DR. EARLE F. ZEIGLER LECTURE

A Different Lens to View Mentoring in Sport Management

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Introduction

During the past 11 Zeigler presentations, many questions have been raised for us to ponder as professionals. For example, in 1995, Dr. Trevor Slack (1996) suggested that we expand the domain and nature of our research to include all aspects of the sport industry. Dr. Brenda Pitts (2001), in 2000, indicated the need for us to "think outside the box" and examine our doctoral programs in sport management. Last year, Dr. Jim Weese (2002) discussed the current and future issues relative to hiring sport management faculty members. Each of the previous Zeigler lectures has challenged us and helped us to define and improve our field. In order to keep our field moving forward, we must contemplate other areas as well. In this paper, I will focus on the topic of mentoring.

In 1990, Dr. Darlene Young (1990) completed a study on athletic administrators' perceptions toward mentoring and networking. At the end of the article, Young (1990) stated, "the data from this study suggest that educating young professionals in sport management about these two phenomena should be an essential part of their professional training" (p. 78). I whole-heartedly agree with Darlene Young. Both mentoring and networking are essential areas for not only professionals in athletic administration, but sport management educators as well. If we are to continue improving our field, we need to consider ways to mentor and assist each other.

Dr. Gordon Olafson (1995) indicated in his Zeigler lecture the hallmarks of Dr. Zeigler's leadership as "sensitivity, commitment, creativity, curiosity, and scholarship" (p. 339). I will add one more to this list, that is, mentoring. Dr. Zeigler was a wonderful mentor to many individuals as Dr. Zeigler's former students remember him as a compassionate teacher and mentor. I recently spoke to Dr. Chelladuari, one of Dr. Zeigler's protégés, who mentioned that Dr. Zeigler was very generous to his students and helped promote his students throughout their academic careers (personal communication, March 5, 2002).

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Mentoring is an important topic of study in many fields as wide-ranging as business, education, and physical education. However, according to Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, and Salmela (1998), "the largest body of research on mentoring has been conducted in the field of education" (p. 268). Therefore, since we are educators at heart, I propose that our field revisit mentoring. In this address, I will provide a different lens through which to view mentoring in sport management.

The term *mentor* is derived from Greek mythology (Young, 1990). Wright and Smith (2000) indicated that Odysseus left his son to a man named Mentor so that he could fight in the Trojan War. Odysseus requested that Mentor provide guidance, education and nurturing to his son. Odysseus was away for ten years and during this time, a relationship between Mentor and Odysseus's son developed (Wright & Smith, 2000; Young, 1990). Thus, the concept of mentoring evolved.

Definition of Mentoring

A review of the literature on mentoring indicates that there is not one precise definition for mentoring, mentor, or protégé (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999; Wright & Smith, 2000). Schweitzer (1993) indicated that mentors are "individuals who go out of their way to successfully help their protégés meet life goals" and protégés are "individuals who have received special assistance from other persons (mentors) in reaching their life goals" (p. 50). Ragins (1997) stated that mentors have experience and knowledge and are committed to enhancing their protégés' careers. For this presentation, I will use the definition of mentoring developed by Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) who defined mentoring as "a process in which a more experienced person (i.e., the mentor) serves as a role model, provides guidance and support to a developing novice (i.e., the protégé), and sponsors that individual's career progress" (p. 25).

Mentors serve many functions. Kram and Isabella (1985) indicated that mentors help protégés in both career development and psychosocial functions. Career development functions refer to the mentor providing assistance in coaching, sponsorship, challenging assignments, protection, and exposure and visibility (Kram & Isabella, 1985; Ragins, 1997). Psychosocial functions include: support, friendship, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and role modeling (Kram & Isabella, 1985; Ragins, 1997).

Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) provide excellent descriptions for each of the aforementioned career and psychosocial functions. Related to career functions, when a mentor informs a protégé of the games played in the organization and the necessary strategies to be successful, they are providing coaching. Coaching allows the protégé to learn about individuals in the organization (e.g., individuals whom the protégé can trust and receive support from, and those individuals who have power and may attack the protégé). Sponsorship assistance occurs when the mentor "highlights the protégé's potential and presents the individual in a highly favorable light" (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999, p. 28). Challenging assignments refer to the process whereby the mentor assists the protégé with the development of "technical and managerial skills that will be useful later in a career" (Weaver &

Chelladurai, 1999, p. 29). Relative to protection, the mentor's function is to help the protégé avoid mistakes. Significantly, if mistakes are made, the mentor takes responsibility for the mistake. The function of exposure and visibility occurs when the mentor gives the protégé a chance to develop relationships with those in power, or the decision makers.

The psychosocial function is best described as a social interaction between the mentor and protégé. Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) indicated that this interaction involves the protégé sharing personal and work experiences with the mentor. Related to the acceptance and confirmation function, "the mentor expresses confidence in the protégé, confirms the individual's abilities, creates mutual trust, and lends support and encouragement" (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999; p. 29). Counseling utilizes the mentor's guidance to solve conflicts. Role modeling involves the mentor setting an example which the protégé desires to follow.

Benefits/Outcomes of Mentoring

In addition to the functions of mentoring, the benefits and outcomes of mentoring are also highlighted throughout the literature. Benefits and outcomes are presented at both the individual and organizational levels. However, I will focus only on the individual benefits and outcomes associated with mentoring as described in a number of research studies. In May of 2000, Wright and Smith published an article in *Quest* titled, "A Case for Formalized Mentoring." A section of their article highlighted the benefits of mentoring for teachers. Wright and Smith (2000) cited a study by Odell (1990), which determined that protégés were motivated to stay in teaching and had positive attitudes toward teaching. Wright and Smith (2000) further mentioned that other studies found protégés were less stressed than their colleagues who did not have mentors (Ganser, 1992, cited in Wright & Smith, 2000; Odell & Farraro, 1992, cited in Wright & Smith, 2000).

Mentors also benefited from these relationships. According to Wright and Smith (2000), mentors underwent rejuvenation (Brzoska, 1987, cited in Wright & Smith, 2000) and reflection (Ackley & Gall,1992, cited in Wright & Smith, 2000) in their own teaching, and felt they made a contribution to the profession (Ganser, 1992, cited in Wright & Smith, 2000).

Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) presented a comprehensive mentoring model in an article in *Quest* that describes outcomes for both the protégé and mentor. According to Weaver and Chelladurai (1999), a protégé can experience advancement outcomes (i.e., salary, promotion, status, and power) and growth outcomes (i.e., competence, identity, and effectiveness). Outcomes for the mentor can include both intrinsic rewards (e.g., satisfaction) and extrinsic rewards (e.g., continued promotion throughout an organization because of the possible network of past and present protégés).

In the 2002 April issue of the *Journal of Sport Management*, Weaver and Chelladurai (2002) presented a study that investigated selected aspects of their mentoring model. A total of 262 Division I and 226 Division III assistant/associate athletic administrators responded to a survey. The results of this study indicated

that "an equal proportion of males and females had experienced mentoring relationships, and mentored individuals were more satisfied with their work than their non-mentored counterparts" (p. 96).

Young (1990) studied the perceptions of 263 NCAA athletic administrators toward mentoring and networking. A total of 157 females and 106 males responded to a 68-item survey. The results suggested that the top five benefits administrators received from their mentors included: (a) encouragement and support, (b) advice, (c) an opportunity to increase their knowledge, (d) guidance and direction, and (e) constructive criticism. Young (1990) indicated there were other benefits as well. Perhaps, the most interesting was "strategies and inside information to ensure success in the profession" (p. 75). When I read this benefit in the article by Young, I kept thinking about ways we can help each other be successful in the profession. Many of us are under pressure to publish and present in order to achieve tenure. Others are striving to balance teaching, research, and service. Mentoring is a way for us to help each other. We are aware of the benefits, but how can we encourage mentoring among our professional members? What can we do?

