SAME-SEX AND CROSS-SEX MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS:

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE INTERPERSONAL QUALITIES

UNDERLYING THESE RELATIONSHIPS

by

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Under the direction of Lillian T. Eby

ABSTRACT

Using an interview study design, this study examined mentoring relationships in an effort to identify interpersonal qualities that characterize these relationships. Mentoring dyads were involved in a formal mentoring program at a large organization. Interview responses from 17 protégés representing three sex compositions (i.e., male mentor/male protégé, male mentor/female protégé, female mentor/male protégé) were content-analyzed and 13 themes describing interpersonal qualities emerged as fundamental to relationships with their mentors (e.g., Commitment, Similarity). Findings indicate that the number of protégés who mentioned each theme differed across the sex compositions. In addition, qualitative differences in the content of the themes were revealed across sex compositions. Implications of the findings for mentoring theory are discussed.

INDEX WORDS: Mentoring Relationships, Mentor, Protégé, Interpersonal Qualities, Sex Composition

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this document to my family because without their love, support, wise advice, and encouragement, I would have left this endeavor long ago.

I would also like to dedicate this work to my boyfriend who has supported me through the trials and tribulations of graduate school, and has probably earned a few gray hairs in the process. His support of my dreams and aspirations never fails to amaze me.

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

Traditionally, mentoring has been defined as a dyadic relationship between a senior, more experienced individual (mentor) and a new, or less experienced, individual (protégé) (Kram, 1985; Mullen, 1998). The origin of the word 'mentor' can be traced back to classical Greek tales of Odysseus, who left his son in the care of Mentor, a wise and nurturing servant, during his adventures at sea. Despite these ancient roots, mentoring has a very modern role in today's organizations. Mentoring can address important organizational needs by serving as a training tool, a career development tool, or as a competitive advantage to attract and retain employees (Russell & Adams, 1997). Important job-related attitudes have been linked to mentoring relationships, including higher job satisfaction, increased organizational commitment (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000), reduced turnover intentions, higher career satisfaction (Fagenson, 1989), and satisfaction with pay and benefits (Dreher & Ash, 1990). Past research has also found relationships between mentoring and several career-related outcomes, such as a higher rate of promotion and salary/compensation (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Scandura, 1992).

These anticipated benefits have led an increasing number of organizations to either establish mentoring programs or to encourage mentoring relationships among employees (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). Out of 1,046 employees representing a variety of occupations, 38% reported having had a mentor during their career

(McShulskis, 1996). In 1998, 75% of executives in Fortune 1,000 firms reported that they either currently have a mentor or that they have had a mentor in the past (Mesmer, 1998). Ninety four percent of those polled indicated that having a mentor in the beginning of his/her career is important. Further, mentoring programs have been identified as a trend for organizations in the new millennium (Ragins, et al., 2000).

The importance of mentoring to organizations is also reflected in the proliferation of mentoring studies in the past 15 years. Kram's (1985) classic text on mentoring provided a framework for the study of these relationships. Based on interviews with 18 mentoring pairs, Kram identified 2 sets of mentor roles, career development functions and psychosocial functions, which define effective mentoring relationships. These functions are the mechanisms through which mentoring leads to attitudinal and career-related outcomes. Although the exchange of resources, as outlined by Kram's mentoring functions, have provided the focus for our understanding of mentoring relationships, the interpersonal qualities of the relationship play an equally fundamental role, yet have been the subject of far less research.

In order to fill this gap in the literature, the present study is designed to answer 2 questions that have yet to be addressed. Initially this study will examine the following question: What interpersonal qualities characterize mentoring relationships? This is an important first step in gaining a better understanding of the interpersonal dynamics of mentoring relationships, beyond the resource exchange between mentors and protégés (i.e., career development functions, psychosocial functions). Additionally, based on findings that different sex compositions of mentoring dyads (i.e., male mentor/male protégé, male mentor/female protégé, female mentor/female protégé, female mentor/male

protégé) are differentially related to mentoring functions (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000; Ragins & Cotton, 1999), an important follow-up question is: Do the interpersonal qualities characterizing the relationship also differ depending on the sex composition of the dyad?

These questions will be examined from the perspective of protégés. Admittedly, obtaining information at the dyadic level would be ideal; however, in an examination of relationships, what actually occurs during interactions may be less important than what the participants perceive, feel, or think about the interactions (Hinde, 1981). How an individual interprets and assesses the relationship is also important in determining the future course of the relationship. Obtaining information about the relationship from the protégé perspective provides one side of the story, but it is an important side that can reveal the dynamics of the relationship. A protégé's behavior must be considered a property of the mentoring relationship rather than of the protégé, since he/she may have acted differently in the context of another relationship. The mentor plays a role in eliciting the protégé's behavior, thoughts, and emotions within the boundaries of that relationship. Similarly, the protégé's interpretation of the relationship is representative of the qualities of the mentoring relationship, and not just of the individual. The essence of the relationship is revealed as well through the perception of each member, as it is through the combination of the members' perspectives.

The exploratory nature of this study necessitates a qualitative methodology, and the use of qualitative interviews was considered most appropriate. To address the first question, protégés representing different sex compositions will be asked to report the interpersonal qualities that they believe characterize their relationship and are

fundamental to how the relationship operates. To address the second question, protégés' responses will be compared across the different sex compositions.

Before launching into a discussion of interpersonal qualities, it is important to examine what is known about mentoring relationships through the more traditional focus on mentoring functions (Kram, 1985). Mentoring functions describe the types of exchanges that occur between mentor and protégé and therefore help to distinguish mentoring relationships from other work relationships (Kram, 1985).

Mentoring Functions

Psychosocial functions are "aspects of the relationship that enhance sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in a professional role" (Kram, 1985, p. 23). These functions consist of role modeling (e.g., mentor leads by example), acceptance and confirmation (e.g., positive regard is communicated to one another, self-differentiation is encouraged), counseling (e.g., talking openly about personal concerns and anxieties), and friendship (e.g., enjoyable conversations about work and nonwork issues) (Kram, 1985). By definition, psychosocial functions are interpersonal in nature, and depend upon the emotional bond between mentor and protégé.

Career development functions are "aspects of the relationship that enhance career development" (Kram, 1985, p.23). These functions consist of sponsorship (e.g., provide public support for the protégé), exposure and visibility (e.g., provide the protégé with opportunities to interact with upper management and to learn about the organization), coaching (e.g., provide job-related feedback and information to the protégé), protection (e.g., prevent protégé from getting bad publicity), challenging assignments (e.g., provide protégé with opportunities within his/her department) (Kram, 1985). In contrast to

psychosocial functions, career functions are facilitated or hindered by the mentor's organizational rank and access to organizational resources. By carrying out career functions, the mentor promotes the protégé's advancement in the organization.

A relevant framework for understanding how mentoring functions operate in the relationship is offered by social exchange theory (Foa & Foa, 1980). In the last two decades, exchange theories, typically reserved for the study of economics, have been applied to the study of interpersonal relationships (Foa & Foa, 1980). In the economic model, the exchange is limited to money-merchandise transactions, whereas social scientists acknowledge all forms of interpersonal exchanges, including friendship, services, and information. The overarching concept is that interpersonal exchange is guided by a perception of costs and benefits associated with the exchange. For instance, a mentor may weigh the decision to offer his/her protégé a challenging assignment based on the anticipated costs (i.e., the protégé fails) and anticipated benefits (i.e., the protégé succeeds). The cost-benefit analysis underlying exchange theory describes a very cognitive and hedonistic process. Exchange theories provide a useful framework for studying relationships, however, this framework only offers an understanding of interpersonal behaviors "determined by the rewards and costs, or expectations of rewards and costs, consequent upon it" (Hinde, 1997, p. 334). This approach has been criticized by scholars as reducing interpersonal relationships to mere exchanges of resources rather than recognizing that interpersonal behavior is not always motivated by instrumental concerns. For instance, exchange theories do not address interpersonal behaviors motivated by altruism. A mentor may take his/her protégé to lunch without any preconceived notions about what will be received as 'payback', particularly if a

mentoring relationship is characterized by positive affective qualities (e.g., trust, liking, identification).

In sum, an understanding of the resources exchanged in mentoring relationships, as described by career development and psychosocial functions, provides pertinent information about the benefits that each member can accrue from the relationship. However, what is lacking from this perspective on mentoring relationships is an understanding and appreciation of the interpersonal qualities driving these relationships. This seems important to achieving a more holistic theory of mentoring relationships.

Key Interpersonal Qualities

Mentoring relationships are inherently interpersonal and developmental in nature; therefore it seems appropriate to extrapolate from the literature on personal relationships in order to better understand these specific types of organizational relationships. Although most of the literature on personal relationships is based on studies examining marriages, dating relationships, and friendships, it is reasonable to assume that mentoring relationships share many of the same key relational qualities. This assumption is supported by how closely Kram's (1985) description of mentoring relationships fits into the broader definition of personal relationships.

According to Kelley (1986), personal relationships are defined by closeness. Closeness refers to a relationship "in which persons affect each other frequently, strongly, in diverse ways, and over considerable periods of time" (p. 11). As relationships become more interdependent, and therefore close, members of the relationship must negotiate the attitudes, qualities, and resources each person will bring to the relationship. Through this negotiation process, interactions become more personalized because they are based on

individual characteristics and motives rather than simply proscribed roles. Kelley's (1986) description of personal relationships parallels Kram's (1985) description of mentoring relationships as intense, occurring over a long period of time, and as benefiting both members in a variety of personal and professional areas.

A review of the literature on interpersonal relationships points to several key qualities of relationships, to include perceived similarity/liking (Byrne, 1971), trust (Hinde, 1979, 1981; Kelley, 1986; Kramer, 2001), commitment to the relationship (Rusbult, 1983; Sprecher, 1988), identification (Brickson & Brewer, 2001), self-disclosure (Taylor, 1979; Derlega & Grzelak, 1979), reciprocity/complementarity (Hinde, 1997), and frequency and diversity of interactions (Hinde, 1997). Although affective and cognitive aspects of relationships are "inextricably intertwined" (Hinde, 1981, p.2), for the sake of clarity, relational qualities will be discussed in terms of three broad categories, namely affective (i.e., liking, trust), cognitive (i.e., commitment, identification), and behavioral (i.e., self-disclosure, reciprocity/complementarity, frequency of interactions, diversity of interactions). These interpersonal qualities are not presented as an exhaustive list, but rather as a list of prevalent and important aspects of interpersonal relationships. Further, a focus on interpersonal qualities in general, and not limited to those presented here, will inform the perspective used when interpreting examples and characterizations protégés use to describe their relationships. Having said this, literature on personal relationships does suggest that the following interpersonal qualities may help answer the first research question: What interpersonal qualities characterize mentoring relationships?

Affective Qualities

Kram (1985) asserts that the emotional bond between mentor and protégé is the basis for psychosocial functions. Affective elements of this emotional bond could include liking due to perceived similarity and trust. Perceived similarity in relationships can foster liking and minimize tension due to shared values, beliefs, or ways of viewing the world (Hinde, 1997). Bryne's (1971) well-documented similarity-attraction paradigm suggests that engaging in a relationship with someone who has similar attitudes provides verification for your own attitudes and is therefore reinforcing.

> It may be that behavioral similarity to self, whether involving attitudes or values or abilities or emotional responses or tastes or adjustive responses or worries or need hierarchies or whatever, provide evidence that one is functioning in a logical and meaningful manner; similarity makes one's interpersonal environment more predictable and understandable. (Byrne, 1971, p. 165).

It has been repeatedly shown that "attitude similarity tends to facilitate long-term attraction" (Levinger, 1983, p. 331). The link between attitude similarity and attraction is strongest when the similarity is instrumental to one's goals or provides self-verification (Levinger, 1983). To summarize, individuals typically are attracted to and like others who are most similar to themselves on some salient dimension(s). Based on this theory, it is likely that protégés will report some degree of similarity and liking as characteristic of the relationship.

The extent of trust shared by the mentor and protégé is also an important determinant of the quality of their present and future interactions. According to Young and Perrewe (2000), "trust stems from the belief that a partner will enact promised behaviors and that those behaviors are likely to be helpful" (p. 618). A recent study (Young and Perrewe, 2000) found that relationships in which the protégé and mentor met

each other's expectations for career and social support behavior, reported the highest levels of trust and overall relationship quality. The level of trust in a relationship has implications for the efficient exchange of information and valuable resources, which is at the heart of mentoring relationships (Kramer, 2001).

Cognitive Qualities

Qualities of the relationship that are more cognitive in nature include the extent to which each member identifies with the other and the level of commitment that binds the two members together. Identification in mentoring relationships has been discussed with regard to role modeling. Kram (1985) describes role modeling as the most frequently cited psychosocial function, whereas Scandura (1992) asserts that role modeling is a third mentoring function, distinct from either psychosocial or career development functions. Regardless of how it fits into the framework of mentoring functions, role modeling clearly occurs in mentoring relationships. The relational quality that underlies role modeling is likely to be identification.

Identification is a process whereby an individual perceives someone else's traits, values, behaviors, and/or attitudes as desirable. According to Kram (1985), a protégé's identification with his/her mentor is based on the extent to which the protégé sees "parts of his current and idealized self" in the mentor (Kram, 1985, p.33). Conversely, mentors may identify with protégés who remind them of a younger version of themselves. Although identification can occur mutually, the differences in power, status, and/or experience between the mentor and protégé have implications for the type of identification that occurs. Brickson and Brewer (2001) describe a framework for identification that focuses on whether an individual's self-definition focuses on the self as

an individual (i.e., personal orientation) or the self as part of a relationship (relational orientation). This framework is particularly relevant for understanding identification in a hierarchical relationship, such as the relationship between a protégé and mentor. From the protégé's perspective, identification has a more personal orientation. This means that, 1) identification with his/her mentor is motivated by a desire for self-improvement, and 2) the mentor becomes a frame of reference for self-evaluation (Brickson & Brewer, 2001). The protégé identifies with and aspires to characteristics of the mentor that he/she perceives as being instrumental to obtaining professional and personal goals. From the mentor's perspective, identification has a more relational orientation. The motivation behind a relational identity orientation is to provide for the other's interests and well-being. Self-evaluation occurs based on the effectiveness with which he/she performs interpersonal roles for the protégé (Brickson & Brewer, 2001). The mentor identifies with his/her position in the relationship and performs the roles inherent to this position in an effort to enhance the protégé's career development. Identification with the protégé means not only recognizing his/her desirable traits, but also recognizing his/her needs in the relationship so that these can be addressed. In sum, identification can be experienced by either the protégé or mentor, and is therefore a property of mentoring relationships. The part that identification plays in role modeling supports the expectation that this quality will likely emerge in the description of mentoring relationships.

Commitment is a relational quality that can affect the intensity and longevity of the relationship. Level of commitment is defined as the extent to which members of the relationship "direct their behavior towards ensuring its continuance or optimizing its properties" (Hinde, 1981, p. 14). Therefore, commitment refers not only to the desire to

remain in the relationship, but also to the mentor and protégé's commitment to improving the relationship rather than accepting the status quo. According to Rusbult's (1983) investment model, level of commitment to a relationship is dependent upon satisfaction with the relationship, the number of desirable alternatives, and how much has been invested in the relationship (Sprecher, 1992). Any resource that the protégé and mentor puts into the relationship, which increases the costs associated with terminating the relationship, can be considered an investment (Sprecher, 1992). Examples of investments include, disclosing personal information, time spent advising, and promoting the protégé to others.

The mentor and/or protégé may act out of a sense of commitment to their role(s) in the relationship. These roles can be outlined formally by the organization, informally by organizational norms for mentoring relationships, or personally by their own expectations regarding how a mentor and/or protégé should behave in the relationship. Conversely, their commitment to the mentor/protégé role may originate from a sense of loyalty to the other member. To summarize, commitment to the relationship can have affective and/or instrumental underpinnings and is expected to be a salient characteristic of mentoring relationships.

Behavioral Qualities

The nature of interpersonal interactions that occur between mentors and protégés can help develop and maintain the affective and cognitive qualities of the relationship. Behaviors that are particularly important to personal relationships include self-disclosure, reciprocity/complementarity, and frequency and diversity of interactions.

