An Overview of Mentoring and Developmental Networks*

What is a traditional mentor?

The literature is replete with definitions of mentors from a variety of sources, including classical literature, military training, academia, business, and government. These definitions include advocate, coach, teacher, guide, role model, valued friend, door-opener, benevolent authority, available resource, cheerful critic, and career enthusiast. It has also been noted that "supermentors" combine many of these definitions, both generating processes for leadership development for succeeding generations and innately leading change. A mentor provides individual or group mentoring support that contributes to the career development of a junior colleague.

Beyond the dyadic model of mentoring – Community of Mentors and Developmental Networks

In addition to the traditional dyadic model of mentor-mentee, mentoring may include multiple relationships that we have called a "Community of Mentors" where each mentor provides part of the needed coaching and career development; one professional may provide scientific critique and expertise, another advice on family/work juggling, and another advice on grantsmanship or scholarly writing or networking in professional societies [1]. The Community of Mentors includes traditional scholarly/research mentors, career advisors, co-mentors, peer mentors, and e-mentors (Figure 1) and can be part of a "Developmental Network." Other resources are outlined in the references [2-15].

Collaborative peer mentoring allows faculty to work together at a regularly scheduled time, sometimes facilitated by a senior faculty member, and combining a curriculum (scholarship, teaching, grant writing, career development) along with a scholarly product. Peer-mentoring can also create an opportunity to share information, strategize about careers, and provide each other feedback, friendship, and emotional support.

E-mentoring typically builds on an existing traditional mentoring relationship that because of time, location or other constraints, continues primarily via electronic communication, but may include two professionals who have never met in person.

Project-based mentoring, often referred to as "functional mentoring" in the literature, pairs junior faculty with mentors who have the skills, expertise, and interest required for a specific project. The mentoring relationship may cease when the project is completed or it may continue and possibly evolve into a more traditional mentoring relationship.

Team mentoring refers to a multidisciplinary group of mentors each with a specific role. The lead mentor traditionally would have expertise in the mentee's research or scholarly interest, while one or more additional mentor's (co-mentors) interests and skills would complement, but not duplicate, the lead mentor's.

