



TRAINING FOR MENTORS
How to Become a Good Mentor?
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Exploring Learning, Motivation, and Values of Doctoral Student

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What can I do for you this morning?

- Discuss about the relevance of mentoring relationships in the academic context in light with phd students' professional development;
- Explore the role played by subjective and contextual factors that might intervene in a mentoring experience;
- Share experience and suggestions in order to maximise mentoring relationships;

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First of all a premise...because we are on the same boat!

SOME EVIDENCES...

There is no formula for the perfect mentor!



Mentors need to wear different hats: researcher, teacher, department director, project manager, etc.;

Mentors need to display lots of professional (analysis, design, interpretation) and personal skills (teamwork, leadership, communication, stress management);

Mentors are called to manage different processes (delegating, influencing, persuading, collaborating, working independently, sharing and transferring knowledge);

Mentees want so many things from mentors...help, guidance, insights, to be challenged, to learn the secrets of our work, to be directed...

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It's simply a question of points of views....
Students' vs Mentors' Common Complaints



The mentor never gives timely answers to my calls

The mentor makes me feel like I'm bothering him/her

The mentor is too busy. The meeting is rushed

The mentor talks over my head

The advice is vague. I don't know what to do afterwards.

The mentor insists on too many rewrites.

The mentor changes his/her mind and gives conflicting advice.

The mentor doesn't return drafts quickly.

The mentor doesn't give help when I need it.

The mentor focuses too much on the details and misses the big picture.

The mentor wants me to work on what they are interested in.

The student calls without organizing his/her thoughts.

The student calls with unimportant matters.

The student thinks he/she is the only student I have.

The student doesn't have basic skills for research.

The student expects me to do the research project for him/her.

The student can't write well.

The student freaks out over revisions.

The student underestimates how long things take and misses deadlines.

The student expects me to rescue him/her from problems.

The student presents sloppy work.

The student refuses to take the initiative.

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Therefore, Mentoring is a formal role *and* a psychological function, and it is an important component of what we do

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Defining a Mentoring Relationship

- Formal vs Informal
- Goal vs Topic/Task Driven
- Frequent vs Infrequent Meetings
- Degree/Level of Guidance
- Accountability (both sides)

A great match is important

What does the Mentee want out of it?
...and what does the Mentor want?

Mentoring is a two-way street!



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Virtue lies in the middle...



Situational mentorship model (Blanchard & Hershey, 1992)

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But there can be challenges too...

Mentees can....

- Consume you
- Be unfocused and not follow-through
- Be manipulative
- Be unwilling to commit to the relationship

Mentors can....

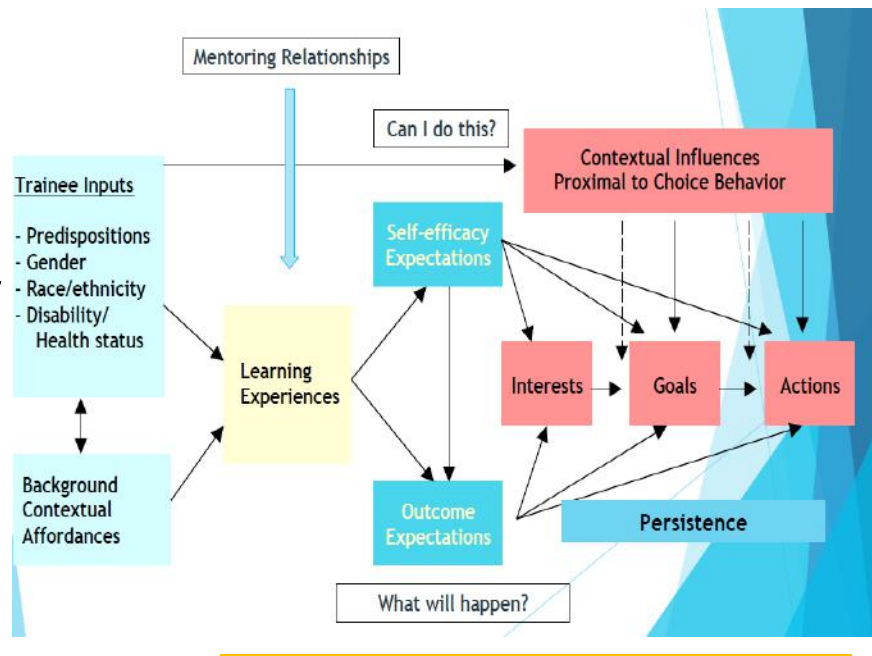
- Burn out
- Run into situations where issues really need professional help
- Have difficulties in marking the boundaries