Self-disclosure includes, “any information exchange that refers to the self” (Derlega & Grzelak, 1979, p. 152), and is often considered a prerequisite for relational closeness. The amount of trust in the relationship dictates the extent of self-disclosure. The disclosed information can be described in terms of the breadth of content areas discussed and the depth with which one discusses a content area (Taylor, 1979). For example, members of a relationship may discuss work-related topics in great detail, and never broach topics related to family. In contrast, conversations between members of a relationship may cover a wide range of topics (e.g., work, family, hobbies), however the depth of information remains at a superficial level. Self-disclosure plays an instrumental role in relationship development. Offering personally revealing information in exchange for acceptance, understanding, or equally personal information fosters relationship closeness. In one of the few studies on hierarchical relationships, subordinates and superiors indicated that openness is valued (Zorn, 1995). These employees also reported that self-disclosure can cause tension in the relationship if personal information is either inappropriate, or impedes the instrumental purpose of the relationship (Zorn, 1995). The degree of self-disclosure is therefore expected to be a salient feature, either negative or positive, of mentoring relationships.

Another important behavioral dimension describes the flow of exchanges in the relationship. According to Hinde (1997), reciprocal interactions are those in which “the participants show similar behavior, either simultaneously or alternately, directed towards each other” (p. 111). The differential in terms of power, status, and experience between the mentor and protégé limits the degree of reciprocity that can occur in a mentoring relationship, especially in terms of career development functions. Although protégés are

not able to provide career development roles equivalent to that of the mentor, protégés can in fact provide career support to mentors. For example, mentors may gain respect and recognition from co-workers for developing younger talent. This recognition is particularly beneficial if it involves co-workers "who work in his or her area of responsibility and who are likely to be in positions to reciprocate support" (Kram, 1985, p. 25). Further, protégés can provide direct forms of career support to mentors (e.g., technical assistance). It is also reasonable to consider the role of reciprocity in terms of psychosocial functions. Particularly in close relationships, protégés can exhibit a high degree of reciprocity for psychosocial roles (e.g., friendship, counseling). For example, mentors serve as a 'sounding board' for protégés' concerns related to professional and personal development. Protégés can benefit from mentors' feedback and advice related to these life domains. Mentors may also benefit by experiencing feelings of self-esteem and self-worth with the realization that he/she still has something to offer to younger employees (Kram, 1985).

Complementary interactions are those in which "each participant differs from, but complements, that of the other" (Hinde, 1997, p.111). Hierarchical relationships, such as mentoring, are typically characterized by complementary interactions. To enhance the effectiveness of mentoring relationships, what one member seeks in the relationship should coincide with what the other member can offer (Kram, 1985). A protégé who desires sponsorship would find a complementary relationship with a mentor who possesses clout and a large network within the organization. Similarly, a mentor who wants to refresh his/her technical skills would find a complementary relationship with a protégé who has technical skills. Relationships are not considered either complementary

or reciprocal, but rather mentoring relationships are characterized by a pattern of complementary and reciprocal interactions. Further, as the needs, concerns, values, and experience of the mentor and protégé evolve, so to does the pattern of complementarity and reciprocity that marks the relationship (Kram, 1985). Of interest to this study are what aspects of mentoring relationships protégés describe as reciprocal and what aspects are described as complementary in nature.

The frequency of interactions between the mentor and protégé has relevance for the number of opportunities available for relationship formation. During interviews with five employees who were currently in a personal relationship with a supervisor or subordinate, Zorn (1995) reported that all interviewees mentioned the time spent together as an important factor in relationship formation. Further, "spending time together and engaging in activities together were seen not only as evidence of connection but also as processes to create and maintain closeness" (Zorn, 1995, p.137). The amount of time that the mentor and protégé spend together is expected to be a salient characteristic of the relationship.

What occurs during these interactions is also an important indicator of relationship quality. In order to understand what implications these interactions have for the relationship, it is necessary to first examine the context of these interactions and what the participants are doing together (Hinde, 1981). A mentoring relationship in which the members only interact at work may differ greatly from a relationship in which the members interact during work and nonwork hours. This assertion is based on the idea that "the more things two individuals do together, the more aspects of their personalities are likely to be revealed to each other, and the more experiences they share" (Hinde, 1981,

p.9). It is likely that the amount of time the protégé interacts with the mentor and the nature of these interactions will emerge as prominent and telling aspects of the relationship.

Affective, cognitive, and behavioral qualities, considered to be key markers of interpersonal relationships, provide an organizing framework for characterizing mentoring relationships. Using the literature on personal relationships as a grounding framework is supported by the fact that, by definition, mentoring dyads involve intense, developmental, and interpersonal relationships (Kram, 1985). To this point, mentoring relationships have been discussed as one category of personal relationships; however, it is also important to take a more discerning look at the differences that exist within this type of interpersonal relationship.

Differences Between Sex Compositions

Although every relationship can be considered a unique interaction between the individual characteristics of each member and the social context, theory-building requires the identification of differences, or subcategories, on a more general level of analysis (Ragins, 1999). For purposes of this study, the sex composition of the dyad was chosen as the relevant means to examine differences within the larger category of mentoring relationships. Therefore, the second research question of interest asks: Do the interpersonal qualities characterizing the relationship differ depending on the sex composition of the dyad?

Examining relational qualities as a function of the sex composition of the mentoring dyad is based on several factors, to include: 1) a power differential exists in organizations, such that men typically hold more power than women (Ragins &

Sundstrom, 1989), 2) sex role stereotypes supporting this power differential place boundaries on appropriate interactions between men and women at work (Kram, 1985), and 3) the power differential that exists between mentor and protégé may further exacerbate difficulties in cross-sex interaction (i.e., a mentor has more power than the protégé due to greater status, organizational resources, and job experience) (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). Taken together, these factors provide a foundation for understanding why the sex composition of the dyad matters.

Power and Gender in Organizations

A review of differences between men and women in power in organizations indicates that women hold proportionately fewer positions of power in organizations, particularly in upper management positions (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). Though women are more prevalent in today's organizations, they are grouped in entry-level positions, or in departments having relatively little power (e.g., human resources). A thorough discussion of the societal and organizational factors contributing to gendered power in organizations is beyond the scope of this study. However, factors related to interpersonal perceptions (e.g., sex role stereotypes, attributions) affect women's power in organizations through women's interpersonal relationships, making these factors particularly relevant to a discussion of mentoring relationships (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989).

Sex Roles Stereotypes in Organizations

The sex of an individual is not a neutral characterization. The labels 'male' and 'female' are associated with a range of both positive and negative characteristics that are collectively considered sex role stereotypes (Hurley & Fagenson-Eland, 1996; Schein,

1973; 1975). These stereotypes typically emerge from traditional gender-related roles ascribed to men and women that spill over into the work environment (Bhatnagar, 1988). The passive, nurturing roles that women have traditionally played as wife and mother are carried into the workplace, where these traits are considered less desirable than stereotypically masculine characteristics such as leadership ability and aggressiveness (Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989). In short, sex role stereotypes impact the way in which men and women are perceived in organizations. This places women at a disadvantage because characteristics that are used to describe men (e.g., competitive, self confident, objective, forceful, ambitious) are also considered to be requisite management characteristics (Schein, 1975). This pattern does not hold for characteristics used to describe women.

Recent research on sex role stereotypes has replicated Schein's (1973;1975) earlier findings. Brenner, Tomkiewicz, and Schein (1989) found that male managers saw no resemblance between female characteristics and characteristics of a successful manager, though the adjectives they used to describe males highly resembled their description of successful managers. The good news is that female managers' descriptions of successful managers equally resembled the characteristics, attitudes, and temperaments used to describe both male and females. Although this study indicates that female managers are beginning to have more progressive views of women, the attitudes of male managers mirrored traditional, stereotypical views. As such, the threat remains that sex role stereotypes can lead to the perception of women as being less qualified or less suitable for powerful positions in organizations (Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989).

> Sex role stereotypes imply that power is stereotypically male; To be a man is to be powerful, and vice versa. Thus, a powerful woman is a contradiction in terms… Stereotypes and associated sex-role expectations held by subordinates may be problematic for female managers. (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989, p. 63)

These stereotypes may also be problematic for female mentors. Relative to protégés, mentors have more power due to their higher organizational status as well as their role in the relationship. However, this general statement is complicated by the fact that perceived power may underestimate or overestimate the actual power one receives from organizational status or position (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). The seeming incongruity between female characteristics and power may lead protégés to devalue female mentors. Conversely, men may be less willing to mentor females (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). These stereotypes affect not only individuals' actual and perceived power in organizations, but also the interactions between men and women in mentoring relationships.

One method of reducing the ambiguity involved in working with someone of the opposite sex is to rely on traditional stereotypes that have been learned in other contexts (e.g., family) (Kram, 1985). Therefore, cross-sex mentoring relationships may be more susceptible to stereotyped interactions that may impede the relationship's effectiveness. In her interviews with mentors and protégés, Kram (1985) identified four reciprocal role relationships that can occur in cross-sex relationships. For example, a male mentor may act like a 'father' towards a female protégé, and she may play the corresponding role of 'daddy's girl' or 'pet'. This type of relationship describes a mentor who primarily coaches and protects the protégé, whereas the protégé acts less competent and less independent (Kram, 1985). The other 3 stereotypical roles are played out in a similar fashion, such that mentors and protégés act out roles learned in early socialization

experiences. Stereotyped roles for cross-sex interactions may originate from experience in either familial relations or intimate/sexual relations. Clearly, encumbering the mentoring relationship with the behaviors and perceptions inherent to either set of relations has implications for the unique difficulties protégés and mentors may face in cross-sex relationships.

An understanding of how sex role stereotypes and gendered power in organizations influence mentoring relationships provides a backdrop against which a discussion of diversified mentoring relationships can be better understood.

Diversified Mentoring Relationships

With the increase in diversity of the workforce, mentoring has been targeted as a mechanism to develop organizational members who are underrepresented in upper management positions, such as women, and racial or ethnic minorities (Russell & Adams, 1997). Organizational barriers to advancement for women and minorities can include tokenism, socialization practices, dependence on inappropriate power, and limited access to information networks (Bhatnagar, 1988). In the context of mentoring, women without a mentor had lower career expectations and perceived employment alternatives than either women with a mentor or men with or without a mentor (Baugh, Lankau, & Scandura, 1996). Thus, it appears that mentoring has particular relevance for women as a valuable mechanism for overcoming organizational barriers to advancement. This may help to explain why, despite women's perceived barriers to developing a mentoring relationship (Ragins & Cotton, 1991), women are just as likely as men to become protégés (Fagenson, 1989; Ragins & Cotton, 1991; Dreher & Ash, 1990). The critical

role mentoring plays in career development encourages women to put in the extra effort to obtain a mentor.

As more women and racial/ethnic minorities seek out mentors and opportunities to mentor others, mentoring dyads continue to become more diverse. Diversified mentoring relationships are "relationships composed of mentors and protégés who differ on one or more group memberships associated with power in organizations" (Ragins, 1999, p. 234). Due to the focus of the current study, a discussion of diversity in mentoring relationships will be limited to the sex composition of the dyad.

Some research on diversified mentoring relationships has focused on the differential mentoring functions and career outcomes associated with cross-sex and same-sex relationships. Using a sample of female protégés, Burke and McKeen (1995) found that women in cross-sex relationships considered same-sex relationships to be easier to manage in terms of public image, and to involve fewer complications and less tension. This finding supports the generally accepted view that cross-sex relationships are particularly vulnerable to sexual tensions, role ambiguity, and suspicion from other organizational members (Kram, 1985; Thomas, 1989). According to Clawson and Kram (1984), cross-sex relationships pose a developmental dilemma for mentors and protégés because each member must manage the closeness and/or distance in the internal relationship as well as the perceptions of other employees. In fact, Bowen (1985) found that the single biggest problem related to cross-sex mentoring is the resentment of coworkers. Coworker resentment is particularly an issue for cross-sex relationships, because there is a tendency for coworkers "to question why the supportive alliance exists", and to determine that the answer is favoritism or sexual involvement rather than

the protégé's competence (Kram, 1985, p. 124). A consequence of managing public image, sexual tensions, and role ambiguity is revealed in the consistent finding that protégés and mentors in cross-sex relationships interact less frequently on a social basis than members of same-sex relationships (Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). These implications have particular relevance for female protégés who are more likely to be in a cross-sex relationship than men due to the scarcity of women in upper management (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; O'Neill, Horton, & Crosby, 1999).

While research findings suggest that cross-sex relationships pose unique experiences and potential challenges for mentors and protégés, it appears that the benefits of the mentoring relationship (e.g., mentoring functions, career outcomes) generally outweigh the costs (Bowen, 1985). Protégés in cross-sex relationships may work harder to overcome the taboos and/or barriers related to having a mentor of the opposite sex. This phenomenon is supported by a study conducted by Noe (1989) which found that mentors matched with protégés of the opposite sex reported that these protégés utilized their relationships more effectively than protégés in same-sex relationships.

What is clear from research is that protégés in cross-sex and same-sex relationships are reporting similar benefits of the mentoring relationship (Scandura & Ragins, 1993; Gaskill, 1991). Mullen (1998) and Ragins & Cotton (1999) found that neither the gender of the mentor nor the gender or the protege determined whether career or psychosocial functions were performed. Similarly, Ragins, Cotton, and Miller (2000) found that both men and women who had an informal mentor reported equivalent attitudinal benefits (e.g., career commitment, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, lower intentions to quit) and satisfaction with the relationship. Finally, in an

examination of the role of mentoring in the career outcomes of men and women, Dreher and Ash (1990) found that gender of the protégé did not moderate the relationship between mentoring functions and career outcomes (i.e., total income, pay satisfaction, benefits satisfaction, and number of promotions) for either same-sex or cross-sex relationships. These findings suggest that although cross-sex relationships present certain challenges to the mentors and protégés in these relationships, the bottom-line for protégés in both same-sex and cross-sex relationships remains the same in terms of mentor functions, career outcomes, and job-related attitudes.

There is, however, an important caveat that should be noted here. The abovementioned findings are based on a comparison of same-sex and cross-sex relationships, when in fact four distinct sex compositions exist. Combining relationships involving a male mentor and male protégé with relationships having a female mentor and female protégé assumes that these relationships are equivalent because the protégé and mentor share the same sex (Ragins, 1999). The same can be said for grouping together the two forms of cross-sex relationships (i.e. male mentor-female protégé, female mentor-male protégé). The dichotomous grouping of mentoring relationships into same-sex and cross-sex categories masks the differences that may exist between the four types of relationships. Though most studies have focused on the main effects of protégé sex and/or mentor sex on mentoring outcomes, this focus could lead to inaccurate conclusions that there are no differences based on the sex composition of the mentoring dyad (Ragins, 1999). The few studies that have examined the interaction between the sex composition of the dyad and mentoring outcomes corroborate this assertion.

For instance, although Ragins and Cotton (1999) found that same-sex and cross-sex relationships did not differ significantly in terms of mentoring functions, an examination of specific sex compositions revealed a significant effect on mentoring functions and career outcomes. Compared to other types of relationships, male protégés with female mentors were less satisfied with their mentors and less likely to report that their mentor provided acceptance in their professional development. Male protégés with female mentors also reported receiving less challenging assignments and exposure than female protégés with male mentors. Additionally, male protégés with female mentors reported less coaching and friendship than female protégés with female mentors. Based on a sample of 1150 employees in a large finance company, McGuire (1999) found that both male and female protégés reported receiving more instrumental help from male mentors and more socioemotional help from female mentors. Participants also indicated that female mentors provided less instrumental and more soicioemotional help to female protégés than male protégés. These results should be tempered with the fact socioemotional support was measured using two items (i.e., “Has this person given you encouragement and moral support?”, “Has this person given you support with a personal problem?”) that focus on aspects of psychosocial functions that indicate interpersonal closeness or intimacy. Results may have been affected by the limited representation of the content domain for psychosocial functions described by Kram (1985). Despite this limitation, it is apparent from these two studies that, within cross-sex relationships, important differences emerge with respect to career development and psychosocial functions. A comparison of specific sex compositions provide a much more complex picture of how the mentoring experience may differ based on the sex composition of the

dyad. Given this complexity, it is helpful to summarize some of the general findings relevant to the specific sex compositions.