Developmental Networks are a newer framework for career development and mentoring that have been defined and valued by academic business leaders David Thomas, Kathy Kram, Monica Higgins and others [4,5,6,7]. "Developmental Networks" are composed of an even broader range of people (including one's Community of Mentors, colleagues, juniors, mentees, family, and friends) who can provide career advice and support (Figure 1). These simultaneously held relationships, drawn both from the faculty member's own organization as well as external organizations and communities, provide access to knowledge, opportunities, and resources. Developmental Networks can thus offer diverse viewpoints, experiences, and two-way learning more readily than those dyadic relationships that draw only on the experience of a single senior faculty member. In addition, developmental networks can change in parallel with your career trajectory and work/life needs and should be regularly assessed and re-configured. Although individuals may change in your developmental network, maintaining contact, even if it is just an occasional email or phone call, can be an important support. As you advance, you will have more advisees and mentees. Faculty should map their developmental network by listing people for each category in Figure 1. A Developmental Network Mapping Exercise and questions will help you analyze the strengths and limitations of your current network.
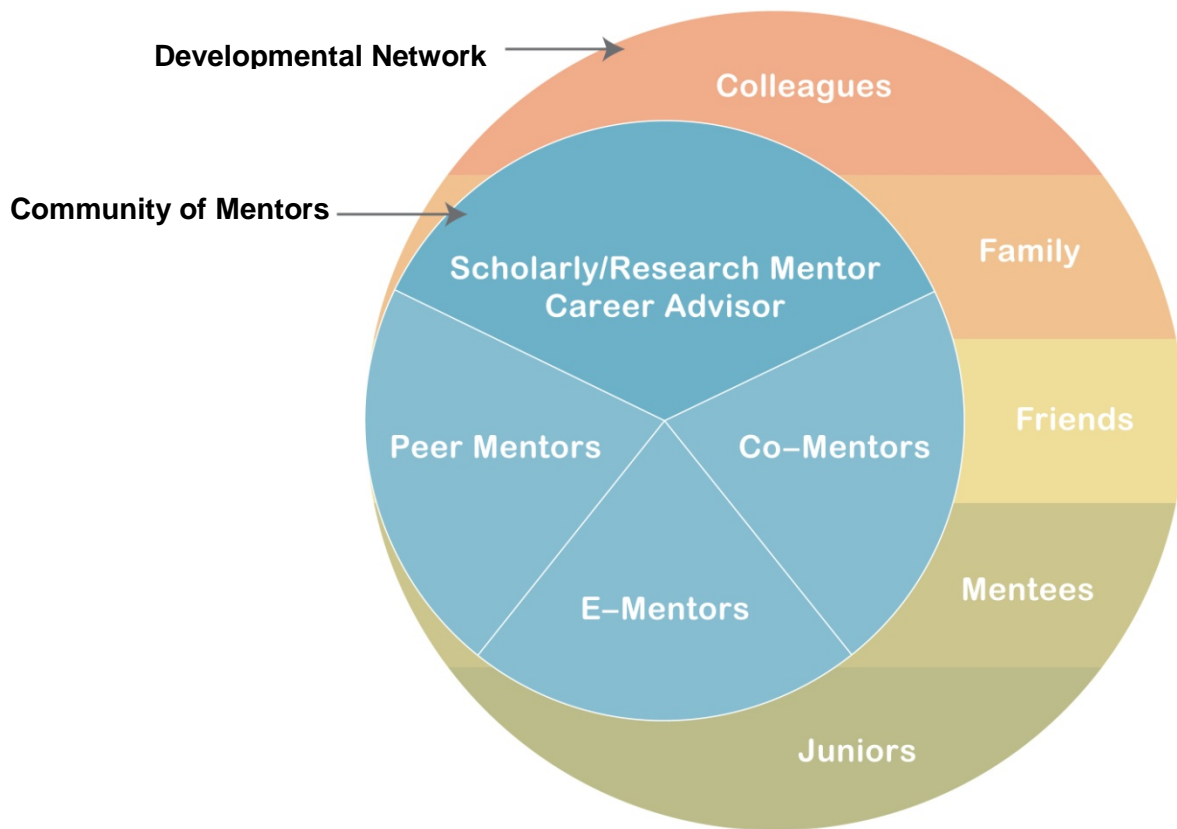
Figure 1

MAPPING YOUR DEVELOPMENTAL NETWORK

Before mapping your developmental network, read "A New Approach to Mentoring" by Kathy Kram and Monica Higgins (http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122160063875344843.html) and look over the example below which is based on the Developmental Network Model put forth by Kathy Kram, Monica Higgins and David Thomas.

We ask you to critically examine your network so that you can reflect on your own support system. For this exercise, we define your network as the set of relationships that help you to get your job done, advance your career, and provide both personal and professional support.

The chart on the next page helps you identify the people who assist you in different ways by listing those people according to the closeness of the relationship you have with them. As you think back over the past 1-2 years, consider the following three types of relationships.

> **People who help you _get the job done_**. These are the people who are helpful and useful to you in doing your work. They may work directly with you, and/or they may have provided leads to others who helped you with important information, introductions, scientific or technical advice, professional expertise, or other resources you needed to do your work.

> **People who help you _advance your career_**. These are the people who contribute to your professional development and career advancement. Whether these were are genuine mentors or more distant relationships, these are people who have given you career guidance and direction, arranged exposure to critical people, provided political advice, helped you get important opportunities or assignments, advised you on promotion criteria, provided advice on funding opportunities, and/or been an advocate for you.

> **People who provide _personal support_ for you**. These are the people you go to for your emotional well being and psychosocial support. They are the ones with whom you share experiences—both positive and negative, consult about decisions or concerns that are important to you, vent with, commiserate with, debrief critical experiences with—people with whom you can be yourself.

> People with whom you have more than one kind of relationship should be listed more than once (i.e. one person could be in two or three categories). In addition to considering people who perform these functions in your network, we also want you to place them in the column that best describes the type of relationship you have with them. **Close** relationships are ones where there is a high degree of trust, liking and mutual commitment. **Distant** relationships are ones where you don't know the person very well. **Moderate** relationships are in the middle, neither very close nor distant.

