Mentoring

Mark Bandstra
Heather Crawford
Tom Gallant
Ernst Sichtermann

February is Black History Month

AAERG's Annual Black History Month Celebration will be this Thursday, February 24, at noon via Zoom

"All of the Lab Community is invited to gather on Zoom with us as we present music, history, readings, and a panel of black scientists, for this celebration of black lives."

https://berkeleylab-erg.lbl.gov/african-american-erg/

Mentoring

- Spencer Klein and Brian Quiter kindly agreed to discuss and update on the PSA Mentorship Program with us during the IDEA minute upcoming March 22, 2022 – Thanks Spencer and Brian!

- This minute for IDEA is more about a few take-aways from the recent *"Mentorship at the Laboratories Across All Levels and Career Types"* workshop in the *"DOE Laboratories of the Future"* series; a ~2h panel discussion past January 25, 2022,

- Heartfelt thanks to Workforce Development & Education for bringing this event to my attention!

You decide to mentor someone because they remind you of yourself.

WHY IT MATTERS

Good mentors can make a big difference. Employees with mentors are more likely to get raises and promotions.[726] But because managers and senior leaders are more likely to be straight white men, and because people tend to gravitate toward mentoring others like themselves, women, people of color, and LGBTQ people often miss out on that support.[727] That also means your company could miss out on fostering talented employees.

You decide to mentor someone because they remind you of yourself.

WHAT TO DO

Be aware of this dynamic and let it inform your choices. If you're a white man, you're more likely to be in a position of authority someday.[728] You can make the workplace fairer by being thoughtful about whom you mentor. Consider proactively reaching out to mentor someone from a different background. If you're a woman, a person of color, or an LGBTQ person, you might decide instead to mentor someone like yourself—especially if you remember struggling to find mentors when you were coming up through the ranks. In your case, mentoring people like yourself supports diversity and inclusion.

WHY IT HAPPENS

Because of this bias, we tend to prefer the company of others who are like us.[729] This can lead us to invest more in people who remind us of ourselves, perhaps because we assume these relationships will feel more comfortable.[730]

Rooted in affinity bias

LEAN IN

Mentoring

- Education in STEM(M) fields focuses on math, physics, … (doh!)

- Understanding of advising, coaching, mentoring, supervision is often formed by experiences,

- Training in the work place often seems to emphasize compliance,

- Mentoring or being mentored is not unique to STEM(M); learn from other fields, business,

- We have all heard the words: diversity, pipe-line, othering, imposter syndrome, …