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Phd is undoubtedly a privileged learning context (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994; 2000)



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And many evidences testify the beneficial role of mentoring in Phd

- **Enhanced research identity, sense of belonging and selfefficacy** (Palepu *et al*, 1998; Garman *et al*, 2001; Paglis *et al*, 2006; Lopatto, 2007; Bland *et al*, 2009; Feldman *et al*, 2010; Cho *et al*, 2011; Chemers *et al*, 2011; Thiry and Laursen, 2011; Byars-Winston *et al*, 2015)
- **Persistence** (Gloria *et al*, 2001; Solorzano 1993; McGee and Keller, 2007; Sambunjak *et al*, 2010; Williams *et al*, 2015; Bordes-Edgar *et al*, 2011; Campbell and Campbell, 1997)
- **Research productivity** (Steiner and Lanphear, 2002; 2007; Wingard *et al*, 2004)
- **Higher career satisfaction** (Schapira *et al*, 1992; Beech *et al*, 2013)

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Therefore, mentors can
concrete concur to shape a
positive relationship with
phd students by...

Aligning expectations

Promoting professional development

Maintaining effective communication

Addressing equity and inclusion

Assessing understanding

Fostering interdependence

Cultivating ethical behavior

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Given that, a crucial role is
played by some
psychological features
related to mentees...

Learning



Values



Self
efficacy



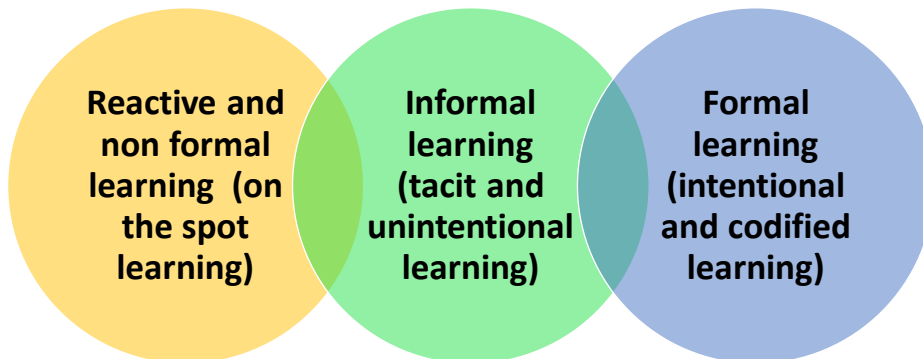
Motivation

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So let us focus on the learning process first

Learning is a multi-dimensional process involving cognitive and emotional dimensions;

Learning is the acquisition of knowledge and skills leading to a change in attitudes and behaviors that could allow to adjust to the context;

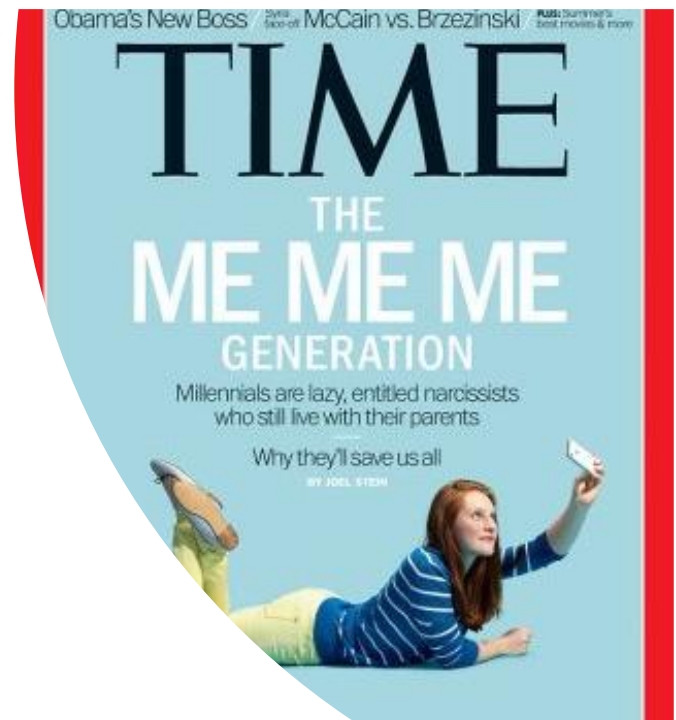


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New Students & Learning Styles