> On the tables on page 6 indicate by a star (*) those people whom you see as very well connected in your department or hospital or professional circle. That person might be an actual leader or just somebody who seems to know many other influential people. Write "mentor" or "mentee" next to anyone you consider in that role. See example on pages 4 and 5.

A DEVELOPMENTAL NETWORK MAP EXAMPLE

You: Senior Fellow or Junior Faculty

Types

 Getting the Job Done: These are people who are helpful in your doing your work. They provide technical advice, introductions, expertise, or resources.

☐

Close Relationship	Moderate Relationship	Distant Relationship
(NS) Nancy Smith, research assistant (mentee)	(JD) John Doe, PI of grant ★	(CJ) Carl Jones, administrative assistant

 Advancing Your Career: These are people who contribute to your professional development and career advancement. They provide career guidance and direction, advice on funding, and have been an advocate for you.

△

Close Relationship	Moderate Relationship	Distant Relationship
(DR) Diane Roberts, senior faculty member in your division (mentor) ★	(JD) John Doe, PI of grant ★	(SW) Sami Wonder, Department Chair★
	(AB) Anne Brown, faculty at other institution	

Getting Personal Support: These are the people you go to for your emotional well being and psychosocial support.

◯

Close Relationship	Moderate Relationship	Distant Relationship
(LG) Lee Green, spouse	(FW) Frances West, friend at work	
(DR) Diane Roberts, senior faculty member in your division (mentor) ★		

Suggested Guidelines:

1. Use Squares for those under Getting the Job done, Triangles for Advancing your career, and Circles for Getting Personal Support. If someone fills more than one criteria such as Personal Support and Getting the Job done, put him/her in two places.

2. Indicate how close or distant they are from you by the length of the line that connects the two of you. The square, triangle or circle red should be striped for Mentors. The square, triangle or circle should be dotted for mentees.

3. Peers should be placed on the horizontal line with you, seniors above that line, and subordinates below.

4. Individuals who are outside of your hospital or department should be connected with a dotted line.

5. Indicate by a star (*) in the table those people whom you see as very well connected in your department or hospital or professional circle. That person might be an actual leader or just somebody who seems to know many other influential people.
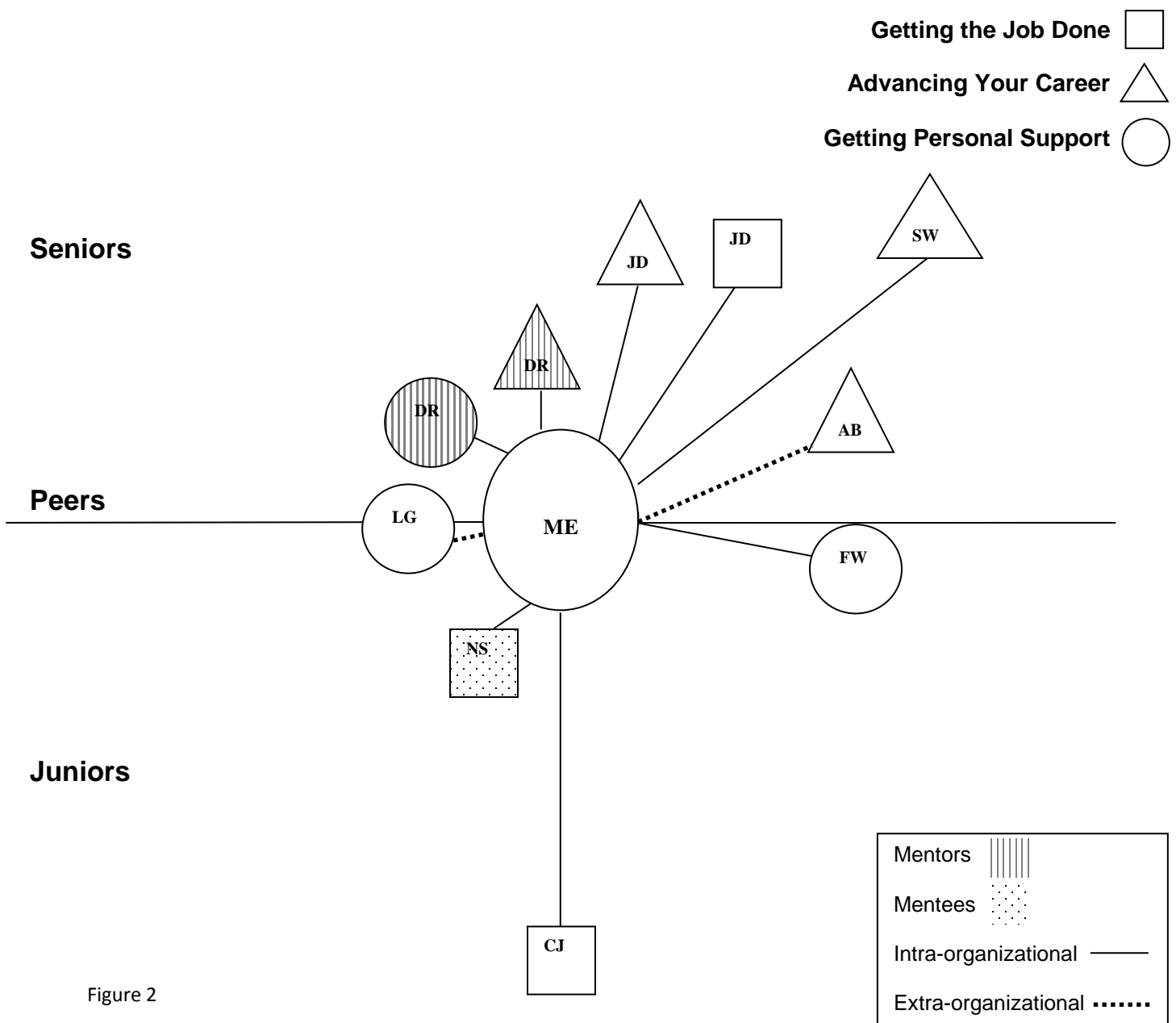
A DEVELOPMENTAL NETWORK MAP EXAMPLE