Studies have consistently found that psychosocial functions are most prevalent in relationships involving a female mentor and a female protégé (Burke, McKeen, & McKenna, 1990; Burke & McKeen, 1996; Noe, 1989; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). More specifically, female protégés with female mentors report that their mentor served a role modeling function (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990), provided socioemotional help (McGuire, 1999), and interacted with them socially (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Information from the mentor's perspective appears to support these findings. In a study comparing male and female mentors, Burke, McKeen, and McKenna (1990) found that female mentors reported providing more friendship, counseling, and sponsorship to females than males. Overall, findings indicate that relationships involving a female mentor and a female protégé are characterized by the most psychosocial functions. The apparent deficiency of career development functions in these relationships may account for the findings that female protégés with female mentors, 1) report greater intentions to quit their organizations despite reporting greater job involvement, 2) earn lower salaries, and 3) are in lower level managerial positions than females with male mentors (Burke & McKeen, 1997; Burke & McKeen, 1996; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). The consistency of these findings allows for speculation that female protégés with female mentors may describe their relationship predominantly in terms of affective qualities and the behavioral qualities that foster them (i.e., self-disclosure, frequency and diversity of interactions).

Until recently, mentoring has been traditionally conceptualized as a male mentor paired with a male protégé. This sex composition continues to be the most pervasive in

organizations and is often perceived as conferring the most benefits to the protégé in terms of career development functions (Burke & McKeen, 1996; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). Recent studies have not found this to be the case. Ragins & Cotton (1999) found that male protégés with male mentors did not report more mentoring functions or greater satisfaction with the relationship, except in comparison to male protégés with female mentors. Again, there are very few studies comparing male mentor/male protégé relationships to the other three forms, because many researchers have chosen to examine main effects for protégé gender or mentor gender. Further, male mentor/male protégé relationships have typically been considered a base-line, or standard, against which to compare more diverse mentoring dyads, rather than as a focus of examination.

With respect to relationships involving male protégés and female mentors, male protégés experience less career development functions (i.e., challenging assignments, exposure, and coaching), and report receiving less psychosocial functions (i.e. acceptance-and-confirmation). Even more revealing is the finding that male protégés with female mentors reported the lowest overall satisfaction with their mentor than the other three types of relationships (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). These findings paint a fairly negative picture of what men can hope to receive from mentoring relationships with a female mentor. However, these results should be interpreted with caution since they are based on a single study in which only 24 out of a total of 257 male protégés reported having a female mentor.

Conversely, female protégés with male mentors reported receiving more career development functions (i.e., challenging assignments, exposure, coaching), more psychosocial functions (i.e. acceptance-and-confirmation) and higher satisfaction with the

relationship than males with female mentors (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Female protégés with male mentors also reported that they socialized less with their mentor outside of work than female protégés with female mentors (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). It appears that female protégés with male mentors receive less psychosocial functions than females in same-sex relationships; however a benefit to this relationship is the increased career development functions as a result of having a male mentor.

Sex role stereotypes and gendered power in organizations likely underlie the differences in mentoring functions and outcomes among the four sex compositions of mentoring dyads. Overall, female mentors represent a contradiction due to the "incompatibility of femininity and power" (Ragins & Sundstrom 1989). This contradiction is intensified in female mentor/male protégé relationships, where traditional sex roles are reversed (i.e., the female mentor has more power and authority relative to the male protégé). Additionally, the interaction between male mentors and female protégés is complicated by sex role stereotypes and the relatively lower power and status of women in organizations.

In conclusion, a fine-grained analysis of mentoring relationships, looking separately at different sex compositions, is important. Recent studies on diversified mentoring provide evidence that the sex composition of the dyad does matter, and that these differences are not captured by a simple comparison of same-sex and cross-sex dyads (Ragins & Cotton, 1999; McGuire, 1999). An expectation that there will be differences across the sex compositions regarding what interpersonal qualities protégés report is also supported by the literature on sex role stereotypes and the disparity in power between men and women in organizations.

The present study utilizes semi-structured interviews in order to provide, 1) insight into the interpersonal qualities that are important to mentoring relationships, and 2) an understanding of how interpersonal qualities vary across the different sex compositions. The context of this examination lies within the boundaries of a global organization in the oil and gas extraction industry.

Organizational Context

The context in which these mentoring relationships occur should be considered a third party in the relationship since it has the potential to dictate the protégés' and mentors' understanding of mentoring, their goals for the relationship, and the activities available to mentoring pairs. In addition, the working environment constrains and/or shapes the interactions between the mentor and protégé. The present study was conducted in an energy company (Company X) that employs more than 91,000 individuals in over 135 countries (e.g., Brazil, Algeria, Netherlands). The company has been in existence for over 100 years. Recent demographic statistics indicate that at the end of 2001, women represented 7.9% of the senior executives, 9.2% of senior management, and 17.7% of middle management positions. Further, in 2001, the number of female employees doubled and the number of minorities more than tripled. The protégés who participated in this study were all employees who lived and worked in the U.S. at the time of the study.

Recently, this organization established a Group Diversity and Inclusiveness Standard. Employee Networks and the mentoring program are two outcomes of this diversity initiative that are relevant to this study. There are currently 8 Employee Networks that are designed to promote diversity awareness and to provide a resource for minority employees. Examples of these Employee Networks include the following:

Hispanic Employee Network (SHEN), Women Adding Value Everywhere (WAVE), Black Networking Group (SBNG), Society Absent of Individual Limitations (SAIL). The basis for these Networks is to use employee differences in order to develop creative ideas, make better decisions, and solve problems more efficiently. For instance, SAIL recently developed a checklist detailing factors to consider when planning a presentation to individuals with impaired hearing and collaborated with an outside agency in order to make the organization more accessible for those with disabilities. Another Employee Network for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender employees held an orientation on issues related to domestic-partner issues such as retirement and wills. In summary, the Employee Networks heighten awareness and educate employees about issues relevant to their particular group, work to create a more inclusive work environment, and utilize their unique perspective to add value to the organization.

The Networks' relevance to the mentoring program is due to the fact that employees can join the mentoring program either through their business unit or through an Employee Network. This is important because each Employee Network and each business unit implements the mentoring program in slightly different ways. For instance, protégés who are sponsored by the Legal business unit (i.e. attorneys) are informed that the mentoring program is designed to orient them to the organizational culture and operating procedures (i.e., employee socialization). These goals are reinforced by the fact that protégés are rarely paired with a mentor who practices the same area of law, thereby restricting any on-the-job training that could occur. In contrast, business units comprised of technical professions (e.g., geologists) utilize the mentoring program in order to facilitate job training for new hires. The Employee Networks also have their unique spin;

becoming involved in the mentoring program through WAVE basically ensures having a female mentor. It is important to note that the point of entry into the mentoring program impacts the protégé's mentoring experience, particularly in terms of the tangible benefits that the protégé receives (e.g., technical training, general organizational information).

Although preparation for the formal mentoring program began in 1998, the pilot program was not launched until the first quarter of 1999. At that time, information sessions were conducted for Human Resource leaders, managers in various business units, and potential mentors and protégés. Potential mentors and protégés submitted profile sheets and pairs were matched based on these profiles. Profiles included information such as the employee's business unit, a personality assessment, what he/she wanted to gain from the mentoring experience, and what he/she had to offer to a mentoring relationship. During the second quarter of 1999, learning sessions were conducted for the newly formed mentoring pairs. The learning sessions introduced protégés and mentors to the concept of mentoring and to the potential applications of the relationship, to include: share organizational knowledge, enhance leadership and business skills, develop effective professional relationships, increase visibility of women and people of diversity/multicultural backgrounds, enhance reputation as role model for diversity, provide individuals with a mechanism to assist them in fulfilling their potential, and provide support for human resource functions (e.g., career development plans, recruitment and retention of skilled employees). In addition, mentors and protégés were encouraged to openly discuss their expectations for the relationship and to develop a mutual contract based on these expectations. The rest of 1999 was dedicated to monitoring the pairs, soliciting feedback from mentoring pairs, and coordinating events

that fostered the exchange of information between mentoring pairs and among mentors and protégés.

During 2000, information collected in the previous year was compiled and used to obtain approval for implementation of the program throughout the U.S., which occurred during the first quarter of 2001. Data collected during the pilot program indicated that the most important effects of the mentoring relationship for protégés were increased insight into personnel goals, leadership development, and a larger network. According to mentors, the most important effects were building a rapport with protégés, increased awareness of company philosophy and culture, and improved career satisfaction. By the end of 2001 the program included 198 mentoring pairs, 86 sponsored by business units (e.g., Chemical, Finance, Legal) and 112 sponsored by Employee Networks (e.g., WAVE, SBNG). During 2002, the mentoring program was projected to grow to include between 307 and 362 pairs, and at the time of the study there were approximately 320 mentoring pairs.

The Mentoring Advisory Board (MAB) is the central body responsible for the mentoring program. The 21 members of this board include a representative from each participating business unit, a representative from each participating Employee Network, two individuals who are responsible for educational services related to the mentoring program (e.g., learning orientation, website), the senior advisor, and an executive sponsor. This board is designed to facilitate implementation and growth of the mentoring program through its members' efforts to, 1) enhance the ability to link mentors and protégés across business units and Employee networks, 2) share experiences and resources, 2) offer guidance and advice for implementation, and 3) build credibility for

the program by evaluating the program and feeding the results back to the business units and Employee Networks. The MAB plays an important role in the present study in that the senior advisor to this board served as the primary contact in the organization and the MAB members served as secondary contacts.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Pilot Study

Participants

Participants in the pilot study included 6 subject matter experts who subscribe to an email listserv designed to advance knowledge and discourse in the area of qualitative research. This qualitative research listserv reaches an international audience. Participation was voluntary and did not include any tangible incentives.

Procedure

The interview questions were posed to several qualitative researchers via an email listserv. Subscribers to the listserv were asked to review the interview questions with a focus on clarity, technical properties (e.g., grammar, spelling), and effectiveness of the questions (see Appendix A). Six individuals, who consider themselves experts in qualitative methods, to include interviews, responded. Feedback included general statements about all of the questions (e.g., "I find your questions to be very appropriate, inviting to the interviewee, and interesting"), comments specific to each question (e.g., "'why do you stay in your mentoring relationship?' might imply that you thought it was a bit odd for them to do so"), and suggestions for additional questions (e.g., "what does your mentor provide for you?"). Based on this feedback, the interview questions were revised and finalized for use in Phase 2 (see Appendix B). More specifically, question #1 was revised in order to clarify the meaning of the question. Question #2 was revised in

order to capture why the protégé mentioned particular adjectives and whether or not the adjectives were always applicable. Question #4 was reworded in order to make the question more open-ended and less suggestive; in addition, the order of this question was switched with question #3 because it is broader in scope. A prompt for question #5 was deleted and replaced with a more concrete question. Question #7 was revised so that it did not imply that it was odd for the protégé to remain in the relationship. Finally, the question, "What is it about the relationship that allows you to consider you mentor a _____?" was added in order to explore the reasons protégés considered other titles or metaphors appropriate for the relationship.

Phase 1

Participants

A total of 169 protégés involved in a formal mentoring program at a large energy company received the questionnaire (104 from business units and 65 from Employee Networks). Of these, 39 protégés returned a completed questionnaire for a response rate of 23%. The average age of protégés was 36, ranging from 20 to 60 years. Most of the protégés identified themselves as female (66.7%) and Caucasian (66.7%). Participants represented 3 sex compositions: 33.3% male protégés with a male mentor, 46.2% female protégés with a female mentor, and 20.5% female protégés with a male mentor. Protégés represented 9 different business units in the organization (e.g., Legal Services, Chemical, Oil Products), and their job positions included business professional (41%), technical professional (46.2%), office support staff (2.6%), middle management (2.6%), and other (7.7%). In addition, 18 protégés reported that they became involved in the mentoring program through an Employee Network, rather than through their respective business

unit. Seven joined through the network Women Adding Value Everywhere (WAVE), 5 through the Black Employee Network (SBNG), and 6 did not specify the Employee Network. Protégés reported having had an average of 3 mentors, informal and/or formal, prior to their current formal mentoring relationship. See Table 1 for additional demographic information for protégés and their mentors.

Table 1

Demographic Information for Phase 1 Participants

	Protégé	Mentor
Race and Ethnicity		
White	66.7%	87.2%
African American	20.5%	5.1%
Hispanic	2.6%	0%
Asian	5.1%	5.1%
Other	5.1%	2.6%
Gender		
Male	33.3%	53.8%
Female	66.7%	46.2%
Organizational Tenure		
Mean Org. Tenure	6 years	17 years
Job Tenure		
Mean Job Tenure	2 years	---
Educational Level		
High School Diploma	7.7%	---
Bachelor's Degree	41%	---
Master's Degree	33.3%	---
Doctorate or equivalent	17.9%	---

Materials

Protégé characteristics. Characteristics of the protégé were assessed using single item measures of age, race, gender, organizational tenure, job tenure, education level,

business unit, and position in the organization. In order to assess the extent of experience in mentoring relationships, participants were provided with a definition of a mentor (Ragins & Cotton, 1991) and asked to report how many mentors they had had during their career. Participants were asked to focus on their current mentor in the formal mentoring program when completing the following sections of the questionnaire (see Appendix C for actual items).

Type of mentoring relationship. In this section, participants were asked to describe several aspects of the mentoring relationship. The nature of the participant pool allowed for the following assumptions, 1) the mentoring relationship was formal, and 2) the relationship was currently on-going; therefore these relevant questions were not included in the questionnaire. Participants were asked to report the following: the length of the mentoring relationship, the number of organizational levels separating them from their mentor, and, if applicable, the name of the sponsoring Employee Network (see Appendix C for actual items).

Mentor characteristics. In this section, participants were asked to provide information about their mentor's gender, race, position/rank in the organization, and organizational tenure. In addition, participants were asked to indicate whether or not the mentor was his/her supervisor, and whether or not the mentor worked in the same business unit (see Appendix C for actual items).

Contact Information. Contact information was necessary for Phase 2 of the study, in which participants were contacted by the researcher to take part in an in-depth interview about their experiences in a specific mentoring relationship. Therefore, participants were asked to provide contact information only if they were willing to

participate in a follow-up interview to discuss the relationship with their mentor in more detail. The requested contact information included their first name (last name optional), a phone number where they can be contacted, and/or their email address (see Appendix C). As an incentive, participants who completed the questionnaire and indicated a willingness to participate in an interview (i.e. the participant provided contact information) were automatically eligible to win a $100.00 prize. Due to the organization's policies, the participants were informed that the $100.00 would be awarded in the form of a donation to the winner's favorite charitable organization.

Procedure

Organizational data. In order to better understand the context in which these mentoring relationships operated, organizational documents were obtained from the senior advisor, the company website was examined, and several conversations took place between the researcher and members of the Mentoring Advisory Board (MAB). In addition, the researcher attended the MAB's quarterly meeting and a symposium about the mentoring program at Company X's annual diversity conference.

Questionnaire Administration. The organization utilizes a particular channel of communication for distributing information to protégés and mentors which was utilized for this study. More specifically, the senior advisor to the Mentoring Advisory Board distributed study documents to the MAB members, who then transmitted those documents to the protégés in their respective business unit or Employee Network. All documents were distributed via email. First, protégés received an email from the senior advisor which outlined the study's purpose and time requirements, encouraged participation, and explained the value of the project to the mentoring program (see

Appendix D). The letter of implied consent (see Appendix E) and the questionnaire (see Appendix C) were attached to this email. Participants could return the questionnaire by 1) saving the attachment as a text document, completing it, and resending the questionnaire as an attachment directly to the researcher, or 2) printing out the questionnaire, completing it, and faxing it directly to the researcher. The questionnaire took approximately 10 minutes to complete and participants were initially given 2 weeks to return the questionnaire. At the end of the two weeks, the senior advisor sent out an email extending the deadline an additional 9 days due to the low response rate of 13% at that time (see Appendix F). The consent form and questionnaire were attached to the reminder email as well.