Millennials prefer:

- Active Learning
- Teamwork
- Civic Engagement
- Use of Technology



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Millenials are intentional and self-directed learners

....they tend to develop self-awareness about the reason for study, the learning process itself, and how knowledge is used;

As intentional learners they tend to be integrative thinkers who see connections in seemingly disparate information to inform their decisions.

As self-directed learners they are highly motivated, independent, and strive toward self-direction and autonomy.

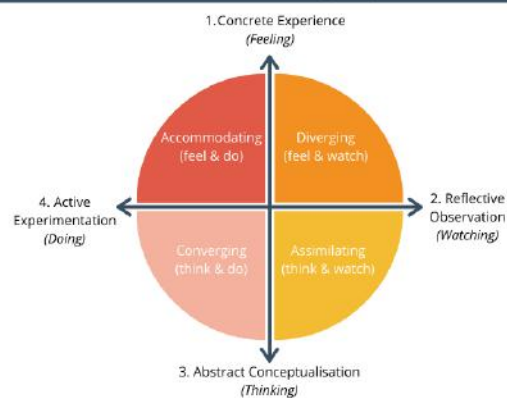
They take the initiative to diagnose their learning needs, formulate learning goals, identify resources for learning, select an implement learning strategies, and evaluate learning outcomes.

Deloitte Millenials Survey 2017

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However, this is a generalization and we should keep in mind that we all learn “differently”

Kolb's Learning Cycle



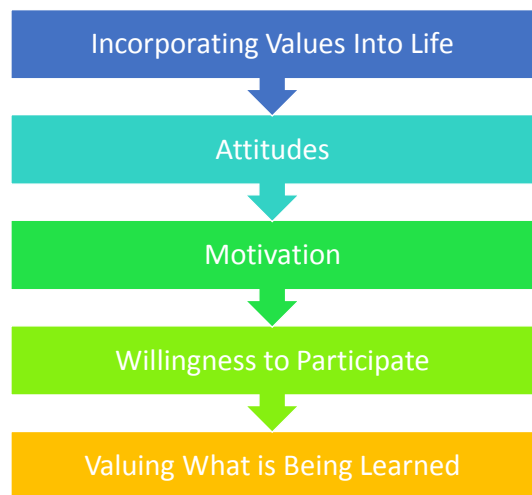
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Metacognition as the cognitive dimension of learning



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The affective dimensions of learning ...



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....Why are values so important in the mentoring relationship?

Values are standards to guide your action, judgments, and attitudes.

Values define what is of worth, what is beneficial, and what is harmful

Values give direction and consistency to behavior.

Values help you know what to and not to make time for.

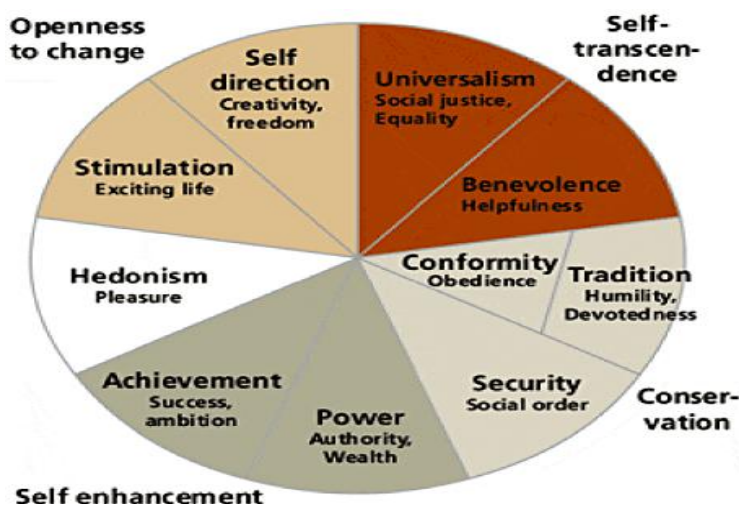
Values establish a relationship between you and the world.