Pipeline or learning eco-system(s)?
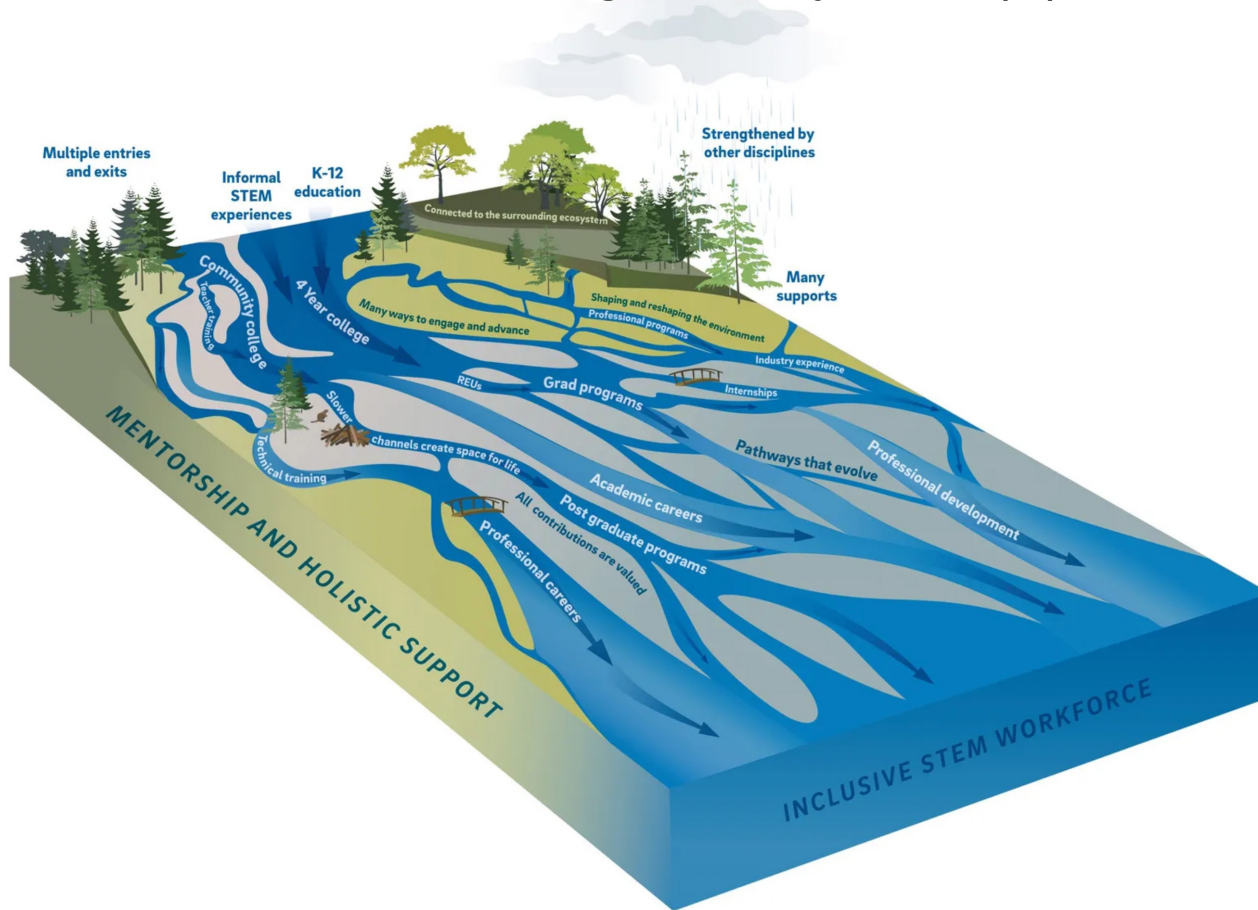
- From R.L. Batchelor et al, *"Reimagining STEM Workforce Development as a Braided River"*, EOS, April 2019

- System with on-ramps, pathways, career pivots, opportunities to build bridges,

- Probably no surprise that this example originated in the geosciences,

- Insights also to be gained from industry; ample Harvard Business Review articles, for example, or LeanIn.org

https://eos.org/opinions/reimagining-stem-workforce-development-as-a-braided-river
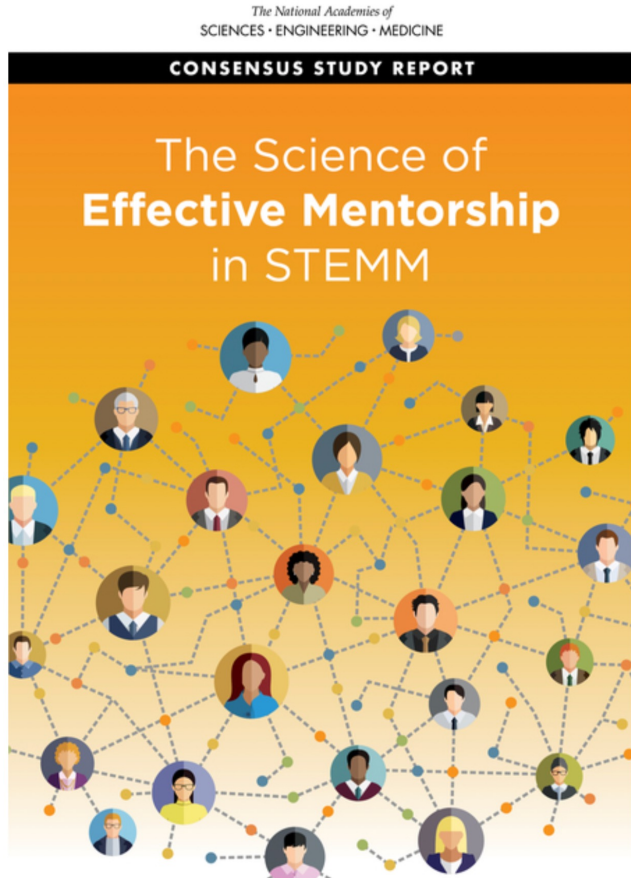
Mentoring