Prize allocation. Within one week after the final deadline, the winner of the $100 prize was randomly selected from among those who provided contact information on the questionnaire. The winner was contacted via email to determine which charitable organization should receive the money, and the money was then donated in his/her name.

Determining Eligibility for Phase 2. Participants were eligible to participate in phase 2 interviews if they completed the questionnaire and provided contact information indicating their willingness to participate in an in-depth interview. Based on these criteria, 25 protégés were interviewed; however the results of this study will only be discussed for the 17 protégés who identified themselves and their mentor as Caucasian on the questionnaire. Controlling for race helped to isolate the differences between the mentoring relationships such that differences in the relational qualities that protégés report can be associated with the sex composition of the dyad with more confidence. A protégé and mentor who share the same sex, but differ in terms of race or ethnic identity

are qualitatively different than same-sex relationships in which both members share the same race or ethnic identity. Ragins (1997) refers to this difference as the degree of diversity, which she defines as "a function of the number of power-related groups in which the mentor and protégé differ" (p. 92). In order to reduce differences in the degree of diversity among the mentoring dyads, only dyads in which the protégé and mentor were Caucasian were represented in the data. The remaining 8 interviews were used as practice in the coding process, which is discussed later in more detail.

Phase 2

Participants

As a result of the criteria for inclusion in the study, all 17 participants self-identified as White. The mean age of the participants was 37 years (SD=11 years) and ages ranged from 22 to 60 years. The majority of participants were female (70.6%) and participants had achieved either a bachelor's degree (35.3%), master's degree (41.2%), or a doctorate/equivalent degree (23.5%) as their highest level of education. On average, participants had worked for the company for 4.3 years (SD=5.7 years) and they had worked in their current job an average of 1.6 years (SD=1.3 years). In terms of position in the company, participants represented 4 business units (Legal Services, Information Technology International, Exploration and Production, Financial Services) and 3 organizational positions: 41.2% were business professionals, 47.1% were technical professionals, and 11.8% were attorneys. Only 4 participants indicated that they had been sponsored by an Employee Network; 3 were sponsored by Women Adding Value Everywhere and 1 did not specify. Participants' previous experience with mentors

ranged from 0 to 25 previous mentors, though 70.5% reported having either 3, 2, 1, or 0 mentors in the past.

The participants represented three different sex compositions, 6 female protégés with a male mentor (35.3%), 6 female protégés with a female mentor (35.3%), and 5 male protégés with a male mentor (29.4%). Length of the mentoring relationships ranged from 1 month to 15 months with a mean of 8.1 months (SD=4.2 months). The length of the relationship was similar across the three sex compositions: M=8.8 months for M/F dyads, M=7.8 months for M/M dyads, 7.5 months for F/F dyads. One protégé reported that their mentor was at the same hierarchical level in the organization, 7 did not respond to this question, and the other 9 participants reported that the hierarchical distance was between 2 and 5 grade levels.

Participants also provided information about their mentor. Again, due to the criteria for inclusion in the study, 100% of the mentors were Caucasian. Unlike protégés, the majority of mentors were male (64.7%). Mentors represented 8 different positions in the company, though most mentors were either a business professional (29.4%) or a technical professional (41.2%). There was one mentor in each of the following positions: first-line manager, middle manager, upper management, executive/CEO, and attorney. It is not surprising that mentors' positions in the organization were generally higher than those held by protégés and that, on average, mentors had a higher organizational tenure (M=16.3 years, SD=5.4 years). Finally, most mentors worked in the same business unit as their protégé (76.5%), and none of the mentors were also their protégé's supervisor.

The nature of interactions between mentor and protégé varied across the mentoring relationships in terms of frequency and diversity of interaction. Although

frequency and diversity of interaction are typically considered to be key relational qualities (Zorn, 1995; Hinde, 1981), these two pieces of information are discussed as contextual factors in the present study. This is due to the fact that frequency and diversity of interaction were often constrained by the work environment (e.g., work schedules, proximity of protégé's office to mentor's office). Therefore, it is inaccurate to assume that frequency and diversity of interaction reflect qualities of the relationship for all of the mentoring dyads; alternatively, this information may simply reflect the circumstances in which the relationship occurs.

Having said this, the nature of interactions between the protégés and mentors offers an important perspective on the context in which these relationships developed. In terms of frequency, protégés reported a range of at least once per day (e.g., "And now we are seeing each other once a week – like the official meeting. Otherwise we see each other every day") to once per month (e.g., "we schedule a meeting a month"). For those protégés who reported frequency, it appeared that interactions took place in formally established meetings that occurred on a predetermined time schedule, in informal/unplanned interactions, or during a combination of the two. Of those protégés who described meeting locations, reports ranged from meetings that only occurred in an office (e.g., "the setting is always either his office or my office") to meetings that only occurred outside of work (e.g., "we schedule a time to go to lunch"); though most protégés reported a combination of work and nonwork locations (e.g., "he'd come over her and we just kind of sit in my office…I think we did lunch a time or two").

Materials

Interview questions were developed to capture the relational qualities protégés consider to be important to their mentoring relationship (see Appendix B). Seven primary questions focused on how protégés perceive and understand interpersonal qualities in the relationship. In addition, the interview guide included probes in order to get a more detailed response from the interviewee, and prompts in order to clarify the question (King, 1994).

Procedure

Beginning with this phase of the study, all contact with protégés was made directly by the researcher in order to protect participants' confidentiality. No one in the company had access to any identifying information related to the participants. One week after the final deadline for the questionnaires, participants were contacted by the researcher using either the phone number or email address provided. Those contacted by phone were asked to provide their email address. Participant received an email thanking them for completing the questionnaire and informing them that they would be contacted by the researcher to schedule an interview (Appendix G). A consent form for the interview was attached to this email with instructions for the participant to read the form, sign it, and fax it directly to the researcher (Appendix H). Participants were informed that the phone interview would take between 30 and 45 minutes, depending on the amount of information they had to offer. Scheduling the interviews required a series of phone calls and emails to each participant. Once an interview was scheduled, participants received an email confirming the date and time of the interview. The participant had to fax a signed consent form to the researcher prior to the interview.

The process of scheduling and conducting interviews lasted approximately 6 weeks. The researcher contacted each participant at his/her office in order to conduct the interview, therefore all interviews occurred during normal working hours. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher asked each participant if he/she had any questions regarding the consent form and then briefly reviewed the procedures in place to protect his/her confidentiality. All participants were reminded that, with their permission, the interview would be tape-recorded and all agreed to the recording. On average, interviews lasted 30 minutes, ranging from 20 minutes to 50 minutes.

Transcription. The researcher and one undergraduate volunteer transcribed all of the recorded interviews in their entirety. Long pauses, laughter, interruptions in the interview (e.g., participant pauses to close the office door), breaks in sentences, and unfinished words were all represented in the transcriptions. Unclear words were transcribed phonetically and 'sic' was written in parentheses next to the questionable word or phrase.

Content analysis process. Two coders developed the initial coding framework with guidance from the primary researcher. The coders, two doctoral students, received training on coding that incorporated Weber's (1990), Krippendorff's (1980), and Miles' and Huberman's (1984) texts as a guide. Coders were also required to read journal articles utilizing qualitative methods (e.g., Schneider, Wheeler, & Cox, 1992) for illustrative purposes. In order to reduce the effects of bias on the content analysis process, the transcriptions did not include any information about the interviewee that would allow the coder to determine the sex composition of the dyad. Further, the coders were not apprised of the theoretical underpinnings of the study until after the content

analysis was completed. For instance, coders were not provided with the 8 interpersonal qualities previously described as potentially relevant to mentoring relationships. Coders were also unaware that any comparison would be made across sex compositions. The coders were informed that the conceptual framework of the study was interpersonal qualities in mentoring relationships. This was necessary in order for the coders to have a study-relevant perspective since the "point is not to search for the 'right' set of codes but to recognize them for what they are: links between particular segments of data and the categories we want to use in order to conceptualize those segments" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p.45). For the present study, it is important that the coders focused on interpersonal qualities that protégés used to describe the relationship.

Development of the initial coding framework proceeded in several steps. First, each coder read through all 17 interview transcripts twice, once without making any notes and again while taking notes on general themes that emerged. Second, the coders shared their list of themes with each other. They discussed differences of opinion, and reached consensus on a preliminary list of themes. The researcher was present during this meeting in order to facilitate the discussion, to ensure that the focus remained on interpersonal qualities, and to offer suggestions for clarifying themes. The coders completed a third reading of the interview transcripts referencing the agreed-upon list of themes and noting any suggestions for revision (i.e., adding, deleting, or redefining a theme). Coders met and discussed their revised list of themes with the guidance of the researcher. This process of reading the transcripts, revising the themes, and meeting to consense occurred one final time in order to finalize the initial coding framework.

The researcher and one of the coders who developed the initial coding framework served as the coders. Double coding sharpens the theme definitions as a result of the consensing process and allows for the calculation of interrater agreement as an indicator of reliability (Huberman & Miles, 2002). During this process, segments of the data were bracketed and labeled with a code corresponding to the list of themes. The unit of analysis was defined as a meaningful thought, which could include a word, phrase, sentence or set of sentences (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Each coder bracketed the text and assigned codes separately for selected transcripts and then met to consense.

Initially, this process was applied to 7 transcripts not included in the present study. These transcripts were based on interviews with protégés in the same organization and mentoring program, but who were involved in mentoring dyads in which the mentor and protégé were not both Caucasian. These transcripts were coded as practice so that any differences in how coders bracketed text segments and/or conceptualized the themes were revealed and addressed. Coding decisions were compared in order to, 1) resolve any discrepancies regarding the definitions of themes, and 2) revise the themes and theme definitions when appropriate. During this process, the coding framework was revised in order to clarify theme definition and two themes were added. The final coding framework is shown in Table 2.

The coding process was then applied to the 17 transcripts that were representative of the dyads in which the protégé and mentor were both Caucasian. The process of bracketing text segments, assigning codes, discussing disagreements, and reaching

Table 2

Coding Framework

Interpersonal Qualities

1. Trust
   - protege trusts mentor or protégé perceives that mentor trusts him/her
   - protege believes that the relationship has confidentiality (this does not include comments such as 'open communication' or 'honesty')

2. Respect
   - identification: protege aspires to be more like mentor in some regard (this must be explicitly stated by the protege; e.g., 'I wish I had my mentor's communication skills')
   - general respect: protégé either respects mentor or protege perceives that mentor respects him/her

3. Similarity
   - commonality between them that protege identifies (e.g., personal characteristics, age, background, work interests, work experiences); proximity is NOT similarity

4. Disclosure
   - protege describes relationship as having open communication, honesty, candor
   - protege indicates that he/she shares personal information with mentor (e.g., family life, attitudes, views)

5. Liking
   - protégé indicates that the relationship is friendly and/or personal in nature
   - protege says he/she likes mentor; captures more general comments

6. Comfort
   - protégé describes relationship as informal (in terms of structure of meetings, related to each other in a casual manner), marked by humor, and/or protege indicates that he/she just 'drops in' on the mentor with questions (e.g., open door policy)
   - protege expresses comfort with mentor

7. Perceived Fit (complementary)
   - protege believes that he/she is a good match with mentor based on differences (NOT similarities) that are complementary (e.g., having different operational styles)

8. Commitment
   - proege makes general comments about time, effort and/or emotional energy that is put into the relationship (by either protege or mentor); there is an investment in

the relationship
- protege wants to remain in the relationship
- protege indicates that the relationship has potential to improve

9. Reciprocity
- protege indicates that the relationship goes both ways; it is mutually beneficial

10. Formality/Relational Distance
- protégé indicates that the relationship is formal or interpersonally distant (e.g., relationship is purely work-related or functional; relationship is 'cordial enough')

11. Negative/Mismatch
- protege indicates anything negative about the relationship (e.g., mentor is not vested in role, differences between protege and mentor negatively impact the relationship, discomfort, relational problems)

12. Closeness
- relational closeness/intimacy (e.g. protégé indicates that mentor is a close friend)

13. Understanding
- mutual understanding between mentor and protege

consensus occurred over the course of 6 meetings. A qualitative software package developed by the Center for Disease Control and entitled ANSWR was utilized to aid in data management and analysis.

Accuracy between the coders was assessed as a measure of reliability. Interrater agreement between the two coders was 84% for the codes assigned to the 17 interviews. This percent agreement is slightly below the recommended intercoder agreement of 90% (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Disagreements were resolved through discussion such that both coders supported the final codes.

Interpretation. The process of recontextualizing the data included within the themes and the process of comparing the themes across the sex compositions are susceptible to researcher bias. According to Huberman and Miles (2002), there are three

broadly defined forms of bias, ethical compromises, value inertias, and cognitive limitations. Readers can feel assured that ethical compromise (e.g., conflict of interest, self-serving analysis, haphazard analysis) is not a factor in the present study. This study was conducted with an emphasis on accuracy and integrity, not on achieving desired results. In addition, the researcher was not in any way compromised by the data collection site. Cognitive limitations can be categorized into 13 biases (e.g., confidence in judgment, discrediting extremes) that arise due to the "limitations of our information-processing capacity" (Huberman & Miles, 2002, p. 126). It is beyond the scope of this paper to explain and address each bias, but it is hoped that understanding and attending to these biases reduced their effects on the analysis. Value inertias, defined as biases that "can be traced to a particular evaluator's background knowledge, prior experience, emotional makeup, or world view" are relevant to any exercise in intuitive data processing (Huberman & Miles, 2002, p. 125). One way to diminish the potential impact of value inertias on interpretation is to reveal values, interests, and/or knowledge having relevance for the study.

The perspective that this researcher brings to the analysis is one shaped by being female and a graduate student who has been immersed in mentoring literature. Preconceptions about relationships may be shaped by the fact that, as a female, the researcher has a more intimate understanding of female mentor/female protégé dyads and male mentor/female protégé dyads than of mentoring relationships involving a male mentor and a male protégé. This is due to the fact that an understanding of mentoring relationships involving a female is facilitated by prior experience in same-sex and cross-sex mentoring relationships and/or friendships. Inadvertently, the researcher may bring

past experiences in these relationships to bear on the interpretation of themes for these two sex compositions. In contrast, the researcher must approach an interpretation of the themes for male mentor/male protégé mentoring dyads as one who has never experienced this type of relationship first-hand. In addition, the researcher's perspective on mentoring relationships has been shaped by findings of past studies on mentoring which have focused on the role of mentoring functions (Kram, 1985), the effects of informal and formal relationships (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000), and the differences between cross-sex and same-sex relationships (Ragins & Cotton, 1999; McGuire, 1999). For instance, past research has found that, in mentoring relationships involving a female mentor and a female protégé, protégés report receiving more psychosocial functions than protégés in other sex compositions (McGuire, 1999). This finding has implications for the type of interpersonal qualities that exist in these relationships. Therefore, while it is important to interpret data from a knowledgeable perspective, this knowledge may also serve to distort what the researcher attends to and how this data is perceived. In conclusion, gender and knowledge of research findings on mentoring relationships are the two most relevant value inertias likely to shape interpretations offered in the present study. It is hoped that through revealing these value inertias and their potential effects that their role in the process of interpretation is attenuated.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Overview

In order to address the first research question, frequencies were calculated in order to determine the number of protégés who mentioned each of the 13 themes that emerged in the interviews. As shown in Table 3, these frequencies represent the pervasiveness of each theme among protégés included in the sample.

Table 3

Theme Frequencies

Theme	Frequency/Percentage of Protégés Reporting Theme[1]
Commitment	17 (100%)
Disclosure	16 (94.1%)
Comfortable	16 (94.1%)
Respect	14 (82.4%)
Similarity	13 (76.5%)
Liking	13 (76.5%)
Formality	13 (76.5%)
Understanding	10 (58.5%)
Trust	10 (58.5%)
Reciprocity	7 (41.2%)
Negative Relationship/Mismatch	6 (35.3%)
Closeness	6 (35.3%)
Perceived Complementary Fit	3 (17.6%)

Commitment was the theme mentioned by the highest number of protégés (100%), followed by Disclosure (94.1%) and Comfort (94.1%). The least frequently mentioned themes included Perceived Complementary Fit (23.5%), Closeness (35.3%), and Negative Relationship/Mismatch (35.3%).

