PERCEPTIONS AND IMPACTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES (UF/IFAS) EXTENSION MENTORING PROGRAM

By

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This document is dedicated to my wife and parents.

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This study was conducted in response to the issue of new county faculty feeling overwhelmed by their new job duties, organizational policies, and procedures upon entering the UF/IFAS Extension System organization. The goal was to study and then develop an effective mentoring program to be a key component of the new faculty orientation and training. Previously, there were several forms of mentoring for assisting new county faculty in their entry level anxieties, but there are varied levels of effectiveness resulting in inconsistent results throughout the state. Consequently, a proposal was made to the UF/IFAS Extension System administration to provide a statewide formal mentoring program that would provide training/orientation, guidelines and procedures for mentors and protégés. In order to create a targeted program for UF/IFAS Extension, it was necessary to conduct a pilot mentoring program that could be a small-scale replica of a potential statewide program.

The purpose of this study was to determine how a mentoring program could benefit the protégés, mentors and the organization as a whole. The study determined effective training/orientation methods, guidelines and procedures for a formal UF/ IFAS Extension mentoring program. The design of this study was descriptive by nature because the study described the participants' perceptions of what they gained from the program and what they thought was effective and ineffective. This study used three phases to collect the data necessary in order to accomplish the objectives.

Phase one and two were formative evaluations conducted during the actual pilot program. These formative evaluations for phase one and two were collected via questionnaires, which consisted of open-ended and Likert-scale questions. The third phase was a summative evaluation conducted at the end of the study. This third phase used four focus groups consisting of one group of each of the following extension positions: District Extension Directors, County Extension Directors, Mentors and Protégés. Data analysis for the Likert-scale questions consisted of basic statistical tests. Qualitative findings were analyzed using content analysis to recognize major and minor themes from which judgments were made on the findings and then recommendations were formed. Benefits were perceived to be gained by both the mentors and protégés in the program. Protégés benefited from the vision and support of being paired with a seasoned agent. The mentors gained personal satisfaction from helping a new agent and they felt rejuvenated by working with a young enthusiastic trainee. The participants provided helpful insight for developing effective guidelines and procedures for a formalized mentoring program.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Background and Setting

Conklin, Hook, Kelbaugh, and Nieto (2002) stated, “In today’s rapidly changing world knowledge is quickly outdated. An organization with knowledge development and education as its base must have processes in place to continually develop its intellectual capital”(p 1). The rapid development of a global economy and increasingly complex and changing social, economic, and environmental conditions calls for a greater need for the intellectual growth of the leaders and employees within every organization (Ladewig & Rohs, 2000). The need for intellectual growth is accelerating because of technological change and changing demographics of the people to be served (Ladewig & Rohs 2000).

Stress management, personal growth and development, as well as balancing personal and work life, are very important in keeping an organization effective and keeping up with changing times (Ritchie, 1996). When people within an organization are not properly educated about how to effectively perform their jobs, then the organization itself is being neglected, and the people within the organization are not performing to the best of their ability (Clark, 1987). If people are not changing with time, then most likely, the organization is not changing either which is why professional development is so critical (Clark, 1987). In today’s world of work, organizational restructuring and technological changes are the norm (Kutilek, Gunderson and Conklin 2002), and that is why professional development is so important.

The Cooperative Extension System is a branch of the Land-Grant University System within each state in the United States. It is the linkage between policymakers and citizens, between academia (university) and the real world (Horner, 1984). County extension faculty or agents are expected to use the new research in their field of expertise and information to help and inform the general public. This includes a myriad of topics, from family and consumer science to helping farmers manage their farms in an environmentally safe and more efficient manner.

Extension agents have complex and demanding jobs requiring them to stay abreast of the issues that are affecting families and industries within their county (Ladewig & Rohs, 2000). Most agents are specialized in different areas, such as livestock, horticulture, family and consumer science, 4-H/youth development, or community development. Within each of these specializations, clientele look to these agents for assistance and education about issues and needs of interest to them (Ladewig & Rohs, 2000). These tasks become evermore complex because of a vast diversity of job responsibilities. These responsibilities are as follows: conducting extension programs, teaching, evaluating, providing office support, and serving as technical subject matter experts (Conklin, Hook, Kelbaugh and Nieto, 2002).

If extension is to remain a viable source of information for a changing world, continued professional development must become a priority (Clark, 1987). Professional development is vital for veteran agents in order to educate them on the rapidly changing industry. However, just as important, new agents need to be educated so they too can effectively function in the organization and educate the public in their specialized area.

Work was conducted at the University of Kentucky by Rennekamp and Nall to create a model of the various stages in a person's career. This model broke the career path into four stages: the entry stage, the colleague stage, the counselor stage, and the advisor stage. Kentucky Cooperative Extension Systems used this model to encourage advanced planning for professional development programs. This helped focus on the individual agents when a professional development program was created and ensured the program matched the career stage of the participants in a particular program. This model allowed Kentucky to acknowledge variations in professional growth that were needed at the different stages of a person's professional career (Rennekamp & Nall, 1994).

