooperatively, which then facilitates his or her willingness to cooperate in risky conditions (R. C. Mayer et al., 1995).

Ferrin et al. (2007) provide two theoretical reasons for how other's trust can increase one's own cooperative behaviors, which represents the association between protégés' trust in their mentors and mentors' provision of mentoring. First, individuals in social relationships feel bound by the values of fairness and give-and-take reciprocity, and this sense of obligation promotes cooperative behaviors toward each other (Cialdini, 1993).

The rule of reciprocity suggests that a mentor who earns his or her protégé's trust feels obliged to appreciate the trust by providing higher levels of mentoring, instead of simply meeting the mentor requirements imposed by organizations. Another theoretical explanation is an instrumental reason for one's own cooperative behaviors in response to other's trust (Ferrin et al., 2007).

Threat of punishment (e.g., loss of relationship or backstabbing by protégés) can be a salient concern by mentors who earn but violate their protégés' trust. This concern for potential sanctions by protégés may encourage mentors to increase the mentoring they provide. Indeed, in a study of the relationship between trust in the mentor and mentoring functions provided, Bouquillon et al. (2005) reported positive associations between protégés' ratings of trust in their mentors and role modeling and psychosocial support in a sample of corporate workers and teachers, one-half of which were involved in formal mentoring relationships.

### **Mentoring Provided and Willingness to Mentor**

Mentoring provided can influence a protégé's willingness to mentor others, that is, to choose to engage in a developmental activity as a mentor (Allen et al.,

1997). Such willingness allows the protégé to develop into a mentor and “pass the torch” of learning and development to other individuals, thus expanding an organization’s human and social capital (Hatch & Dyer, 2004; Higgins & Kram, 2001). As such, part of the developmental process of mentoring should result in generativity, or protégés who want to develop the next generation of protégés (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978).

There is limited research on protégés’ willingness to mentor, but this literature (e.g., Allen et al., 1997; Aryee et al., 1996) does provide both theoretical and empirical evidence of a positive association between experience as a protégé in a mentoring relationship and willingness to mentor in the future.

For example, Allen et al. (1997) reported positive correlations between career-related and psychosocial mentoring functions received and willingness to mentor others. Bozionelos’s (2004) study also revealed that the amount of mentoring received was positively associated with the amount of actual mentoring provided. These results may be explained by the role modeling function of mentoring (Scandura & Ragins, 1993).

Positive and supportive characteristics in career-related and psychosocial mentoring functions may also influence a willingness to assist others’ development in appreciation of being mentored (Allen et al., 1997).

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