Although frequencies provide important information about the extent to which these themes are shared across mentoring dyads, it is important to examine the "composition of each coded set", or theme (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 46). Table 4 provides an example text segment that is representative of the type of segments coded within each theme. A more detailed discussion of each theme's content is presented in the Discussion.

In order to address the second research question, the number of protégés who mentioned each theme was calculated separately for each of the three sex compositions. A rank-ordering of this frequency data for the dyads with a male mentor and male protégé (M/M), male mentor and female protégé (M/F), and female mentor and female protégé (F/F) are presented in Table 5, Table 6, and Table 7, respectively.

Themes Mentioned by Most Protégés

Key similarities emerged among the themes mentioned by 100% of protégés. Commitment was mentioned by every protégé in all 3 sex compositions. Comfort was mentioned by 100% of male and female protégés with a male mentor, and disclosure was mentioned by 100% of female protégés having a male or female mentor. Differences also emerged between the sex compositions. The theme, Respect, was mentioned by 100% of male protégés with male mentors, as opposed to only 66.7% in the M/F composition and 83.3% in the F/F composition. Liking was also discussed by 100% of

Table 4

Examples of Themes

Themes:	Examples:
1. Commitment	1. "There's no doubt in my mind that if I feel I need mentoring at a moment, he will make himself available to do that"
2. Disclosure	2. "There were a few meetings we had together where, not really necessarily scheduled meetings, but just where we would get together and just talk about each other, you know – the usual where are you from and whatnot, and then, you know – married? kids? and that kid of stuff"
3. Comfort	3. "I would feel totally comfortable asking him whatever question and, you know, I don't feel that it's, you know, constrained in any way"
4. Respect	4. "Very, very good role model. I would hope to come across that way in meetings"
5. Similarity	5. "Luckily we're both – have the same outlooks on lots of things. We're very similar on issues and beliefs and uh, just all around belief system – we're very similar"
6. Liking	6. "I wouldn't say we're close friends, but it's definitely a relationship that could – it's definitely a friendly relationship"
7. Formality	7. "The difference is that there is still that arm's length relationship kind of thing. It's not too close, it's not too personal"
8. Understanding	8. "There was a sort of camaraderie there because I think we both – he understood my frustration with working in an office"
9. Trust	9. "So it's a good feeling to know you can go to somebody you trust"
10. Reciprocity	10. "I think it works both ways. We want to see each other do well. We want to learn from each other's experiences"
11. Negative/Mismatch	11. "There were times when I actually would hold back on, uh, utilizing him simply because I knew that his workload was such that it was a real imposition on him"
12. Closeness	12. "Then, personally it's quite close too"
13. Perceived Fit	13. "She is very different than I am and yet she took on that role of mentor and has allowed me to develop"

Table 5

Theme Frequencies for M/M dyads

Themes	Frequency/Percentage of Protégés Reporting Theme[1]
Commitment Comfort Respect Liking	5 (100%) 5 (100%) 5 (100%) 5 (100%)
Trust Similarity Disclosure Formality Understanding	4 (80%) 4 (80%) 4 (80%) 4 (80%) 4 (80%)
Negative /Mismatch	3 (60%)
Reciprocity Closeness	2 (40%) 2 (40%)
Perceived Complementary Fit	0 (0%)

[1]Based on N protégés =5

Table 6

Theme Frequencies for M/F dyads

Themes	Frequency/Percentage of Protégés Reporting Theme[1]
Commitment	6 (100%)
Comfort	6 (100%)
Disclosure	6 (100%)
Formality	5 (83.3%)
Respect	4 (66.7%)
Liking	4 (66.7%)
Similarity	3 (50%)
Reciprocity	3 (50%)
Trust	2 (33.3%)
Understanding	2 (33.3%)
Closeness	1 (16.7%)
Negative/Mismatch	1 (16.7%)
Perceived Complementary Fit	0 (0%)

[1]Based on N protégés=6

Table 7

Theme Frequencies for F/F dyads

Themes	Frequency/Percentage of Protégés Reporting Theme[1]
Commitment	6 (100%)
Disclosure	6 (100%)
Similarity	6 (100%)
Respect	5 (83.3%)
Comfort	5 (83.3%)
Trust	4 (66.7%)
Liking	4 (66.7%)
Formality	4 (66.7%)
Understanding	4 (66.7%)
Perceived Complementary Fit	3 (50%)
Closeness	3 (50%)
Reciprocity	2 (33.3%)
Negative/Mismatch	2 (33.3%)

[1]Based on N protégés=6

male protégés with male mentors, though it was mentioned by only 66.7% of protégés in the M/F and F/F compositions. The F/F composition differs from the other two compositions in that Similarity was mentioned by 100% of protégés, versus only 50% in the M/F composition and 80% in the M/M condition.

Themes Mentioned by Fewest Protégés

Several interesting findings emerged in the comparison of sex compositions with regard to themes mentioned by the fewest protégés. Two themes (i.e., Perceived

Complementary Fit, Negative/Mismatch) were mentioned by few protégés in 2 of the 3 conditions. None of the protégés in the M/M and M/F compositions mentioned Perceived Complementary Fit, however 50% of protégés in the F/F composition used this theme to describe their relationship. Negative/Mismatch only appeared in 16.7% of the interviews representing the M/F composition and 33.3% of the interviews representing the F/F composition. In contrast, Negative/Mismatch was mentioned by 60% of protégés in the M/M composition.

Other themes were mentioned by a low percentage of protégés in only one of the compositions. Closeness was not a pervasive theme among protégés in the M/F composition (16.7%); however 50% of protégés in the F/F composition and 40% of protégés in the M/M composition used Closeness to describe the relationship with their mentor. Taken together, these findings present information about themes mentioned by the most protégés and by the least protégés.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Overview

The purpose of the present study was to determine what interpersonal qualities protégés considered to be important to the relationship with their mentor, as well as to determine whether or not these interpersonal qualities varied across different sex compositions of the mentoring dyad. The following section describes each of the 13 themes (i.e. interpersonal qualities) that were identified in the interviews.

Significantly, these themes do not represent descriptions of mentoring relationships from the perspective of male protégés with female mentors, because protégés in this particular sex composition did not elect to complete the questionnaires. Although demographic data is not available for the 169 protégés who received the questionnaire, members of the Mentoring Advisory Board indicated that male protégés with female mentors comprised lowest percentage of mentoring dyads in the program. This is in line with the general finding that only an estimated 10% of all male protégés have a female mentor (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Ragins & Cotton, 1999).

In addition, these themes do not necessarily define the entire domain of interpersonal qualities that existed in the mentoring relationships that were included in the sample. Be that as it may, these are the qualities that protégés chose to use when describing the mentoring relationship. To the extent that the interview questions were broad enough so as not to lead protégés to a particular answer, these qualities can be

considered the most salient interpersonal qualities to the protégés at the time of the interview.

Interpersonal Qualities

Commitment

Commitment was the only theme mentioned by all of the protégés, which is not surprising given that this interpersonal quality most directly affects the intensity and longevity of relationships (Sprecher, 1992). Text segments included in this theme described, 1) the protégé's desire to continue the mentoring relationship (e.g., "at this point, I would stay where I'm at"), 2) the protégé's belief that the relationship will progress (e.g., "I think it's improving all the time"), and 3) the protégé's indication that there is time and/or emotional energy invested in the relationship (e.g., "there were a couple of times when he worked in here with me until 9 or 10 o'clock at night, and I was surprised at his devotion", "what I like in the relationship with my mentor is that he's not thinking only of himself, but he's thinking about my development"). The multifaceted nature of this theme clearly maps onto Hinde's (1981) conceptualization of commitment as not only the desire to remain in the relationship, but also the desire to improve the relationship. Commitment expressed as a desire to improve the relationship occurred when protégés described investments that he/she *or* the mentor made. In this sample, investments primarily took the form of protégés' perceptions about their mentor's time/energy investment and their mentor's emotional investment. From the way in which protégés describe these investments, it can be reasonably inferred that, to protégés, investments are one way to determine the mentor's level of commitment to their

professional and personal development. Further, in all cases, protégés discussed any indication of commitment on the part of the mentor as positive to the relationship.

Protégés infrequently discussed their own investments in the relationship, however when it was mentioned, the investment usually took the form of time that the protégé spent during meetings or preparing for meetings. One possible explanation for this limited range of investments on the part of the protégé is that the hierarchical nature of mentoring leads the protégé to actually play the role of the 'investment-receiver'. Conversely, protégés may simply underestimate or overlook the investments they make in the relationship. In the context of these mentoring relationships, it is clear that 1) the importance of commitment to mentoring relationships is shared by all protégés, 2) both aspects of commitment included in Hinde's (1981) definition are apparent, and 3) investments in the relationship appear to be perceived as indicators of commitment (Sprecher, 1992). The significant role of investments as indicators of Commitment underscores the potential for social exchange theory to serve as a really important theoretical bridge for mentoring research.

Disclosure

The theme, Disclosure, was mentioned by all but one of the protégés (94.1%). Protégés' responses associated with this theme described the relationship or one of its members (i.e., mentor, protégé) as generally open and/or honest (e.g., "it's a pretty open relationship", "he's very frank"), or explained that personal information is shared (e.g., "we can share more candid information I think about um, perhaps things going on in the organization that we're not too happy with", "I mean, we don't just talk about work stuff"). Protégés' examples of shared personal information can be described as having

breadth, depth, or both (Taylor, 1979). Breadth of information indicates that conversations between the mentor and protégé go beyond the domain of work to include domains such as family and leisure activities. Depth of information occurs when the protege and/or mentor share revealing information, but only in the context of work. Mentoring relationships that displayed only depth of information occurred far less than relationships involving only breadth of information or a combination of breadth and depth. One protégé noted a possible reason for this when describing the rationale for having breadth of information present in her relationship:

> I think a lot of us have come to a place where we look at our life in totality and there's not work totally separate from personal and it all sort of comes together…That it bleeds over – work into personal, personal into work – and so, I think that's a reason why we have conversations that go into personal things going on as well as work-related.

Regardless of the type of information shared, protégés clearly valued openness in their mentoring relationship. This supports Zorn's (1995) previous finding that subordinates value openness in their relationships with superiors. Kram (1985) explains how Disclosure can indirectly facilitate career development in her description of the integral role self-disclosure plays in the counseling function (i.e. "a psychosocial function that enables an individual to explore personal concerns that may interfere with a positive sense of self in the organization", p.36). When a mentor becomes a confidante for his/her protégé, the protégé can express concerns and doubts that, if left unexpressed, could impede the protégé's success in the organization. In conclusion, it is clear that protégés in this sample shared information that "goes beyond the boundaries of most hierarchical relationships" and that this Disclosure may facilitate relationship development (Kram,

1985, p. 37). According to Kram (1985), Disclosure may also have implications for career development through its role in the counseling function.

Trust

Protégés' discussion of Disclosure often included mention of the theme, Trust, which provides some insight into why Disclosure is valued in these relationships. All 10 protégés who mentioned Trust (58.5%) also discussed information sharing that can be described as having both breadth and depth. Further, when protégés mentioned Trust it was usually in the context of information sharing; the protégé described Trust as related to confidentiality or Disclosure. For example, one protégé explained, "there's a mutual trust. I mean, I know that what I tell her is going to stay with her". Another protégé implied a relationship between Disclosure and Trust by comparing the mentoring relationship to a relationship with a therapist: "sort of like a therapist almost – that relationship with a therapist – that you have to trust that person". Clearly, protégés' description of trust in their mentoring relationship primarily occurs in the context of information sharing. In fact, only one protégé described trust as meeting expectations other than confidentiality (e.g., "Here's the person that you are trusting as a mentor to look out for your best interests"). Gabarro (1978) discovered a similar finding during interviews with subordinate and superior pairs. A primary basis of trust identified in these interviews was "the perception that the other person would not violate confidences or carelessly divulge to others potentially harmful information" (p. 296). Like those subordinates, it appears that the protégés also considered discreteness an important basis for trust. This makes sense given that these relationships occur in the context of work, where tangible consequences could follow a breach of confidence. Similarly, Kram

(1985) discussed the importance of trust for the psychosocial function, acceptance-and-confirmation, whereby trust "encourages the young adult to take risks and to venture into unfamiliar ways of relating to the world of work" (p. 35). In this case, most protégés seemed to equate risk with sharing information and trust with confidentiality.

Comfort

Comfort, like Disclosure, is a theme that emerged across 16 of the interviews (94.1%). This theme includes, 1) descriptions of the relationship as casual/informal in terms of meeting schedules and agendas (e.g., "And I was free to visit at any time that I felt that I had something to talk to him about", "we get together and whatever was on our minds we'd talk about"), and 2) the protégé feels comfortable and/or relaxed when interacting with his/her mentor (e.g., "I like the unstructured way in which we communicate", "I would feel totally comfortable asking him whatever question and, you know, I don't feel that it's constrained in any way"). Several protégés provided information about the basis of Comfort in their relationship. According to these protégés, factors that facilitated Comfort in their relationship included, the mentor's demeanor (e.g., "he's just very – he's easy to talk to"), a shared sense of humor (e.g., "we could joke around and have fun"), open communication, and trust. A possible explanation for why Comfort is a pervasive theme is the fact that the relaxed, casual nature of the relationship might be in stark contrast to protégés' experiences in other hierarchical relationships. Therefore the closest point of comparison, relationships with supervisors, renders Comfort a salient quality of the relationship. Alternatively, Comfort may characterize most of the mentoring relationships because mentors simply have the social skills necessary to put protégés at ease.

Respect

According to Kram's (1985) taxonomy of mentoring functions, identification drives the role modeling function in mentoring relationships, such that a protégé sees "part of his current and idealized self" in the mentor (p.33). In describing their relationship, a number of protégés discussed this identification process as part of a broader relational quality, Respect (82.4%). Similar to Kram's (1985) definition of identification, Respect included emulation of the mentor's knowledge or skills (e.g., "she has a lot more positive leadership qualities than I do. She has a lot more to give that I need to learn from", "I have respect for my mentor's technical skills, and was happy to find that he was sort of a supporter of my skill level"), as well as consideration of the mentor as a role model (e.g., "Very, very good role model. I would hope to come across that way in meetings"). In addition, these types of comments were used in conjunction with protégés' general expressions of respect (e.g., "I respect what she's accomplished in her life and she respects me"); hence identification is considered a subset of this broader relational quality (i.e., Respect). Comments that did refer to an identification process underscored protégés' perceptions of the mentor's ability to develop them professionally and/or personally. In turn, the attributes respected by the protégé are also those that the protégé wants to develop. By verbalizing respect for mentor attributes that are relevant to professional development (e.g., leadership skills, communication skills), these protégés' revealed a personal orientation in their identification with their mentors (Brickson & Brewer, 2001). Although some of the protégés perceived that their mentor respected them, none of them presumed to know why or in what way.

Similarity

In support of Byrnes' (1971) well-established similarity-attraction paradigm, 13 protégés (76.5%) mentioned Similarity and, in every case, this theme was considered positive for relationship development. An examination of the text segments associated with Similarity revealed that protégés recognized similarity with their mentor in terms of work experience (e.g., "he used to be in my exact position 25 years ago, so he can relate to what kinds of things I'm thinking about"), personal characteristics (e.g., "we both enjoy working with the same kind of people", "And there again, I think that was also beneficial in that I think he and I are fairly close in age"), nonwork activities, (e.g., "actually I'm becoming president of a women's professional organization…and she recently joined that organization so…she sees that there are things I'm involved in that are also of interest to her") and attitudes/beliefs (e.g., "Luckily we both have the same outlooks on lots of things – we're very similar on issues and beliefs").