A Different Lens to View Mentoring

I found the answer to my questions. I suggest we consider a different lens to view mentoring; an alternative to traditional mentoring. Instead of mentoring, I propose that we as professionals consider adopting Kram's (1988) concept of peer relationships. In 1988, Kram published a text called, *Mentoring at Work: Developmental Relationships in Organizational Life*. One chapter of her text caught my attention, a chapter called mentoring alternatives, which highlighted the types, functions, and characteristics of peer relationships. In addition, one of her recent articles regarding a new lens to view mentoring provides the inspiration for this address (Higgins & Kram, 2001). Kram's text on mentoring is based on two studies, and throughout her text she employs a conceptual framework based on these studies. Both studies were qualitative in nature and involved extensive interviews.

One aspect of Kram's (1988) framework described how mentoring functions can be achieved through peer relationships. Further, while a mentoring relationship can last for 3-8 years, a peer relationship often lasts 20–30 years. Peer relationships, similar to mentoring, comprise both career and psychosocial functions. Kram (1988) listed information sharing, career strategizing, and job-related feedback as career functions in peer relationships. According to her text (1988), information sharing "gives both individuals technical knowledge and perspective on the organization that help them get their work done" (p. 136). Peers discuss their own career options and problems by career strategizing. Also, peers can discuss situations that are work-related and "clarify their own strengths and weaknesses" (p. 136).

Kram (1988) characterized the psychosocial functions of peer relationships as being more intimate, longer in duration, and involving self-disclosure and trust. The psychosocial functions included: confirmation, emotional support, personal

feedback, and friendship. Confirmation referred to peers sharing their perceptions, values, beliefs, and finding areas of commonality. Emotional support provided opportunities for peers to listen to and advise each other during difficult periods of time (e.g., changing jobs or having a manuscript rejected). Feedback allowed peers to learn about one another, often extending beyond professional concerns. Perhaps most important of the psychosocial functions is that of friendship which occurs when peers develop a concern for each other that extends beyond the professional setting.

Although Kram (1988) acknowledged that several functions of peer relationships are similar to those of mentoring, she does acknowledge several differences. First, Kram (1988) used the word "mutuality" to describe a peer relationship and indicated that each person in the relationship is a helper and recipient of help. According to Kram, this is not the case in a mentoring relationship where one person assumes the role of "guide or sponsor" (p. 136). Mutuality allows each person to feel as though they are on the same playing field and, thus, provides equal assistance to one another. A second advantage to peer relationships is that they are more available and can occur at any time; it is often more difficult to contact and find a mentor. Regardless of where an individual is in his/her career, a peer relationship can be formed. The last advantage, longer duration, occurs because peer relationships extend beyond work situations.

There are some disadvantages to peer relationships. Competition can occur if two individuals are working in the same organization. Also, because of the close interaction between peers, pessimistic perceptions about an organization can be reinforced. Regardless of these negatives, the benefits of peer relationships outweigh the negatives. Throughout our professional careers we have had numerous peers influence us. Kram (1988) has identified three types of peer relationships and places these on a continuum. The types of peers include: information peer, collegial peer, and special peer.

The information peer's primary function is information sharing where the demands are few, yet the benefits are many. The interaction between peers at this point is social and there is a small amount of personal disclosure. The information peer also "increases an individual's eyes and ears to the organization" (p. 139) and serves as a "source of information regarding career opportunities" (p. 139).

The next reference point on the continuum is a collegial peer. This peer's primary functions are: "career strategizing, job-related feedback, and friendship" (p. 138). An increased level of trust and self-disclosure characterizes this peer relationship. In addition, the individuals in this relationship provide feedback to one another and discuss their personal lives.

The last point on the continuum is a special peer. The primary functions of this individual include: "confirmation, emotional support, personal feedback, and friendship" (p. 138). A special peer can be considered as a best friend or an individual in whom a discussion of one's professional as well as personal life can occur. Kram (1988) indicated that these types of relationships were rare. According to Kram (1988) "this type of peer relationship provides reliable and candid personal feedback, emotional support, career strategizing and ongoing validation

of individuals' competence and potential" (p. 141). Kram (1988) stated that a special peer relationship could sometimes evolve from an information or a collegial peer relationship and that we may experience 1 to 3 of these types of relationships during our careers.

