

Mentoring...and its importance in Extension today

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Today's Goal

Create the idea with you that Mentoring:

- Is an important and valuable activity
- Is something worth your time and effort
- Can have long-term benefits to your career in Extension

Today's Outline

- Beginning in an Extension career—how we get started; personal observations
- Definitions, terms and examples of mentoring
- Mentoring at OSU and in Extension
 - What it looks like and how it works
 - Resources available for you
 - Taking responsibility

Extension Career...observations

- Fondly remember my start in Extension work more than 35 years ago
 - Didn't grow up in 4-H or around Extension
 - Went to college to become a subject matter expert—never saw myself teaching; only limited community education experience
 - Did have three years college teaching experience
- How do we get started in these new jobs?

Extension journey

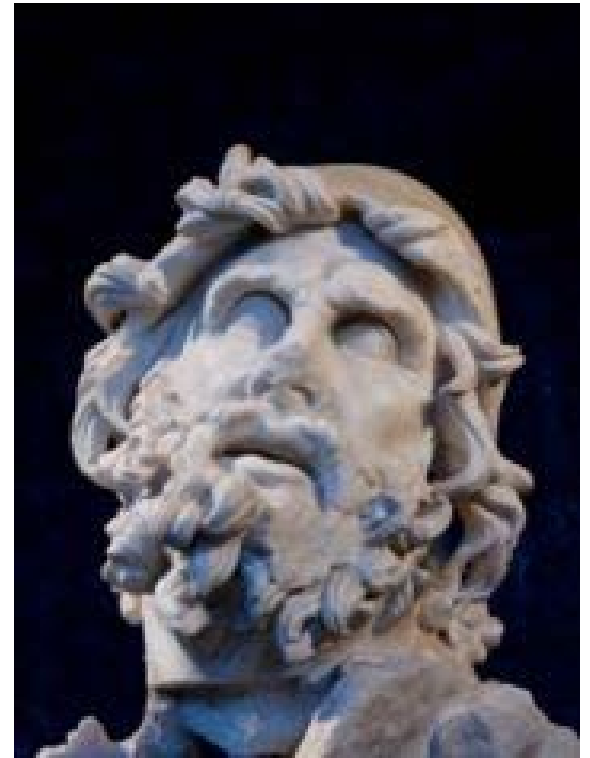
- 1978: OSU Extension Service
 - “New Faculty Orientation” —class setting on campus
 - Six hour presentation
 - No formal mentoring program
- Remember one of my first program staff meetings with all peers to do program planning—how can I do this job?

Mentors Along the Way

- **Debby Chan**—Extension Home Economist; knew office dynamics and county, knew community and people, became life-long friend
- **Dan Green**—Extension Forestry Agent peer; knew program and people, respected faculty member, someone to emulate, followed in his footsteps, still work with today
- **Bill Emmingham**—Extension Forestry Specialist; subject matter expert, respected faculty member, programmed with and published together, led my case forward for promotion and tenure

Origin of “Mentor”

The term *mentor* has its origins in Greek mythology. When **King Odysseus** left home to fight in the Trojan War he entrusted the care and education of his son Telemachus, to his friend and advisor, Mentor. While Odysseus was gone, ***Mentor served as guardian, teacher and father figure*** to his young charge. The term “mentor” has become synonymous with trusted advisor, friend, teacher and wise person.



King Odysseus, circa 1200 B.C.

From Kentucky Cooperative Extension:
The Mentoring Program—the new Agent;
Revised, 2007

Why Mentoring is Important for You

For an employee new to Extension, having a **co-worker** who serves as a **guide** and **coach** to help them **avoid mistakes**, **address concerns**, **answer questions** and **provide a sounding board** for ideas, **makes the transition** from *new faculty* to *experienced faculty* a **smoother process** and **increases the potential for success**.

Why Mentoring is Important for the Extension Service

Facilitating the **orientation** and **integration** of the new employee leads to **increased effectiveness, managerial success** and **reduced turnover**.