It is interesting to note that the positive effects of Similarity on differed depending on the type of similarity. When protégés mentioned similarity to their mentor in terms of age, gender, or beliefs, this similarity was discussed as relevant for interpersonal closeness (e.g., "we were both women in a technical field and that creates almost an instant bond anyway"). One possible explanation for this is provided by Byrne's (1971) assertion that individuals typically are attracted to others who are most similar to them on some salient dimension. It is reasonable to assume that, for the female protégé working in a technical, male-dominated field, the fact that her mentor is also female and in a technical field is extremely salient. In addition, the effects of similarity on relationship formation are most intense when "our views are validated by interacting with someone

who shares them" (Fehr, 1996). When protégés mentioned similarities based on hobbies or interests, they either did not explain the implications for the relationship or they described it as providing topics for conversation. In these instances, effects of similarity are best described as facilitating communication. Finally, protégés who mentioned that they were similar to their mentor in terms of work experience indicated that this similarity facilitated the mentor's ability to conduct on-the-job training. The importance of examining similarity type has also been noted in literature on friendships, in that friends are more similar in terms of their views and perspectives on the world, and acquaintances are more similar in terms of more superficial domains (Fehr, 1996). Findings of the present study and literature on friendships provide preliminary evidence that type of similarity matters to the conclusions that can be drawn about its effects on mentoring relationships. This points to an important area for future research, because mentoring researchers have not yet considered the type of similarity.

Understanding

Another theme that implies an interpersonal connection between mentor and protégé is Understanding, which was mentioned by over half of the protégés (58.5%). According to the protégés' portrayal of Understanding, this theme is inherently mutual. Protégés describe Understanding as knowing each other well (e.g., "yeah, I think it has improved too, because we know each other better"), being able to relate to each other (e.g., "it's good in that, you know, her being able to relate to my situation or needs or hopes or whatever"), and/or having an implicit understanding of each other (e.g., "sometimes you understand people than others. And I think that I understand – we understand each other pretty well", "there was sort of a camaraderie there because I think

we both - he understood my frustration with working in an office"). The mutuality and content of Understanding is mirrored in Hinde's (1981) definition of understanding as, "the extent to which each participant understands the other and feels him or herself to be understood – that is,…the extent to which his view of himself coincides with his view of his partner's view of him" (p. 13). Protégés indicate that the foundation for Understanding in their relationships is either open communication or the existence of some commonality (e.g., dislike for working in an office, age). Although the content of the themes Similarity and Disclosure are distinct from the content of Understanding, these themes appear related; Understanding may be more likely to occur in the context of mentoring relationships characterized by Similarity and/or Disclosure. In support of this observation is the fact that every protégé who mentioned Understanding also mentioned Similarity (1 protégé), Disclosure (2 protégés), or Similarity and Disclosure (7 protégés). In every instance, protégés referred to Understanding as a good for relationship development, supporting Zorn's (1995) suggestion that personal relationships at work could benefit organizations by allowing greater understanding between the two people involved (e.g., subordinates and supervisors).

Liking and Closeness

Despite Byrne's claim that similarity fosters attraction and liking, protégés who mentioned Similarity did not necessarily provide responses associated with the theme, Liking. Liking was a prevalent theme (76.5%), which is at least partly explained by its generality. Comments associated with this theme include descriptions of the relationship as friendly or personal (e.g., "I wouldn't say we're close friends, but it's definitely a friendly relationship") and protégé's claims to like or get along with his/her mentor (e.g.,

"I think I've had the benefit of pairing up with someone that I really get along with"). Liking is not equivalent to interpersonal closeness. The theme, Closeness, includes comments that explicitly describe the relationship as interpersonally close (e.g., "extremely close", "personally, it's quite close"). It is not surprising that only 6 protégés (35.3%) mentioned Closeness when describing their relationship, especially considering the relatively short duration of the mentoring relationships at the time of the interviews. Liking seemed to operate as a precondition to Closeness in the present study, since all protégés who mentioned Closeness also mentioned Liking. As would be expected, the converse was not true.

Formality

Several protégés also mentioned Formality when describing their relationships (76.5%). On the surface it may seem contradictory that the same number of protégés mentioned both Liking and Formality, but the theme encompasses varying degrees of formality. Any comment indicating that there was a boundary in the relationship was categorized as Formality. This boundary could limit the relationship to work-related issues (e.g., "it would be hard to say friend because he is not primarily a friend at all. He's mostly just a mentor", "predominantly work-related. I mean we might do that first 5 minutes – how's the family – that kinds of stuff, but after that it was pretty much work") or to the work environment (e.g., "we certainly didn't do anything outside of the workplace"). In addition, the boundary could be one that the protégé perceives on an interpersonal level (e.g., "there is still that arm's length relationship…It's not too close, it's not too personal"). The prevalence of this theme among the protégés may arise as a result of the fact that all mentoring relationships occurred in the context of a formal

mentoring program. A protégé recognized and explained the potential role of the formal program in engendering a certain degree of Formality:

> Usually if you have a friend you're in an informal kind of situation in your living room or in their living room, but this was more formal. And you understand that that exists - that this is a work program and that you are expected to accomplish something.

Although the previous statement makes a distinction between work relationships and personal relationships, it implies that the more formal the structure of a relationship becomes, the more focused the relationship is on the goal. In this case, the organization provides the mentors and protégés with overarching goals for mentoring, therefore protégés might be more mindful of the relationship's purpose.

Negative/Mismatch

A theme that did encompass protégés' negative attitudes toward the mentoring relationship was Negative/Mismatch, which was mentioned by only 6 protégés (35.3%). This theme involved protégés' descriptions of, 1) dissimilarity between the mentor and protégé (i.e., age, leisure activities, work experience) that impeded relationship development (e.g., "I mean he's obviously much older so we don't do anything – we don't go places after work or anything like that", "for that (*friendship*) we'd have to be hanging out together and we just don't have the same lifestyles or anything"), 2) work schedules that hindered interaction (e.g., "because of our schedules we probably weren't able to meet I think as much as either of us may have liked", "I wish that my schedule had allowed me to get with him a little bit more often even if it was just to talk about something totally unwork-related", "there were times when I would actually hold back on utilizing him simply because I knew that his workload was such that…it was a real imposition on him"), and 3) unmet expectations (e.g., "he never really was a mentor – in

what I would consider defining a mentor, which is somebody who is basically there to show you the basics, walk you through it once…", "(the relationship has) changed a lot. I'm not sure it'll actually continue"). These occurrences are in line with what literature on friendship identifies as factors leading to dissolution of friendships, to include loss of similarity, lack of availability, and reduced liking due to betrayal (Fehr, 1996). Protégés' descriptions of Negative/Mismatch also map onto past research on negative mentoring experiences (Scandura, 1998; Eby, McManus, Simon, & Russell, 2000). More specifically, a recent study outlined a typology of negative experiences in mentoring relationships, and two types (i.e., Match Within Dyad, Distancing Behavior) are represented in protégés' accounts in the present study (Eby et al., 2000). A more detailed analysis of this theme appears later.

Reciprocity

The theme, Reciprocity, indicated a reciprocal exchange of resources between the protégé and mentor (e.g., "we would consider each other playing valuable roles in the relationship together", "I think it works both ways. We want to see each other do well – we want to learn from each other's experiences") and is consistent with Kram's (1985) discussion of mutuality in mentoring relationships. Protégés discussed Reciprocity from an economic perspective of giving and receiving personal advice and work support; protégés did not comment on the perceived equity or equality of this exchange (La Gaipa, 1981). Reciprocity was described as important to less than half of the mentoring relationships (41.2%), which is not surprising given that reciprocal exchange is complicated by the hierarchical nature of mentoring relationships. Mentors, due to their organizational position and work experience, are in a better position to provide career

support to protégés; therefore career-related functions are not as likely to be reciprocal (Kram, 1985). The protégés who did mention work support as a reciprocated resource, worked on projects with their mentor or had an equivalent amount of work experience as their mentor but were new to the organization (e.g., a protégé who worked as an attorney in private practice for 20 years before joining this organization). Personal advice was more commonly discussed as a reciprocated resource, most likely because this resource is not asymmetrically distributed among mentors and protégés by virtue of their position in the organization. For instance, one protégé indicated that he and his mentor exchange personal advice because he/she can offer insight into how to raise teenage children and his/her mentor can offer advice about marriage. This exchange of personal advice is made possible by the life experiences that the protégé and mentor bring to the relationship. Finally, some protégés did not specify the resources, but rather characterized the relationship as being mutually beneficial or pleasant (e.g., "I think it's been as pleasant experience for her as well", "I guess mutually beneficial is a good way to put it"). Overall, it is clear that Reciprocity was not a dominant theme among the protégés, but that exchange of personal advice and work-related support did occur.

Perceived Fit

Perceived Fit was mentioned by the fewest protégés (17.6%) and it referred to the protégé's perception that the differences existing between him/her and the mentor were complementary (e.g., "she is very different than I am and yet she took on that role of mentor, and has allowed me to develop"). Complementary differences included personality characteristics as well as differences in skills (e.g., leadership skills, communication skills). One protégé simply stated that her mentor was a good

complement to her, without stating the key difference(s). While only a few protégés articulated that their mentor was a good match based on observed dissimilarities, mentoring relationships typically involve a mentor who has a set of skills, knowledge, and/or work experience that the protégé does not possess (Kram, 1985). Without this distinction, the relationship would be more accurately described as one that occurs between colleagues. Therefore, complementary differences between the mentor and protégé that are related to work may simply be an assumed condition of the relationship and not one that protégés find the need to discuss. Kram's (1985) assertion that "all developmental relationships begin as complementary ones" (p. 103) supports the idea that complementarity is a pervasive interpersonal quality despite the fact that few protégés identified it when describing their mentoring relationship.

Differences Between M/M, F/F, and M/F Dyads

The second research question addressed possible differences in the interpersonal qualities that emerged between the three sex compositions represented in this study. Analyses of the number of protégés mentioning each theme, as well as how the themes were expressed, provide preliminary evidence that differences do exist between the sex compositions.

Frequency of Themes Shared by 3 Compositions

As previously discussed, the only theme mentioned by all protégés despite the sex composition was Commitment. Again, this finding is most likely due to the fundamental nature of this theme to the continuation of relationships (Sprecher, 1992). In addition, mentoring relationships are designed such that the protégé should expect the mentor to

make investments in the relationship. When the mentor follows through with his/her role, protégés will attend to these investments (e.g., encouraging questions).

The way in which Commitment was expressed by protégés was also similar across the 3 sex compositions. The mentoring program in this company makes commitment explicit through encouraging mentors and protégés to negotiate a contract for the relationship. As a result, Commitment arose not only as an inherent interpersonal process, but also as an overtly recognized contract between protégé and mentor (Hinde, 1981). Likewise, these mentoring relationships existed within a context of publicly shared expectations that both members will invest time and effort in the relationship. The process of devising an explicit contract and an understanding of the publicly shared expectations may serve to standardize how Commitment is expressed by all protégés (e.g., mentors provide similar investments, protégés attend to similar investments based on prior expectations).

Frequency of Themes Shared by 2 Compositions

Two obvious similarities exist between the F/F dyads and the M/F dyads. First, all female protégés reported Disclosure as characterizing their mentoring relationship regardless of the mentor's sex. One possible explanation is that female protégés engage in more self-disclosure. Literature on women's friendships supports this explanation with the finding that "women use talk as a primary way to develop relationships" (Wood, 2001, p. 198). Alternatively, female protégés may simply attend to this aspect of the relationship more so than male protégés. It is important to note that most of the male protégés also mentioned Disclosure, making it difficult to make strong inferences based on this distinction.

An examination of how Disclosure is expressed by protégés in the different sex compositions does reveal important differences. Among the F/F dyads, Disclosure entails disclosures relevant to work (e.g., career goals) as well as very personal information. For instance, one protégé noted that her mentor actively inquired about her personal life in order to understand her better: "she wanted to know why, if there was anything that happened to me in the past, that would make me not trust people. We talked about my personal relationships when I was in my 20s". Other protégés in the F/F dyads mentioned examples of Disclosure such as, "very intimate details", "things that you normally wouldn't share with anyone", "personal matters", and "our families, our likes, our dislikes". The manifestation of Disclosure in F/F dyads is in line with findings that "women tend to talk about personal feelings and disclose intimate information" in their friendships with other women (Wood, 2001, p. 199). The type of information disclosed by female protégés with male mentors was qualitatively different. These protégés described Disclosure more in terms of work-related information, such as "what types of things that I wanted to achieve and what I would like to get out of our relationship", "things going on in the organization that we're not too happy with", "a personal issue with someone at work", and "I share more developmental type information with him". When female protégés with male mentors did describe personal disclosures in the relationship, they always qualified this description as being restricted in some way. These qualifiers included phrases, such as "to a certain extent", "a little feedback on what we're involved in personally", and "I don't mean real deeply, deeply personal". Clawson and Kram (1984) have theorized that managing closeness internal to the relationship and managing public image constitutes a developmental dilemma for mentors and protégés in

cross-sex mentoring relationship. The predominance of work-related information and the inclination of protégés in the M/F dyads to downplay the personal information that is exchanged may serve as examples of how protégés and mentors manage closeness and public image.

The second similarity between the F/F and M/F dyads involves the Negative/Mismatch theme. Few protégés in these compositions mentioned Negative/Mismatch as compared to protégés in the M/M composition. The similarity between the F/F and M/F dyads extends beyond the number of protégés who mentioned it to the actual content of Negative/Mismatch. Female protégés in these two compositions described this theme in terms of 1) not being able to meet as often as desired (e.g., "the only negative thing I would say is that she, because of her position and responsibilities, her schedule is very tight"), 2) having a mentor with expertise in a different field (e.g., "we don't practice in the same areas of law so, …I don't know how much help he would have been if it was a purely work-related question"), or 3) having a mentor with a different lifestyle which inhibited interaction outside of work (e.g. "for that we'd have to be hanging together and we just don't have the same lifestyles"). Negative/Mismatch for these protégés focused on how circumstances related to the mentor, protégé, or both hinder the relationship in some way, though this negativity does not arise from the interpersonal aspects of the relationship. This finding conflicts with prior research that found that background dissimilarity was not related to occurrences of negative mentoring experiences (Eby, et al., 2000).

In addition to background dissimilarity, two protégés in the M/M composition also used Negative/Mismatch to describe the interpersonal relationship with their mentor

(e.g., “I don’t think he put value on his job on whether he was a good or bad mentor”). More specifically, in both cases the mentor’s work-related contributions to the relationship fell short of what the protégé expected. This type of experience clearly maps onto Eby, et al.’s (2000) description of the Neglect theme (e.g., “He was always very evasive when I needed his advice or support”) and the Interpersonal incompetency theme (e.g., “Someone who does not communicate well at all”) in their typology of negative mentoring experiences. Interestingly, neglect was the negative experience most frequently cited by protégés in that study. To summarize, Negative/Mismatch described inhibiting contextual factors for the M/F and F/F dyads; this theme also described the mentor’s negative behaviors and attitudes in the M/M composition. This may indicate that male mentors offer more career-related guidance to female protégés than male protégés. This could occur either because female protégés ask for more guidance from their mentors, or because male mentors believe that female protégés need more career-related mentoring. Alternatively, male protégés may have higher expectations for the amount and/or type of career-related benefits they will receive from their mentors.

The compositions, M/F and M/M, shared the exact frequencies for two of the themes, Comfort and Perceived Fit. Comfort was mentioned by all protégés, whereas Perceived Fit, which will be discussed in a later section, was mentioned by none. The types of comments used to describe Comfort were also very similar in both the M/F and M/M compositions, with one exception. Protégés in M/M dyads indicated that humor played a role in their relationships (e.g., “sense of humor made a big difference”, “we could joke around and have fun”). It is generally believed that men have an activity-based orientation to friendships, which emphasizes humor, fun and companionship (Fehr,

1996). Therefore, it is likely that male protégés with male mentors engage in more interactions marked by humor than female protégés (Fehr, 1996). Another explanation could be that male protégés with male mentors may simply perceive that humor has a higher degree of importance to their relationships and are more likely than female protégés to mention humor when describing their relationships.