Another topic Kram (1988) highlighted was peer relationships at various career stages. She identified four stages of career development: establishment, advancement, middle career, and late career. An individual at the establishment stage is usually in his/her twenties and has "concerns about competence and a sense of professional identity" (p. 145). Peer relationships can assist a person just beginning his/her career. Kram (1988) indicated that peer relationships at this stage are similar to those of a mentoring relationship.

During this stage, as an information peer, I can assist a younger colleague to learn how to use the various services on campus to get things done efficiently. As a collegial peer I can provide information about their role as a teacher, researcher, and member of the campus community. As a special peer I may establish a personal friendship with that individual based on common interests outside of work (e.g., movies, music, books, recreational activities). The special peer relationship enables me to offer confirmation, emotional support, personal feedback, and friendship and, in turn, help my younger colleague gain competence and confidence.

In the advancement stage (i.e., individuals in their thirties), Kram (1988) indicated that "as the individual becomes established in his or her chosen profession and has a sense of competence and mastery, needs and concerns associated with advancement in the organization and profession take on new importance" (p. 145). At this stage, individuals have a desire to move forward. This is an important stage in which each of us can assist others to move forward in NASSM and in his/her professional career.

As an information peer during this stage, I can provide knowledge about the university and its culture and this, in turn, can help another advance. As a collegial peer I can identify opportunities for advancement and recognition, such as publishing and grant opportunities, committee assignments, working with graduate students, teaching awards, and assist with career strategizing. As a special peer I can help an individual with concerns about their potential at the university and within the profession. I may also assist them with situations dealing with balancing work and family. My experience dealing with these issues may be valuable information to younger colleagues struggling with the demands of teaching, research, service, and family life, particularly for individuals who have spouses or partners working outside of academia.

The middle career stage, when individuals are typically in their forties and fifties, is when we reevaluate the choices we have made and the events that occurred in our lives and careers. Kram (1988) characterized this stage as having established histories. Decisions made and passed up shape these histories. At this stage, as an information peer I can help a colleague network with others who have similar research interests and maintain visibility in professional organizations through different committee positions. A collegial peer helps one learn "how to develop subordinates and how to depend on, as well as coach, junior colleagues"

(p. 147). In this role I might help another colleague who is interested in pursuing an administrative or leadership role in a university or professional organization. As a special peer I can help an individual not feel out-of-date and deal with personal and professional issues. Kram (1988) indicated that peer relationships at this stage are beneficial because they offer security, comfort, camaraderie, and "a chance to celebrate oneself through another" (p. 147).

The late career stage occurs when an individual is transitioning to leave the organization and retire. The information peer according to Kram (1988) helps an individual feel a part of the organization and continue working. As an information peer I can reinforce the positive contributions that a colleague has made to an academic program and the profession. A collegial peer assumes what Kram has termed a *consultative role*. This individual passes on responsibilities to younger workers. As a collegial peer, I can let go of certain responsibilities and pass them on to a younger colleague. An example would be stepping down as a program coordinator or committee chairperson. As a special peer I can help a colleague prepare psychologically for retirement. At this stage, an individual reflects back on his/her career. A special peer at this stage is rare according to Kram (1988). In addition, a special peer is considered essential, since this person has been through the same steps. Kram (1988) mentioned a special peer is "like a home away from home—a chance to be understood and liked by someone who has been through it all, too" (p. 148).

Recommendations

Although Kram's (1988) work is focused within an organization, I believe we can apply the concepts to NASSM. Each of us has the potential to serve as an information, collegial, and eventually a special peer. While we may be able to develop peer relationships with people at NASSM, it would be much easier and more effective to start with our own students. Therefore, I would like to make a few recommendations that we first as individual professionals can implement to serve as effective mentors with our own graduate students.