Getting the Job Done ▢

Advancing Your Career △

Getting Personal Support ◯

Seniors

Peers

Juniors

Mentors	▥
Mentees	⬚
Intra-organizational	——
Extra-organizational	•••••

Figure 2

5

You:

Types

Getting the Job Done: These are people who are helpful in your doing your work. They provide technical advice, introductions, expertise, or resources.

Close Relationship	Moderate Relationship	Distant Relationship

Advancing Your Career: These are people who contribute to your professional development and career advancement. They provide career guidance and direction, advice on funding, and have been an advocate for you.

Close Relationship	Moderate Relationship	Distant Relationship

Getting Personal Support: These are the people you go to for your emotional well being and psychosocial support.

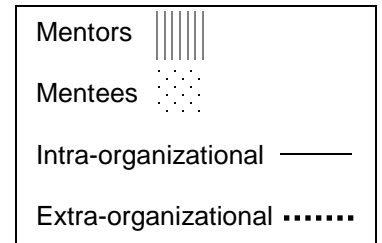| Close Relationship	Moderate Relationship	Distant Relationship

Your Developmental Network Map

Getting the Job Done ☐

Advancing Your Career △

Seniors

Getting Personal Support ◯

Peers ——————(ME)——————

Juniors

Mentors	‖‖‖
Mentees	⋰⋰
Intra-organizational	——
Extra-organizational	•••••
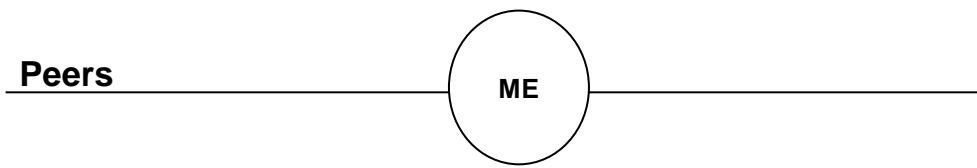
Source: "A New Approach to Mentoring," Kram and Higgins http://sloanreview.mit.edu/business-insight/articles/ 2008/4/50410/a-new-approach-to-mentoring

Analyzing and Maintaining Your Network

Kram differentiates between high range and low-range networks, each of which serves a particular purpose (Figure 3). Range refers to the number of different social systems in a developmental network. In Figure 3 each developmental network consists of 6 people, but how they are grouped differs:
Low Range – small number of social systems, most advantageous for individuals who want to advance within their current field and organization
High Range – multiple levels of social systems, most advantageous for individuals who seek to change fields and/or to move to a different organization
The choice depends on short and long term career goals which may evolve over time.