Commonly Used Terms

- **Mentoring**

- Process for informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and support provided to new employees in a work, career, or professional setting
- Includes informal communication— usually face-to-face—and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less experience (the mentee)
- Relational experience

Commonly Used Terms

- **Onboarding**

- Refers to the mechanism through which new employees acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviors to become effective organizational members
- Process usually included formal meetings, lectures, videos, printed materials, or computer-based orientations to introduce newcomers to their new jobs and organizations

Commonly Used Terms

- **Coaching**

- A training or development process via which an individual is supported while achieving a specific personal or professional competence result or goal
- Coaching differs from mentoring by focusing upon competence specifics, as opposed to general overall development
- Some coaches ask questions and offer opportunities that will challenge the coachee to find answers from within him/herself.
- Frequently coaches are not connected directly to coachee's organization and employment network

Goal of Mentoring

To provide a professional, educational, and personal support system for new Extension faculty by:

- Identifying resources and resource persons for the new faculty
- Educating new faculty in organizational philosophy, goals, and values
- Sharing skills and knowledge of experienced and successful county and state faculty to meet the needs of the new hires
- Strengthening new faculty's leadership skills and self-confidence

Who makes a good Mentor?

- Someone with strong respect and concern for you; caring person committed to helping and guiding
- Influential, experienced faculty member familiar with Extension and OSU
- Good teacher and scholar
- Someone willing to take the time and make the effort to help with your success

Mentors you should have

- Immediate Supervisor
 - Extension and OSU policies and procedures
 - Employee guidelines
 - Extension philosophy of education
 - Program planning guidance
 - Reporting procedures
 - Local knowledge, politics, advice

Mentors you should have

- Co-workers
 - Getting acquainted with office procedures, dynamics
 - Understanding working relationships, personalities
 - Knowledge of community, key leaders, potential roadblocks, opportunities
 - View and perspective “from the trenches”

Mentors you should have

- Program Peers

- Program team connections, personalities
- Subject matter expertise
- Program planning, development, delivery, evaluation
- Collaborator and project partner
- Publishing co-author

Good Mentors

- Provide Advice
- Give Feedback
- Help you Focus
- Respond to Questions
- Test Ideas
- Talk About Difficulties and Solutions
- Challenge You

Typical Ways Mentors Can Help

- Thinking about short-term and long-term career goals
- Identifying university resources and places for help—where to go for specific needs
- Discussing university policies, guidelines and governance structures
- Providing peer teaching reviews
- Discussing effective instructional techniques

More Ways Mentors Can Help

- Exploring scholarship or funding opportunities
- Co-authoring publications
- Sharing experience managing time, handling stress, balancing life and work
- Guiding your preparation for promotion/tenure or career advancement
- Exploring professional development opportunities

What Mentoring Looks Like

- Takes many shapes, forms—should be occurring in local unit, at Department/College level, in program unit
- Can range from monthly visits to 3-4 personal meetings per year with email/phone conversations between
- Should last at least a year or two for effectiveness—especially for new hires
- Frequency of visits depends on needs
- Can be terminated at any time

Mentoring Resources at OSU

- Your first start is OSU Extension website—go to **Employees** tab
 - <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/employees>
- On the RIGHT rail under Employee Resources click on **New Employees**
<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/employees/training-technology/new-employee>
- Much more info at site, too

More Mentoring Resources at OSU

- OSU Human Resources Department
 - Your next stop!
 - See website at <http://hr.oregonstate.edu>
 - Check out **Training** tab at <http://hr.oregonstate.edu/training>
- Teaching and Educational Design—Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)
 - See website at <http://oregonstate.edu/ctl>

Mentoring is a Two-Way Street!

- YOU need to take responsibility, too
 - Don't wait for help if not happening; start with your immediate supervisor, Department Head, and Program Leader
- Access OSU Human Resources support
- Mentees need to
 - Devote time to meet with mentors
 - Prepare for meetings—identify needs
 - Keep mentors informed
 - Openly exchange ideas; be engaged, honest, open
 - Make use of opportunities and suggestions from mentors

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