Due to time, I will focus on recommendations for doctoral students. These recommendations can be modified for master's degree students and, in some cases, undergraduate students. One recommendation is to develop a contract between the protégé and mentor. The contract is a method to set up goals and activities that can occur outside the classroom. The contract also is a way to establish what the mentor expects from the protégé and an opportunity for the protégé to list expectations for the mentor. For example, from the mentor's perspective, the mentor could include expectations for publishing, presenting, and readings. An important point to mention is that the mentor must be willing to assist the protégé with the recommended tasks in the contract. The protégé needs feedback and guidance from the mentor. Otherwise, the activities outside the classroom will be difficult to achieve. Of course not every protégé will be able to achieve the established goals, and the mentor will need to be flexible and work with that protégé. For some protégés, the doctoral coursework may be enough.

The mentor may also consider adding parts to the contract which state that the mentor will provide timely and constructive feedback on the protégé's work, help the protégé get ready for a tenure track position, and teach the protégé everything that the mentor knows to help the protégé become successful after graduation. The mentor may also want to consider pursuing activities with the protégé that encourage social interaction. A part of the contract should allow the protégé to list his/her expectations for the mentor. For example, the protégé should be given the opportunity to indicate how often he/she desires to meet with the mentor, the type of feedback he/she desires from the mentor on papers, and other areas.

In addition to a contract, the mentor may consider setting up an independent study course for the protégé during his/her first semester in school. The focus of the independent study may be to introduce the protégé to research, the field, NASSM, the Community of Science Database, the Social Science Citation Index, being a tenure track faculty member, and other topics. The mentor can provide readings and assignments that assist the protégé to understand each of the aforementioned subjects.

Another area in which the mentor may prepare the protégé is the job market, and this may be one of the most difficult and challenging tasks. The goal is to help the protégé establish his/her line of inquiry. The dissertation, as we all remember, can serve as a foundation for our future research. However, the dissertation can also burn out the protégé and make him/her develop another line of research. Therefore, as mentors, it becomes important for us to help our protégés find dissertations that they are very interested in and will hopefully serve as a foundation for their future research. The mentor can assist the protégé with not only a line of inquiry, but also a research agenda and curriculum vita.

The aforementioned recommendations are just a few of the ways in which a mentor can assist the protégé. These recommendations require a commitment from the mentor and protégé and will only work, if both agree to them. If a protégé enjoys the experience he/she has as a doctoral student, then there is a strong potential for a peer relationship to develop between the protégé and mentor after the protégé graduates.

As previously mentioned, I believe that we can apply Kram's (1988) work to NASSM. Every one of us has the potential to serve as an information, collegial, and eventually a special peer. We do not have to be in daily face-to-face contact to serve in these roles because with today's technology we are capable of communicating with our peers every day. So how can we encourage and develop peer relationships? One of my recommendations is for NASSM to create a clearinghouse that Webster (1974) defined as a central office for information. The clearinghouse could be a place for our members to find out who is interested in a peer relationship. It would also serve as a mechanism for sharing this information. The purpose of the clearinghouse would be to foster information peer relationships among our professional members.

Schweitzer and Dolan (2001) recommended a clearinghouse in their article. They described the University of Minnesota Alumni Association's mentoring program that is used by 16 different colleges and programs and included 1400 student

and mentor participants (University of Minnesota Alumni Association, 2002; Schweitzer & Dolan, 2001). A NASSM task force could develop the specifics for a clearinghouse with a focus on establishing mentoring initiatives for our members. For example, a database could be developed of NASSM members who are interested in establishing information peer relationships. This would require developing a form that would request information such as the NASSM member's research, teaching, and service interests and initiatives. Members would be matched with other members based on the information from the mentoring form. The task force would determine the individual or group responsible for maintaining and updating the database. Perhaps, it could even be housed in the NASSM business office.

