

Mentorship enterprise: The future frontier

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Our mentorship workshop, represented by 3 generations of mentoring styles, demonstrated variations in developing effective mentoring skills, establishing appropriate mentoring boundaries, managing professional development and establishing networking opportunities.

The strategies were based on 4 CanMEDS Roles:

Collaborator: creating a customized plan to support specific mentee requirements, including advice about research strategies,

Professional: assisting new residents with career decisions and providing networking opportunities,

Communicator: supporting teaching/learning experiences, and

Manager: prioritizing competing professional and personal development choices.

The role-modeling demonstration focused on the evolution of the mentoring experience, creating developmental objectives and moving the relationship forward. Faculty, residents and clinical staff formed small groups to discuss the advantages and barriers of mentorship. There were 8/11 Ophthalmology residents, 23/30 faculty, 4 clinical fellows and 8 clinical staff (researcher, nurse, technicians and graduate student) participating in the workshop on 11 Dec. 2009.

Qualitative feedback at the end of the workshop informed next steps: mentees suggested that they take ownership of the creation of a wiki to share the mentorship process with residents and faculty, immigrant residents expressed with great passion the need to provide supportive mentors during their adjustment period and faculty recognized the value of fostering relationships with "junior colleagues" to renew their enthusiasm for their profession and to generate new perspectives in research and education. Mentees shared how they learned best, which gave faculty new insights into how the program could be modified to accommodate the learners' needs.

The workshop validated CanMEDS recommendations concerning the necessity for incorporating organized mentorship relationships into all residency programs.