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2019. *The Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/25568

From the recommendations:

4.2: Mentors should learn about and make use of inclusive approaches to mentorship such as listening actively, working toward cultural responsiveness, moving beyond "colorblindness," intentionally considering how culture-based dynamics like imposter syndrome can negatively influence mentoring relationships, and reflecting on how their biases and prejudices may affect mentees and mentoring relationships, specifically for mentorship of underrepresented mentees.

4.3: Mentees should reflect on and acknowledge the influence of their identities on their academic and career trajectory, including the potential for imposter syndrome to disrupt mentorship. Mentees should seek mentorship that is intentional in considering their individual lived experiences.

Paired with an abridged version in the form of an online guide, https://www.nap.edu/resource/25568/interactive/index.html

A coworker says, "I don't see color."

WHY IT MATTERS

This comment denies a fundamental part of people's identities. It also suggests that if we choose to ignore racism, it will go away on its own. In fact, many studies show that when people or institutions claim to be "color-blind," they often perpetuate racism by failing to take action against it.[80] To combat racism, you first have to face it head-on, then actively work to challenge racist stereotypes and behavior—both your own and those of others.[81]

A coworker says, "I don't see color."

WHAT TO DO

You could ask a question to make your coworker reflect: "What's wrong with acknowledging someone's race? Everyone's identity is unique and should be appreciated."[82] Explain that while you understand they think they're being fair and objective, "not seeing color" can make racism worse. Point out that this way of thinking signals that someone's not interested in challenging racist behavior, whether or not that was the intention.

WHY IT HAPPENS

Your coworker may wish to deny that racism still exists.[83] Or they may be falling into the trap of thinking that "not seeing color" is a way of avoiding racism, when in fact it perpetuates racism.[84]

Mentoring – some of my take-aways from the workshop

- There is a science of mentorship,

  - Brings together multiple disciplinary perspectives – from organizational and social psychology to discipline-based education

  - Provides guidance on effective behaviors, frameworks, measures and assessment techniques, tools, …

- Mentorship can take different forms; dyads, triads – collective or group – network,

- Dimensions of identity – science identity, cultural identities – are linked empirically to academic and career development, and the experience of mentoring relationships in STEMM,

- Mentorship can help ameliorate negative effects of imposter syndrome, othering due to non-science identities in STEMM,

- Early consensus on expectations of productivity is helpful; compare "n publications" and "development of a network",

- Building trust and active listening are key,

- Questions – open-ended; "what" and "how" often work better than "why"; embrace silence,

- Criticism and reassurance go hand in hand, especially in early stages,

- A wealth of resources

  - https://www.nap.edu/resource/25568/interactive/index.html - The Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM online guide v1.0 by NAS

  - https://sites.nationalacademies.org/PGA/RAP/PGA_365025 - Mentoring Guides for Research Advisors by NAS

  - https://cimerproject.org/culturally-aware-mentoring-resources-2/ - Culturally Aware Mentoring Resources by CIMER

  - https://bit.ly/DOE_Mentorship_January2022 – Workshop link

IDEA Resources

- URM Job Posting funding
- [Luminary Cards](#)
- IDEA SPOT Award Program
- [LeanIn cards "50 ways to fight bias"](#)
- [idea.lbl.gov](#)

Consider joining the Council!

- All-volunteer effort
- Looking for people from all roles and areas of NSD

Share your ideas for topics or other feedback:

NSD-IDEA-Council@lbl.gov