In addition to a clearinghouse to help establish information peer relationships, I recommend that we add another component to the clearinghouse that focuses on our graduate students. In other words, NASSM should develop a formalized mentoring program for our graduate students. We should remember that our students are the future of our profession. They are our future leaders and colleagues. Dr. Zeigler (1992) indicated in his 1989 address that "we should search for young people with all of the attributes needed for success in our field. We should help them develop lifelong commitments so that our profession can achieve its democratically agreed upon goals" (p. 213). During the past several years, our professional society has developed ways to make students feel more a part of the association. However, I believe with a formalized mentoring program we will serve them much more. Mentoring can occur informally or formally (Noe, 1988; Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000; Tepper, 1995). In a formal mentoring program, mentoring happens when organizations or programs match mentors and protégés (Ragins et al., 2000), whereas informal mentoring occurs without external involvement (Tepper, 1995). I believe a formal mentoring program would benefit our professional members and our students; it would enhance networking opportunities for our students and the job selection process for our members.

The first step in developing a formalized mentoring program is to have the previously mentioned task force develop "a statement paper that outlines the goals and objectives of the program" (Wright & Smith, 2000, p. 210). This, of course, is needed to help us clarify what we are attempting to accomplish (Wright & Smith, 2000). The next step is to establish a pool of mentors/protégés and start the matching process (Schweitzer, 1993).

Hypothetically, the mentoring program could evolve at a NASSM conference. Mentors and protégés would fill out surveys to outline their expectations and interests. They would then be matched accordingly. Next, meetings between mentors and protégés would occur at the conference to establish expectations for each other. The process of mentoring would then begin and continue for an academic year. At the end of the year, an informal evaluation would occur between the mentor and protégé to determine the success of the mentoring (Schweitzer, 1993).

Although, many of our members currently serve as mentors for students at their own institutions, it may be of value for us to mentor students from other institutions. As mentors, we can provide a different view and philosophy of sport

management for students outside of our universities. In addition, as mentors, we can learn from protégés and feel as though we are making a contribution to the profession. Our professional association may benefit as well. Schweitzer and Dolan (2001) indicated that there are some significant gains that an organization generates because of these types of mentoring programs, which include membership growth and retention, and professional growth. Thus, a formalized mentoring program would benefit all of us. I will mention that other professional associations do have formalized mentoring programs at their conferences. In May of 2002, the Health Physics Society established a mentoring program at their annual conference for their students (Walchuk, 2002).

If we are to establish a clearinghouse for information peer relationships and mentoring for our graduate students, we must remember that we will only be successful if we have a strong commitment from our members to volunteer for this program (Schweitzer & Dolan, 2001). Without volunteers our mentoring programs will not work. Also, these types of programs will not work if they are forced upon individuals. Thus, we should only pursue these types of endeavors if we are interested in them and have the time and effort to expand toward such a relationship.

I want to present a third recommendation regarding mentoring and NASSM. This is a very different way of viewing mentoring. I propose that we add a new section to the July issue of the *Journal of Sport Management* entitled, "Best Practices in Mentoring and Teaching." I do not feel as though we need to limit ourselves to mentoring in this new section. This section could be expanded to teaching ideas, initiatives, and other areas. Further, the selection of the July issue is important because many of us are preparing for the upcoming academic year during the summer. An idea from this type of article could be implemented into an upcoming course or our professional lives. O'Dell and Grayson (1998) define best practices as "those practices that have produced outstanding results in another situation and that could be adapted for our situation" (p. 13). Just think how much we could benefit as sport management educators if we shared more of our best practices.

A question sure to be raised with this suggestion is "How many other academic associations include this type of section in their journal?" I cannot answer this question. However, I am proposing that our editorial board consider the idea. Why not be different if it advances our approach and knowledge base as sport management educators?

In conclusion, it is important to note that many NASSM members have established mentoring programs for their students. In addition, many of our members are information, collegial, or special peers for individuals at their own institutions. However, if we are to continue to grow as a field and as sport management educators, we need to move beyond the boundaries of our institutions. My hope is for our association to develop mechanisms to encourage and foster more peer and mentoring relationships between NASSM professionals and student members in the near future. After all, my mentor, Dr. Linda Thorton from the University of Florida, said "Never say you cannot do something." The time has now come for us to try on a different lens and put a plan into action.

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