STRUCTURE OF A DEVELOPMENTAL NETWORK:

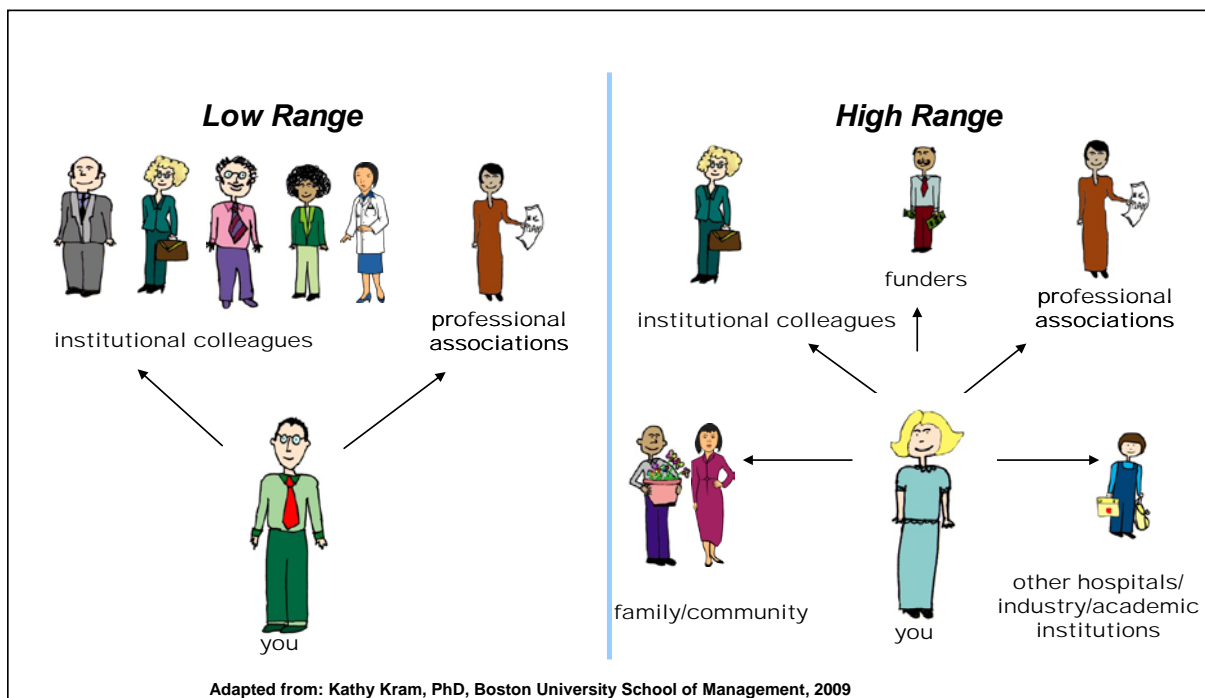Adapted from: Kathy Kram, PhD, Boston University School of Management, 2009

Figure 3

Once that you have defined your developmental network, how do you assess if it meets your short and long-term career goals? The questions below will help you determine the strengths and weaknesses of your network, and where you need to fill in gaps with new contacts. Be mindful of maintaining existing relationships, by staying in touch and "giving back" such as facilitating an introduction or sending an article of interest to the individual along with your comments. Professional conferences are another important way to reconnect with your existing developmental network and cultivate new connections.

1. **Diversity**. How similar or different are these individuals to each other and to me (gender, race, function, geography, organizations)? How many individuals are in your network?

2. **Redundancy.** How much overlap is there in roles?

3. **Interconnectivity.** How closed is the network (most of the people know each other)?

4. **Strength of Connection.** What is the spread of people in terms of closeness and distance?

5. **Balance.** Is your network balanced or in danger of tipping?

6. **Connections to Power and Influence.** How many would you characterize as influential in the department or hospital or field?

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT YOUR NETWORK:

Summarize the PATTERNS you see in your network, your STYLE of networking, and/or what you might want to do differently in the future. Think about how to maintain the strengths of your network, how to diversity, and how with time to increase the number of mentees and advisees.

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