Section 1:
Developmental Networks - A shared model and language for mentoring

The complete version of the toolkit, each section and individual forms are available to download at http://suadvance.syr.edu (look for Mentoring Resources). The complete printed version of the toolkit is available for order also at the website.

Developmental Networks – the basics

A shared model and language for mentoring at SU

The information and knowledge required to be successful is no longer readily available from one person or group, necessitating pursuit of knowledge from other individuals and venues (Lazer and Mergel, 2011). Furthermore, there is evidence that a multiple-mentor approach is beneficial to women and members of under-represented groups, especially in the academy (Johnson, 2002). Over the last several decades the nature of mentoring has therefore expanded considerably although the essential goal remains the same. Broadly defined, mentoring is the provision of career and technical guidance and psycho-social support for professional development.

1. A developmental network consists of multiple social relationships that foster career development and personal growth (Higgins and Kram, 2001; Molloy, 2005; & Blickle, et al., 2009).

2. The developmental network is seen as a subset of an individual’s overall social network and consists of multiple mentors acting as career advisors for specific needs or resources.

3. An individual’s developmental network serves specific goals, and therefore, will be different depending on which goal a person is pursuing at any given time (including goals tied to specific stages of career advancement).

4. Individuals new to the developmental network approach may find it helpful to work with a developmental network coach.

The specific makeup (shape) of a developmental network will change over time.
Mentors – a new look at the mentor role

Defining the multiple kinds of support

A developmental network should have multiple, concurrent mentors that function in a variety of roles (Dinolfo & Nugrent, 2010). There should be access to a full range of career assistance including advice, sponsorship, coaching, and psycho-social support. The roles are not intended to be mutually exclusive. Each type of mentor role is defined as follows:

Navigator - A navigator is an individual with the ability to offer advice on dynamics, standards, and expectations relevant to chosen goals; to share and interpret the “road map of success”. A Navigator should have sufficient knowledge, experience, and network centrality to offer guidance especially regarding career advancement and career resources. They also share tacit knowledge and information necessary for integration in the institution or organization. They can sit at any level in the hierarchy. Often these relationships benefit both partners.

Sponsor - A sponsor is someone with influence who actively ushers the mentee through advancement opportunities or calls attention to her/his talents. She or he provides opportunities for exposure to other people of influence and facilitates access to promising opportunities and challenging assignments. She or he may nominate for awards and recognition.

Coach - A coach’s input is generally instructional and tactical, often informed by knowledge of multiple strategies to reach a particular professional goal. She or he supports decision making, self-awareness, self-assessment and planning. He or she may or may not be part of the organization, and may be a hired professional.

Confidant – A confidant is a sounding board, providing a safe place to talk and ask questions without judgment. She or he provides affirmation, encouragement, motivation and assistance. Often these relationships benefit both partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Navigator</th>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Coach</th>
<th>Confidant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advises about organizational dynamics</td>
<td>Promotes your interests within the organizational structure.</td>
<td>Teaches the skills needed to negotiate organization dynamics</td>
<td>Listens to the challenges and triumphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career development goals and advancement criteria</td>
<td>Promotes – steers you toward advancement</td>
<td>Helps you determine the direction you want to go</td>
<td>Affirms your choices and cheers you on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translates implicit performance criteria to concrete actions.</td>
<td>Speaks on your behalf, using information about your goals that you have communicated.</td>
<td>Explains new skills and holds you accountable for exercising them.</td>
<td>Shares their experiences, what’s worked for them, and the unwritten rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work related</td>
<td>Work related</td>
<td>Work and Personal</td>
<td>Work and Personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual relationship</td>
<td>Hierarchical relationship</td>
<td>Professional /formal relationship</td>
<td>Reciprocal relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps you manage your overall work performance and achievement.</td>
<td>Introduces you to people of influence; helps you build network connections.</td>
<td>A mentor in your developmental network</td>
<td>A mentor in your developmental network and possibly a friend in your social network</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developmental Network Principles

Different networks result in different kinds of development

The developmental network model fosters the use of social networks as a facilitator of career advancement. More generative and entrepreneurial networks will have a number of strong and weak relationship ties from highly diverse (multiple) systems/social networks in order to provide sufficient career assistance. The network should provide sufficient embeddedness to encourage retention, but enough diversity for novel information and advice to become available. Where formal mentoring programs exist in the academy, they most closely resemble “traditional” networks as described below. More detailed information about the connections between social network theory and mentoring, as well as a primer on social network concepts, is included in Section 6. The table below summarizes the work of Higgins and Kram (2001) on this topic.

Social Network Concepts in Action:
Mentoring and Developmental Network Makeup

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength of Relationship Ties</th>
<th>Traditional: “one or two mentors”</th>
<th>Opportunistic: “loosely managed development”</th>
<th>Entrepreneurial: “well managed development”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weak ties, low motivation to help</td>
<td>Strong ties and high motivation to help</td>
<td>Tendency toward more weak than strong ties</td>
<td>Tendency toward more strong than weak ties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Diversity/Department only</td>
<td>Low Diversity/Only Mentor’s Network</td>
<td>High/Multiple Networks</td>
<td>High/Multiple Networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal Opportunity for novel information and type of information is narrow in scope</td>
<td>Strong source of information but minimal variety of perspectives and little access to new resources</td>
<td>High access to novel ideas and a variety of information and resources</td>
<td>More complex and varied information, and Increased access to resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least one mentor in a developmental network should have the skills to help the mentee or protégé build and manage their network. However, the developmental network model requires the pro-active and deliberate engagement of faculty members in meeting their own mentoring needs.
Developmental Network Coach (DNC)

Support for the individual at the center of the network

Even though individuals ultimately manage their own networks, a regularly-scheduled conversation with a colleague can help ensure that the network is developing in a productive direction. This unique mentor role—the Developmental Network Coach—is particularly beneficial to those new to the University, seeking to achieve a new career stage, or working on a major new goal.

Developmental Network Coaches can help:
- By discussing goals and providing feedback.
- By introducing faculty to individuals who can help them reach those goals (for this reason, Developmental Network Coaches are most effective if they have high centrality in the University network).
- By continuing to learn about developmental networks and how they can be used effectively as a professional development strategy.

Network for Success

Developmental Network Coaches can help others identify gaps in their network. In addition to a mixture of strong and weak ties, a developmental network should include:

1. Functional diversity - mentors that play different roles such as navigator, sponsor, coach and confidant;
2. Positional diversity - senior faculty, junior faculty, academic leaders/administrators;
3. Demographic diversity - gender, ethnicity, race, age, (dis)ability, cultural background, etc.; and,
4. Systems diversity - college, university, discipline, industry/government, community, etc.

Individuals in this role are particularly helpful to new faculty as they:

- **Learn about Developmental Networks**: Understand developmental networks as a mentoring model and how to implement it.
- **Reflect on self-management**: Develop or enhance the capacity to manage their network toward career success in the context of new demands.
  - **Plan**: Support creation of a career plan and ensure clear understanding of expectations.
  - **Build a network**: Bridge with potential mentors, role models, and other important resources on campus.
- **Build Reputation**: Provide guidance on establishing a good first impression and collegial relationships within the department and on campus.

*Most importantly, a formally assigned DNC should be recognized and rewarded for service to the department.*