Female protégés with female mentors described Comfort as feeling comfortable approaching her mentor (e.g., "I will schedule an ad hoc meeting with her when I have a key issue") or being generally comfortable (e.g., "I'm comfortable", "you can be slightly more casual"). Unlike protégés in the other compositions, female protégés with female mentors did not provide a rich description of how they experience Comfort in the relationship with their mentor. Evidence suggests that personal disclosures and similarity foster interpersonal comfort, so it is possible that female protégés with female mentors do not explicitly describe Comfort because it is considered inherent to their relationships with other women in the workplace (Ragins, 1997).

Distinctive Themes for M/M Dyads

Unlike the M/F and F/F dyads, all of the male protégés with male mentors mentioned Respect and Liking as important to their relationship. Similar to an earlier suggestion that male protégés may have higher expectations for what they will receive from the mentoring relationship, male protégés may attend to characteristics of the mentor that indicate an ability to provide these benefits. Although Respect was mentioned more often in M/M dyads, the content of Respect was similar for all three sex compositions.

In terms of Liking, male protégés in same-sex mentoring relationships may feel more comfortable using phrases associated with this theme (e.g. friendship), as opposed to phrases or words indicating greater interpersonal closeness (e.g., close friend). Despite the difference between sex compositions in the number of protégés who mentioned Liking, the content of this theme was similar for all three compositions. This supports a previous finding that protégés in cross-sex and same-sex mentoring relationships did not differ in the extent to which they considered their protégé a friend (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990).

When compared to the other sex compositions, Negative/Mismatch is mentioned by a higher percentage of male protégés with male mentors. As previously discussed, this theme is also qualitatively different for protégés in M/M dyads than for protégés in M/F and F/F dyads.

Distinctive Themes for M/F Dyads

In comparison to the other two sex compositions, fewer female protégés with male mentors mentioned Closeness, Trust, and Understanding when describing their mentoring relationships. This provides further evidence for the assertion that protégés in cross-sex dyads need to actively manage the internal closeness of the relationship and public image (Clawson & Kram, 1984). Two possible explanations are apparent. First, female protégés with male mentors are less likely to experience Closeness, Trust and Understanding in their mentoring relationships, which parallels the finding that protégés in this sex composition receive less psychosocial functions than protégés in F/F dyads (Ragins & Cotton, 1999; McGuire, 1999). This could reflect attempts to manage the internal relationship. This could also arise from the tendency for men and women in

cross-sex mentoring dyads to rely on stereotypes to reduce ambiguity in their interactions (Kram, 1985). Stereotyped interactions would certainly introduce a barrier to interpersonal processes such as Closeness, Trust, and Understanding. Further, particularly for Understanding, male mentors may simply not comprehend issues unique to women in the organization (Ragins, 1997). Second, female protégés with male mentors are less likely to discuss these interpersonal qualities for fear of what 'outsiders' might think of their relationship, which would be an example of managing the public image.

While there were no qualitative differences across sex compositions for the theme, Understanding, differences were noted for the themes, Closeness and Trust. The only response associated with the Closeness theme for M/F dyads is, "Then, personally, it's quite close, too". The content of this theme in the M/M and F/F dyads is more specific and descriptive (e.g., "extremely close", "almost an instant bond"), which would be expected if female protégés with male mentors feel more cautious about describing Closeness. It is important to point out that Closeness was not mentioned by 50% or less of the protégés within any given sex composition.

The type of Trust indicated by female protégés with male mentors mirrors the type of Disclosure found in this sex composition: work-related (e.g., "here's the person that you are trusting as a mentor looking out for your best interests", "because of the agreements that we have on confidentiality, I was able to ask political questions"). In stark contrast, females protégés with female mentors use phrases such as "sort of like a therapist", "I would trust her more in every aspect", "we have built a trust", which are different from protégés in M/F dyads in that the trust goes well beyond work topics and

trust is mutual. This collaborates past findings that protégés in F/F dyads report more of the counseling function than protégés in other sex compositions (Burke, McKeen, & McKenna, 1990).

Distinctive Themes for F/F Dyads

Compared to the other two sex compositions, all female protégés with female mentors described their relationship as having Similarity. This theme was pervasive among protégés in each of the sex compositions, but particularly for F/F dyads. The content of this theme differed across the sex compositions, with the biggest difference existing between the same-sex and cross-sex dyads. Protégés in the M/F dyads described similarity to their mentor in terms of personality (e.g., "I just think it's our personalities makes a good match"), work experience (e.g., "I think we are both at a place in our careers…"), and age (e.g., "we kind of grew up with, you know, the same things around us…as opposed to maybe somebody that's quite a bit younger or older"). Protégés in M/M dyads and F/F, in addition to noting Similarity in terms of personality, work experience, and age, describe Similarity with regard to attitudes and beliefs (e.g., "luckily we're both – have the same outlooks on lots of things", "he was a very family-oriented person and that's kind of where I think we made our connection", "I think we certainly…have a lot in common in terms of not only working for Company X but…the ways we like to work and the priorities we have in life"). The qualitative differences in the content of Similarity between protégés in same-sex and cross-sex mentoring relationships may indicate that individuals in diversified relationships need to search for more peripheral commonalities as a basis for Similarity and identification (Ragins, 1997).

Protégés in same-sex mentoring relationships may be more likely to perceive important shared attitudes/beliefs because that type of Similarity would be expected in relationships with someone in the same power group (i.e., gender). One difference between protégés in M/M and F/F dyads is that some female protégés in same-sex mentoring relationships explicitly stated that gender was an important commonality in their relationship (e.g., "Researcher: Are there other similarities that you think help foster closeness other than family? Protégé: Yes, the fact that we're both women"); whereas gender was not explicitly stated as a basis for Similarity among the M/M dyads. The finding that protégés in F/F dyads only mention gender, and not race, as an important similarity and that protégés in M/M dyads mention neither gender nor race as an important similarity is probably best explained by literature on white privilege and male privilege. Privilege arises based on membership to a majority group and the host of advantages that come with that membership. McIntosh (1993) describes privilege as an "invisible package of unearned assets" (p.31). White males represent the most privileged group, by virtue of belonging to the dominant race and sex (i.e. white privilege, male privilege). White females, while they are often considered a minority group, do experience privilege on the basis of their race (i.e., white privilege). What is interesting to note is that privilege seems invisible to those who enjoy it. In fact, the first stage of White identity development is a lack of awareness about issues of race except as they relate to other racial/ethnic groups (Helms, 1990). An understanding of the invisibility of privilege helps to inform why females mentioned gender as an important similarity, but not race, and why males mentioned neither race nor sex as an important similarity.

The salience of shared gender to protégés in F/F dyads can also be explained by a tenet of social identity theory: "when men predominate in positions of organizational power, the categories 'male' and 'female' will become salient for women" (Ely, 1995, p. 592). Although the organization represented in this study emphasizes the importance of diversity in the workplace, demographically, women are underrepresented in senior executive, senior management, and middle management positions (e.g., women represent 7.9% of the senior executives in Company X). Overall, these findings indicate that protégés in same-sex relationships report more salient dimensions (age, gender, attitudes/beliefs) as the basis for Similarity, which may provide one explanation for the fewer instances of Closeness, Trust, and Understanding reported by protégés in M/F dyads.

Interestingly, Perceived Fit was only mentioned by protégés in the F/F dyads, therefore it is impossible to compare the content of this theme across the three sex compositions. The fact that this theme was only made explicit by female protégés with female mentors may indicate that these protégés are more likely to view complementary differences as positive for the relationship. In contrast, protégés in M/F dyads may perceive differences with their mentor as threatening to the relationship. Literature on friendship processes has found that, due to men's higher status in society, women in cross-sex relationships are more likely to conform to the man's style than vice versa (Fehr, 1996). Therefore, female protégés with male mentors may simply alter their behavior, etc. in order to be more similar to their mentor, rather than perceive these differences as an avenue for mutual learning.

In comparison to the other two sex compositions, Formality and Reciprocity were mentioned by the lowest percentage of female protégés with female mentors. One possible explanation for the few instances of Formality is that less status differences exist in F/F relationships than in any other sex combination. In addition, women have a tendency to put others at ease and this could lead to less Formality in relationships involving a female mentor (Wood, 2001). Protégés who mentioned Formality described this quality in the same way, regardless of the sex composition.

The content of the Reciprocity theme for F/F dyads is limited to both members serving as a sounding board for the other and both members experiencing the relationship as enjoyable (e.g., " a pleasant experience"). Protégés in the M/M and M/F compositions, however, describe Reciprocity as a mutual exchange of work-related support and/or personal advice. Male mentors' emphasis on career development support may account for protégés description of work-related support as a reciprocated resource (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). In addition, most protégés who mentioned Reciprocity in terms of work-related support worked with their mentor on projects, or worked in the same business unit as their mentor. These circumstances would allow protégés more opportunities to provide work support to their mentor and vice versa. Protégés in F/F dyads were typically sponsored through an Employee Network (i.e., Women Adding Value Everywhere), meaning that protégés in these relationships are less likely to get paired with a mentor within the same business unit. Therefore, whether or not the protégé and mentor worked in the same business unit could explain the qualitative differences in Reciprocity between the sex compositions.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The themes that did emerge during these interviews could have been influenced by a variety of factors, one of which is that fact that the duration of the mentoring relationships ranged from 1 to 15 months. According to Kram (1985), all of these relationships occurred in the Initiation phase, which can be characterized by the development of expectations, interaction around work-related tasks, the protégé's desire to be coached, the protégé's respect for the mentor, and the mentor's engaging in career-related support. Research has also shown that, relative to protégés in later phases, protégés in the Initiation phase "reported the lowest levels of psychosocial and career-related support" (Chao, 1997, p. 24). Implications of this finding are most obvious for themes such as Closeness, Trust, and Disclosure. Thus, the present study provides a snapshot of interpersonal qualities that were descriptive of one particular phase associated with mentoring relationships. Future research needs to qualitatively assess interpersonal qualities as mentoring relationships progress through the phases (e.g., Initiation, Cultivation, Separation, Redefinition), since "various interpersonal processes may indeed be differentially salient at various point along the continuum of relationship growth" (Morton & Douglas, 1981, p. 6).

Another influencing factor is that all protégés were involved in formal mentoring relationships. Formal mentoring relationships are considered less interpersonally close due to the initiation of the relationship by the organization rather than a result of mutual attraction between the mentor and protégé (Kram, 1985). Mullen (1994) has suggested that formal mentoring relationships involve more restricted communication and less interpersonal comfort than informal mentoring relationships. Ragins and Cotton (1999)

found that protégés in informal mentoring relationships received more psychosocial functions (i.e., friendship, social support, role modeling, acceptance). On the other hand, Chao, Garnder, & Waltz (1992) found that protégés in formal and informal mentoring relationships reported receiving similar levels of psychosocial functions. It is important to remember that there are large within group differences for formal mentoring programs, which makes the dichotomy between formal and informal mentoring relationships less clear (Ragins, 1999). The formal mentoring relationships represented in the current study vary in terms of the degree to which the mentor and protégé volunteered to be in the relationship, the way in which protégés were paired with mentors, the proximity between mentor and protégé, and the goals for the relationship. As such, these mentoring relationships represent a hybrid of informal and formal characteristics. The results of this study should not be generalized to interpersonal qualities existing in informal mentoring relationships, nor should they be considered representative of all formal relationships. Rather, the results provide preliminary evidence for interpersonal qualities that could exist in either type of mentoring relationship. Future research should examine interpersonal qualities that emerge in informal and formal mentoring relationships that differ on relevant dimensions (e.g., voluntary vs. involuntary participation of mentors).

Another limitation to the present study involves the absence of male protégés with female mentors in the sample. The failure of male protégés in this sex composition to participate in the study is most likely a combination of two factors. First, this sex composition has been found to have the lowest base rate (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Second, male protégés may feel hesitant to participate due to their self-consciousness

about having a female mentor or their discomfort describing a cross-sex work relationship. Until the perspective of these male protégés is examined, only speculations exist to describe this type of sex composition. Future research should target this sex composition, so that a holistic understanding of how interpersonal qualities differ between sex compositions can be achieved.

Future research should also obtain information about interpersonal qualities from the mentor's perspective and, ideally, from the dyadic perspective. With few exceptions (e.g., Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Kram, 1985), there is little research from the mentor's perspective and even less so from a dyadic perspective regarding all aspects of mentoring. The present study offers preliminary evidence regarding what interpersonal qualities are important to mentoring relationships and the nature of these qualities; however additional qualities or different implications of these interpersonal qualities for the relationship may be revealed by examining the mentor's perspective. For example, protégés in the present study discussed Similarity as relevant for on-the-job training, interpersonal closeness, and information sharing, depending on the type of Similarity characterizing the relationship. From the mentor's perspective, he/she may be more willing to provide mentoring to protégés who they consider to be more similar to them as a result of greater perceived rewards (Allen, et al., 1997). Therefore, although protégés and mentors may consider Similarity an important interpersonal quality for mentoring relationships, protégés and mentors may differ in how they perceive the effects of Similarity on their relationships. Clearly, future research should extend an examination of interpersonal qualities to mentors and mentoring pairs.

Finally, future research should address potential relationships among interpersonal qualities. For instance, protégés often mentioned Disclosure in the context of Trust when describing their mentoring relationships. Similarly, Understanding was only mentioned by protégés who characterized their relationship as being characterized by Disclosure, Similarity, or both. Future research should be conducted to determine what interpersonal qualities co-vary in order to provide a better understanding of how these interpersonal qualities affect mentoring relationships. Further, understanding relationships among interpersonal qualities is an essential step in building a theory of interpersonal qualities in mentoring relationships (Bacharach, 1989).

Implications for Mentoring Theory

Interpersonal qualities can provide a better understanding of why mentoring functions occur in these relationships. Kram (1985) implicates the role of interpersonal qualities for psychosocial functions (e.g., trust as the basis for acceptance-and-confirmation), however no effort has been made to map out the interpersonal qualities most directly relevant for psychosocial functions. The results of the present study represent a first step in this process. Models of personal relationships, such as Rusbult's (1983) investment model, Sprecher's model of close relationship loss, and Byrne's (1971) similarity-attraction paradigm, can provide frameworks for building theoretical models of how specific, unique interpersonal processes manifest in, and effect the development, sustainability, and benefits of mentoring relationships. Protégés' responses in the present study already support the relevance of these models to mentoring relationships (e.g., investments as indicators of commitment). In sum, theoretical models

of mentoring processes should be developed using models of personal relationships as a guide.

Although studies examining mentoring functions have found little to no significant differences between same-sex and cross-sex mentoring relationships (Ragins & Cotton, 1999), this study provides further evidence that differences between the sex compositions become apparent when the sex compositions are examined separately (Ragins & Cotton, 1999; McGuire, 1999). In order to advance mentoring theory, future research should continue to take a more fine-grained approach when examining differences between mentoring relationships based on sex composition, relationship type (i.e., formal versus informal), and any group membership associated with power. For instance, a dichotomous grouping of mentoring relationships as either formal or informal may mask within group differences, especially among formal mentoring programs (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). These findings also suggest that differences between mentor and protégé in terms of other group memberships associated with power in organizations (e.g., race, ethnicity, social class, disability) may have implications for how interpersonal processes play out (Ragins, 1997). Results for protégés in M/F dyads may provide insight into interpersonal processes existing in mentoring relationships involving one marginalized member; whereas results for F/F dyads may provide some interesting parallels to how interpersonal qualities manifest in dyads involving two marginalized members (e.g., disabled mentor/disabled protégé). The link between results of the present study and compositions involving marginalized members, in general, is made plausible by the recognition "that a common bond among marginalized groups is restricted power in organizations" (Ragins, 1997, p. 483). Based on this common bond, it

is reasonable to consider potential similarities between relationships involving a particular sex composition (e.g., M/F) and relationships involving an equivalent pattern of marginalized members (e.g., African American mentor/White protégé).