Values set the direction for one's life

Values affect our decisions, goals and behavior.

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Basic value orientations



A fit between value orientations of mentors and of mentees could predict a positive mentoring relationship (Kristof-Brown, 1996)

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The role of Self efficacy

Self efficacy is a powerful predictor of outcomes expectations, goals, interests and career aspirations (Adedokun et al. 2013; Byars-Winston et al., 2010; Lent et al., 1986; Lent et al., 1991);

Research self efficacy has a positive effect on enrollment in Phd and other professional programs (Byars-Winston et al., 2015)

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Self efficacy is informed by 4 sources



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4 sources of self-efficacy

Mastery experience «I have done this before»

Vicarious experience «I have seen others do this before»

Social persuasion «Others have told me I can do this»

Emotional/psychophysiological state «Doing research in the lab makes me happy» or «My heart starts racing when I begin to conduct an experiment»

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Motivation is an important drive of learning

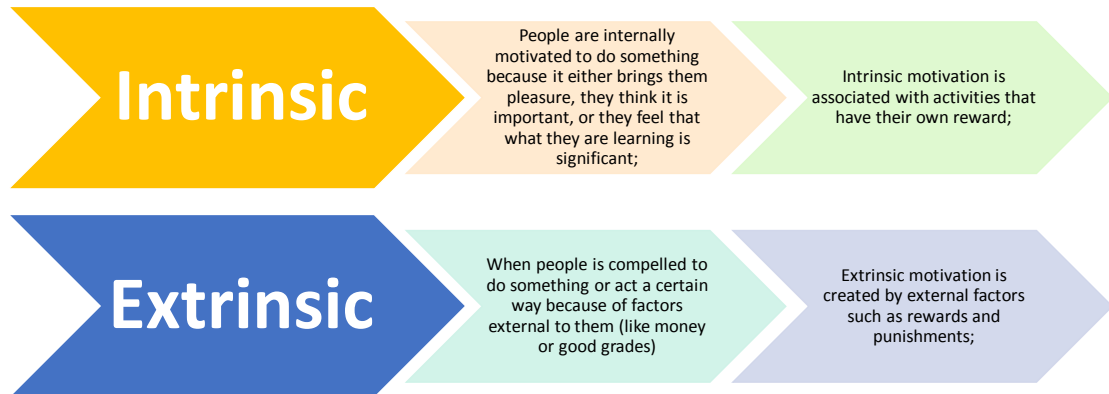
Motivation is the desire to do something, or have interest in doing something

In psychology, the process that arouses, sustains and regulates human behavior

Motivation is what starts our actions, gives direction to our work, helps us persist despite obstacles, and makes us put in considerable effort to a task

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There are 2 kinds of Motivation

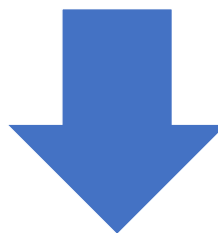


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Re-think Motivation



It is not a stable trait, motivation is a psychological trait that we can learn to regulate and to "train";



Therefore, it is important to identify what motivate ourself, rather than thinking of motivation as something they we have or do not have;

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What interferes with Motivation?

Depression from feeling overburdened with work

Peer pressure (competition)

(good and bad) Personal and family relationships

Unclear career goals

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Four General Approaches to Motivation

1. Behavioral Approach

A **Reward** is an attractive object or event supplied as a consequence of behavior.

An **Incentive** is an object or event that encourages or discourages behavior.

2. Cognitive and Social Cognitive Approach

expectancy x value theories: explanations of motivation that emphasize individuals' expectations for success combining with their valuing of the goal

3. Socio-cultural Conceptions

Legitimate peripheral participation is genuine involvement in the work of the group, even if your abilities are undeveloped and contributions are small

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Approaches continued

...