In the present study, a fine-grained analysis led to preliminary evidence that sex compositions are qualitatively different in terms of interpersonal qualities. Differences in frequencies (i.e., the number of protégés who reported a particular theme) across sex compositions provided important information about what interpersonal qualities existed and, to a lesser degree, potential indications of the importance of themes within each sex composition. Frequency data provided answers to the questions, 'what?' and 'to what extent?' An examination of how the content of themes differed across sex compositions served to answer the questions, 'why?' and 'in what way?'; and in doing so revealed even greater differences. This type of information is essential for future theory building on the role of sex composition in understanding mentoring relationships (Bacharach, 1989). For instance, the Disclosure theme was mentioned by 100% of protégés in F/F and M/F dyads. Looking only at frequency data, it could be suggested that these two sex compositions do not differ with regard to Disclosure. Qualitative analysis, however, reveals that this interpersonal quality might mean something different to protégés in M/F dyads than protégés in F/F dyads. An obvious implication for mentoring theory is that research needs to examine qualitative differences as well as differences based on frequency. One application of this suggestion would be to examine the way in which mentoring functions manifest in different sex compositions, rather than simply focusing on the presence and frequency of these functions.

Implications for Practice

Although this study represents only a first step in determining what interpersonal qualities are relevant for mentoring relationships and how the sex composition of the dyad may affect the manifestation of these qualities, there are some important implications for practice. These implications primarily result from the improved understanding of the relational aspect of mentoring. Organizations that have established formal mentoring programs often provide participating mentors and protégés with educational resources about ways in which to enhance the effectiveness of the relationship. Clearly, an understanding of how the interpersonal relationship hinders and/or facilitates mentoring functions would be important for those interested in getting the most benefits out of their relationship. For instance, trust, as described by the protégés in this sample, is often synonymous with met expectations, or more specifically, the expectation that the mentor will honor confidentiality in the relationship. Based on this finding, organizations may want to emphasize the importance of confidentiality between mentors and protégés as a way to enhance the trust in these relationships. In turn, increased trust may foster the development of other important interpersonal qualities, such as disclosure and comfort. In summary, organizations can use knowledge of how interpersonal qualities impact the mentoring relationship to assist mentors and protégés contract their expectations for the relationship.

In addition, Kram (1985) suggests mentors may experience concerns regarding their ability to succeed in the mentoring role and that these anxieties may be alleviated by "defining mentoring functions and by providing interpersonal skill training" (p. 184). Determining what interpersonal qualities are important to mentoring relationships is an

important step in developing interpersonal skills training for mentors. For example, similarity was discussed as important to mentoring relationships; therefore mentor training could include information about how to make a connection with the protégé on the basis of some commonality, especially if a basis for similarity is not apparent or if the differences seem to overshadow any similarities (i.e., cross-sex or cross-race mentoring relationships).

Finally, the findings have implications for the matching process in formal mentoring programs. Understanding how interpersonal qualities differ in either frequency or type based on the sex composition of the dyad, may help organizations address issues of fit when matching a protégé and mentor. For instance, results indicate that a female protégé who desires a personally close mentoring relationship would possibly experience the highest degree of fit with a female mentor. In contrast, if a female protégé was mainly interested in the ability to discuss work issues in an open and honest manner, then a male or female mentor would provide an equivalent fit. Knowledge of how interpersonal qualities differ across sex compositions, coupled with information about the type of interpersonal relationship protégés and mentors prefer, can better equip organizations to create a good match, or fit, between the mentor and protégé simply based on the most appropriate sex composition.

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APPENDIX A

SOLICITATION OF QUALITATIVE LISTSERV

I joined this listserv a few months ago, because I am conducting a qualitative study for my thesis. I have really enjoyed receiving information about issues related to the philosophy behind qualitative research as well as the technical aspects of qualitative methods. My thesis is an examination of the interpersonal qualities involved in mentoring relationships at work - from the perspective of the protege/mentee. The primary purpose is to determine what, if any, interpersonal qualities (e.g., trust, identification, commitment to the relationship) are considered important to protégés. I have developed a brief list of interview questions in order to try and obtain this information.

1) How did the relationship with your mentor develop? Basically, tell me the story of your mentoring relationship.

2) How would you describe the relationship with your mentor?

prompt – What adjectives would you use to describe your relationship, and why?

prompt – What characteristics of the relationship make it particularly effective, or ineffective?

3) How would you compare the relationship with your mentor to other relationships that influence your work and/or personal life?

prompt – e.g., as compared to relationships with friends, other co-workers, family members, etc.

prompt – What are some similarities? differences?

4) What other titles, besides ‘mentor’, would be appropriate for describing his/her role in your life?

prompt – e.g., people can play more than one role in your life, such as a colleague/co-worker who is also a friend

5) Please describe a typical meeting or interaction with your mentor.

prompt – Are interactions with your mentor limited to the workplace?

prompt – How do these interactions influence the relationship?

6) Why do you stay in this mentoring relationship?

prompt – e.g., people may stay in a mentoring relationship because there are no other mentors available, the relationship is beneficial, etc.

Since this is the first time I have developed interview questions, I would really appreciate any comments/suggestions you have about the questions (e.g., technical properties, clarity, focus). Unless, the comments would be beneficial to others developing interview questions, you can respond directly to me at alokwood@arches.uga.edu. Thanks in advance for your guidance. -Angie

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1) How did the relationship with your mentor develop after the two of you were initially matched up by the organization? How did the relationship actually operate/function?

prompt – How has Company X influenced the relationship with your mentor?

2) How would you describe the relationship with your mentor?

prompt – What adjectives would you use to describe your relationship?

prompt – Why did you choose those adjectives?

prompt – Were these adjectives always applicable, or has the relationship changed over time?

3) Are there any other titles, besides 'mentor', that would be appropriate for describing his/her role in your life?

prompt – e.g., people can play more than one role in your life, such as a colleague/co-worker who is also a friend

4) What is it about the relationship that allows you to consider your mentor a _____ (ask for each title offered in question #3)?

5) How would you compare the relationship with your mentor to other relationships in your work and/or personal life?

prompt – e.g., as compared to relationships with friends, co-workers, family members, etc.

prompt – Are there any similarities? differences?

6) Please describe a typical meeting or interaction with your mentor.

prompt – Are interactions with your mentor limited to the workplace?

prompt – What are the sorts of things that he/she says or does that you find beneficial to the relationship? harmful to the relationship?

7) If I gave you the option of either staying in your current mentoring relationship, or ending the mentoring relationship, what would you choose? Why?

prompt – e.g., people may stay in a mentoring relationship because there are no other mentors available, the relationship is beneficial, etc.

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions by writing the appropriate answer in the space provided or by placing an 'X' in the space provided. All of your responses will remain completely confidential.

1. Your age: _____ years

2. Your race:___ Caucasian ___ African American ___ Hispanic
___ Native American ___ Asian ___ Other: _____

3. Your gender: ___ Male ___Female

4. How many years have you worked for Company X? _____ years

5. How many years have you worked in your current job? _____ years

6. Your highest level of education:
___ High school diploma ___ GED ___ Bachelor's degree
___ Master's degree ___ Doctorate or equivalent

7. What business unit/organization are you currently working in? _____

8. Which category best describes your position in the organization?
___ Business professional ___ Technical professional ___ Office support staff
___ First-line manager ___ Middle management ___ Upper management
___ Executive/CEO ___ Other (please describe)
:_____

Thinking about <u>the mentor you currently have in Company X's formal mentoring process</u>, please answer the following questions:

9. Are you being sponsored through an Employee Network? ___ Yes ___ No
* If so, which one? _____

10. Length of mentoring relationship: _____ months

11. How many grade levels separate you and your mentor? _____ levels

12. Mentor's gender: ___ Male ___ Female

13. Mentor's race: ___ Caucasian ___ African American ___ Hispanic
___ Native American ___ Asian ___ Other: _____

14. Which category best describes your mentor's position/rank in the organization:
___ Business professional ___ Technical professional ___ Office support staff
___ First-line manager ___ Middle management ___ Upper management
___ Executive/CEO ___ Other (please describe) _____

15. Is this mentor also your supervisor? ___ Yes ___ No

16. How long has your mentor worked for Company X? _____ years

17. Does your mentor work in the same business unit/organization? ___ Yes ___ No

General definition of mentoring:
One type of work relationship is a mentoring relationship. A mentor is generally defined as a higher-ranking, influential individual in your work environment who has advanced experience and knowledge and is committed to providing upward mobility and support in your career. Your mentor may or may not be your immediate supervisor.

28. Using this definition of a mentor, how many mentors have you had during your career (at Company X, or at any other place(s) of employment)? _____

Please provide the following contact information **if you would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview focusing on your mentee/mentor relationship**. The interviews are expected to last 30 to 45 minutes. Your responses will remain completely confidential. As an incentive, by indicating your willingness to participate in an interview, you will be automatically eligible for a $100 prize that will be awarded to the charitable organization of your choice.

First name: _____

Phone number: _____ OR Email address: _____

Thank you for your participation!!

APPENDIX D

LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT

May 6, 2002

Dear Company X Mentoring Process participant:

As you know, Company X is committed to helping its employees' personal and professional development. One way we have demonstrated this investment is through our mentoring process. As part of our on-going commitment to continuous improvement, we are collaborating with the University of Georgia in a study of mentoring relationships. The study is entitled "Mentees' Experiences in Mentoring Relationships" and is being conducted by Angie Lockwood, a doctoral student, and her advisor, Dr. Lillian Eby.

The information obtained from this study will help us evaluate and enhance the mentoring process. Therefore, we would greatly appreciate you participation in this study by completing the brief survey that is attached to this email. The survey should take about 10 minutes of your time to complete. After completing it, you may be asked to participate in a voluntary, follow-up interview to gain more insight into your mentee/mentor relationship.

You have two options for returning the questionnaire directly to the researchers. First, you can save the attached questionnaire, enter your responses directly into the file, and then email it as an attachment to alokwood@arches.uga.edu. As a second option, you can print out the questionnaire, complete it, and fax it to (706) 542-3275 to the attention of Angie Lockwood.

Please read the Consent Advisory letter (attached separately) from the researchers at the University of Georgia for important information about the study. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Senior Advisor
Company X

APPENDIX E

LETTER OF IMPLIED CONSENT

May 6, 2002

Dear Company X Employee:

I am writing to ask your help in a study entitled "Mentees' Experiences in Mentoring Relationships". This part of the study is designed to determine, 1) characteristics of individuals who are involved in Company X's mentoring process, and 2) what mentoring relationships look like in your organization. A secondary objective is to determine whether or not you would be willing to participate in an interview to discuss your mentoring relationship

You have been selected to participate in this study because the only way we can find out about mentoring relationships at Company X is to contact employees like you. We are contacting mentees in order to ask questions related to you, your mentor, and the mentoring relationship. The questionnaire should take approximately ten minutes to complete. We are also interested in your willingness to participate in a follow-up interview to discuss your mentoring relationship in greater detail. Of those who express a willingness to participate in a follow-up interview, a random sample of 40 mentees will be contacted for this purpose.

Results from this study will be used to better understand the types of mentoring relationships occurring at Company X. Neither the name, nor the location of your organization, will be reported in any write-ups. Instead, both the name and location of Company X will be referred to using pseudonyms and fictitious locations.

In addition, your responses will remain completely confidential and will be reported only as part of the total sample's responses. Your responses will remain the sole property of the primary researcher, and individual responses will not be provided to Company X. No risks, discomforts, or stresses are expected from completing this voluntary questionnaire. By completing the survey, you are indicating your informed consent to participate in this part of the study. The last portion of the questionnaire requests your contact information. By providing this information, you are consenting to receive a phone call from the researchers in order to schedule a follow-up interview. If you do not provide contact information, the researcher will assume you do not want to participate in the follow-up interview. Please complete and return this survey by Monday, May 20th in order to ensure that your responses are included in this study.

Thank you in advance for your help with this important study! If you provide contact information, you will be eligible to win a $100 prize. This prize will be in the form of a donation to your favorite charitable organization. The winner will be determined by a random drawing, and will be contacted on Friday, May 24th.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, we would be happy to speak with you. Feel free to contact the project director, Angie Lockwood, at 770-497-0291 or at alokwood@arches.uga.edu.

Sincerely,

Angie Lockwood
Doctoral Student and Project Director
Psychology Department
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602
Phone: (770) 497-0291

Lillian Eby, Ph.D.
Faculty Advisor
Psychology Department
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602
Phone: (706) 542-2174

APPENDIX F

REMINDER AND DEADLINE EXTENSION

Dear Mentoring Advisory Board Members:

I would like to take this time to remind you of the Mentoring Survey process we are participating in with the assistance of the University of Georgia. Today (May 20th) was originally set as the deadline for Mentee Questionnaire returns. While the turn out has been steady (22 to date) there is still a large number that have not been returned (I would presume). I would like again to take the opportunity to point out the potential valuable information which could be obtained through this process and would ask that you resend a request to the MENTEES who have participated in the structured, facilitated Company X Mentoring sponsored through your organization in the period FY 2001- Present in order that we may get a higher representative rate for more learning application.

Therefore, we are extending the deadline to close of business day - May 29, 2002. Of course, if your organization has not "sponsored" (i.e. paid to have a pair go through the SPS – Mentoring Learning Session), please disregard this request. I am re-attaching the information included in the first transmittal for you convenience.
<<Solicitation letter.ZIP>> <<Consent form letter.DOC (Compressed)>>
<<Mentee Questionnaire.DOC (Compressed)>>

In addition, so I can get a better idea on the number of potential Mentee submittals (i.e. target population), could you please send me the number of Mentees that each of you distributed this information to and the respective "sponsoring" organization (e.g. SBNG, SAPENG, Shell Finance Services, or E & P, etc.) by May 24, 2002.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and I apologize for the second round, but this is just too good of an opportunity to pass up if we as a group want to know more about the benefits that we are seeing from mentoring as well as an areas for potential improvement/enhancement.

Regards,

Senior Advisor

APPENDIX G

FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

Dear Company X Employee:

Thank you for completing the 'Mentee Questionnaire', and for indicating a willingness to participate in a follow-up interview to discuss the relationship with your mentor. Without your participation, this study would not be possible.

I would like to start conducting the interviews this week, therefore I would like to get your feedback on days/times that would be convenient for you. Please send me an email with a list of days and times that you would be available during the next three weeks. If you would prefer to schedule the interview over the phone, simply ignore this request, and please expect a phone call from me on Thursday, June 6th.

Prior to conducting any interviews, I must have your signed consent using the form attached below. A signed consent form is required by the research review board at the University of Georgia to ensure that your rights are protected. Please print out the consent form, read it thoroughly, sign it, and fax it to my attention at 706-542-3275.

Thanks again for taking the time to participate in this important study. If you have any questions or comments, please call me at 770-497-0291 or email me at alokwood@arches.uga.edu. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Angie Lockwood
University of Georgia
Department of Psychology
770-497-0291

APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

I, _____ agree to participate in phase 2 of the research entitled, "Mentees' Experiences in Mentoring Relationships" conducted by Angie Lockwood and Dr. Lillian Eby from the Department of Psychology at the University of Georgia. I understand that I do not have to take part if I do not want to. I can withdraw from the study at any time, without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The reason for this study is to gain a better understanding of mentees' experiences in mentoring relationships.

I will not benefit directly from this research. However, my participation in this research may lead to information that could improve the mentoring process at Shell (e.g., how mentors and mentees are matched, mentor training).

If I volunteer to take part in phase 2 of this study, I will be asked to do the following things:
1) Respond to questions about my mentoring relationship in the context of a phone interview. The interview is expected to take 30 to 45 minutes of my time.
2) If I am willing, the phone interview will be tape-recorded.

No discomforts or stresses are expected from my participation in this study.

No risks are expected.

The only person who will know that I am a participant in this study is the primary researcher. No information about me, or provided by me during the research, will be shared with others without my written permission, except if necessary to protect my rights or welfare (for example, if you are injured and need emergency care); or if required by law. I also reserve the right to review/edit the audiotape of the interview. The tapes will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the primary researcher's possession for 3 years, at which point they will be erased.

The researcher will answer any further questions about the research during the course of the study, and can be reached by telephone at 770/497-0291.

By signing this form, I understand that I am agreeing to take part in this research study. I will receive a signed copy of this consent for my own records.

_____ _____

Signature of Investigator Date Signature of Participant Date

The University of Georgia
Department of Psychology
Athens, GA 30602-3013