4. Humanistic Approaches

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs:

Four lower level needs – survival, safety, belonging, and self-esteem

Three higher level needs – intellectual achievement, aesthetic appreciation, and self-actualization

Self-actualization: self-fulfillment, or the realization of one's personal potential



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Needs: Competence, Autonomy, and Relatedness

Self determination theory: suggests that we all need to feel competent and capable in our interactions in the world, to have some sense of control over our lives, and to be connected to others

Need for autonomy: is the desire to have our own wishes, rather than external rewards or pressures, determine our actions

Need for relatedness: is the desire to establish positive relationships with people

Cognitive evaluation theory: suggests that events affect motivation through the individual's perception of the events as controlling behavior or providing information (self fulfilling prophecy)

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Goal Orientations and Motivations

Many theories include goals as key elements in motivation.

- A **Goal** is an outcome or attainment an individual is striving to accomplish.
- A **Goal Orientation** is a pattern of beliefs about goals related to achievement.

There are different orientations:

- **Mastery Goal** is a goal to improve and to learn;
- **Task Goals** focus on task;
- **Performance Goals** are when the goal is to demonstrate abilities to others;

And different styles:

- **Ego Involved Learners** are concerned with the evaluation of their work by others.
- **Work Avoidant Learners** want to complete work as quickly as possible with as little effort as possible.
- **Task oriented learners** are concentrated on the accomplishment of the goal;

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Interests and motivation

There are two kinds of interests:

- **Personal interests:** enduring tendency to be attracted to or to enjoy specific subjects – seek information and have more positive attitudes toward the learning context
- **Situational interests:** short term aspects of the activity, texts, or materials that catch and keep attention – if students are not initially interested in a subject or activity, they may develop interests as they experience success

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The role of emotions: Excitement and Anxiety in Learning

Arousal is physical and psychological reactions causing a person to be alert, attentive, and wide awake;

Individuals are naturally motivated to seek novelty, surprise, and complexity;

Curiosity arises when attention is focused on a gap in knowledge;

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Anxiety

Anxiety is general uneasiness, a feeling of tension, feeling of self-doubt

- **Trait anxiety** is the tendency to be anxious in general.
- **State anxiety** is the anxiety provoked by specific situations.
- Anxiety interferes with learning and performance

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Beliefs and Self-Schemas

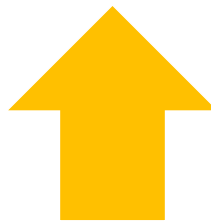
Entity view of ability assumes that ability is a stable, uncontrollable trait – a characteristic of the individual that cannot be changed

Incremental view of ability suggests that ability is unstable and controllable – an ever-expanding repertoire of skills and knowledge

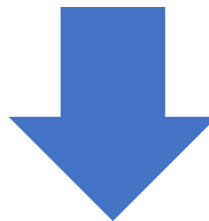
Attribution theories of motivation describe how the individual's explanations, justifications, and excuses, can be characterized in terms of three dimensions (1. locus, 2. stability, 3. controllability)

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Beliefs and Self-Schemas continued...



Self efficacy is a belief about personal competence in a particular situation such as learning or teaching a specific subject.



Learned Helplessness is the expectation, based on previous experiences with a lack of control, that all one's efforts will lead to failure.

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Learning “Coping” styles

Mastery-oriented students are students who focus on learning goals because they value achievement and see ability as improvable.

Failure-avoiding students are students who avoid failure by sticking to what they know, by not taking risks, or by claiming not to care about their performance.

Failure-accepting students are students who believe their failures are due to low ability and there is little they can do about it.

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Motivation to Learn

It is the tendency to find academic activities meaningful and worthwhile and try to benefit from them

source of motivation: *intrinsic (optimum) vs. extrinsic (diminishes motivation)*

Type of goal set: *learning goal vs. performance goal*

Type of involvement: *task-involved vs. ego-involved*

Achievement motivation: *motivated to achieve vs. failure-avoiding*

likely attributions: *controllable vs. uncontrollable*

Beliefs about abilities: *Incremental view vs. entity view*

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Final words on Motivation

Does not just appear out of the blue, but rather is the end-result of hard work and being a self-regulated person

Relationship between motivation and hard work is reciprocal

Having a clear understanding of why investing in challenges (e.g. Phd), and the related benefits, can help remain motivated



Mentors can do a lot to act on motivation through feedbacks for example

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A few highlights about your experience to keep in mind

- What qualities in a mentee will bring out the best qualities in you as a mentor?
- Which are the 4 characteristics that might define you best in the role of mentor?

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