The Ohio State University Extension adapted the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Systems model in its organization. Ohio State University Extension's professional development model (as cited in Kutilek, Gunderson, and Conklin, 2002) is the most current model and consists of three different stages in a person's career: the entry stage, colleague stage, and the counselor and advisor stage. The first stage is the primary focus of this study. This stage consists of topics new agents must learn, such as understanding the organizational structure and culture, obtaining skills to perform the job, establishing linkage with internal partners, and moving from dependence to independence. When the new agent makes the transition from dependence to independence, he or she learns the organizational structure, culture, and skills to perform their job. The new agent can now think for themselves and contribute to the organization, rather than primarily learning about the organization. From the entry stage, agents move to the colleague stage where they will further develop an area of expertise, gain membership and identity in the professional community, and expand their creativity and innovation. The final stage is the counselor and advisor stage. In the Kentucky model these stages were separate, but Ohio adapted the Kentucky model to combine the counselor and advisor stage since most of the motivators and organizational strategies in these two stages were similar. This is the stage where agents will acquire a broad base of expertise, engage in organizational problem solving, and counsel and coach other professionals (Kutilek, Gunderson, & Conklin, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

The primary focus of this study involved new extension agents who were in the entry stage of their career. New extension agents may feel overwhelmed with all of the information regarding the organization, job duties, operational policies and procedures. Extension needs new employees to develop skills quickly so they can perform their work efficiently and effectively (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002). This is why it is so important that professional development begin promptly as new agents start their careers.

The primary focus on training new agents should be based on developing easy-to-use tools for managers and new employees to help them do their jobs. According to Smith and Beckley, new agent orientation and training are one of the first experiences agents have with professional development. However, these orientations are usually very brief, varying from a one or two day orientation to just a packet that is given to the new agent to look over. These orientations cover a lot of information in a short amount of time. If the orientation process was given more focus, it could be a great benefit to the new agent as he or she embarked on a new career. The turnover rate of new agents is still high, possibly due to the overwhelming information they receive and insufficient follow-up within the first months they are with the extension organization (Smith & Beckley, 1985). According to Ritchie, orientations consist of topics such as, the mechanics of being a Cooperative Extension Systems Employee, required reports that agents must submit annually to document what they accomplished over the course of the year, official picture taking, history of the organization and the university, and meeting departmental staff (Ritchie, 1996). The orientations might even have some sessions to discuss issues on stress management, personal growth and development, and how to balance personal and professional life (Ritchie, 1996). Although new agent orientation has been well received and has provided important information, new faculty were still overwhelmed with their new jobs and did not know where to start (Ritchie, 1996).

In contrast to the above descriptions of new agent orientation and training programs, there are some states, such as Florida, that take a considerable amount of time to train their new agents. In Florida, the major part of new agent orientation and training is a three-part sequential orientation and training program. The program consists of three sessions lasting a total of eight-and-a-half days on the University of Florida campus. The program provides basic knowledge and skills to help new faculty members understand and become effective in their role. This structure was developed and implemented to help meet the overall educational goals of comprehensive professional development programs, based upon the ascribed and perceived needs of new county faculty.

The orientation program focuses on specific topics for each session. Session one gives an overview of the following topics: UF & Extension, extension program development, promotion and tenure, and policies and procedures. Topics in Session 2 include implementing extension programs, teaching and learning, extension methods, teaching techniques, and a teaching practicum. Session 3 covers evaluation, accountability, communication, advisory committees, and marketing. A variety of state and county faculty and extension administrators are involved in delivering educational components. New faculty members have many opportunities to engage in discussion with instructors and extension administration during all parts of the training. A plan of work theme has been carried throughout the three sessions. Along with completing the training, faculty members develop an individualized plan of work based upon material taught in the sessions. They also receive constructive feedback on their plan of work throughout the process (N. Place, personal communication, August 26, 2004).

Smith and Beckley data from extension exit interviews indicated that something was lacking in the new agent's introduction to the organization (Smith & Beckley, 1985). Therefore, the literature contains evidence that mentoring could successfully introduce employees to their new jobs and organizations. If the mentoring program is successful, employee retention would increase. Preliminary research on mentoring programs found that extension systems all around the United States have been investigating mentoring programs to implement into their organizations to help their new agents through the entry-level stage. Extension systems found that when a new agent was provided with a mentor, the mentor gave the agents an accessible person on whom to rely. The new employee could feel comfortable asking questions, which would relieve some of the stress that comes with starting a new career. Because the new agents feel more comfortable and confident in their new job, they will typically do a better job for their clientele and the organization.

Mincemoyer and Thomson have defined a mentor as an influential senior member of the organization who has advanced experience and knowledge and is dedicated to providing upward mobility and support to a protégé's professional career (Mincemoyer &

Thomson, 1998). A protégé is an individual who is new to a particular job or career and would benefit from the knowledge, guidance and support of a senior member in the organization.

The mentoring practice is not a new theory. Mentoring has been around for thousands of years. The term mentor is over three thousand years old and has its origins in Greek mythology. When Odysseus went off to fight the Trojans, he left his trusted friend, Mentor, in charge of his household and his son's education. Mentor took care of the household and was also commanded to help develop Odysseus' son into a man. He was instructed to mentor him by educating the boy in the classroom and guiding him through day-to-day challenges that would teach him necessary life skills. Consequently, the boy would grow into a strong, wise man. As a result, Mentor's name has been attached to the process of education and care by an older and more experienced person (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998).

The Cooperative Extension System was formalized when the Smith-Lever Act was passed in 1914, and by 1915 the extension system was established in Florida. There are extension programs in each of Florida's 67 counties that provide vital services and information to residents in both rural and urban settings (Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service-United States Department of Agriculture, 2005). Currently there are approximately 380 county extension agents in Florida (B. Terry, personal communication, March 13, 2005). The actual number of county extension agents in Florida is always fluctuating because of agents retiring, new positions being created, and other positions being collapsed. Therefore, there are a varied number of new agents hired each year who need to be oriented and trained. Even after these extensive training sessions, Florida is still facing the problems of turnover and burnout by the new agents (N. Place, personal communication, September 20, 2003). The University of Florida/IFAS Extension has decided to implement a pilot mentoring program into the Cooperative Extension System to help new agents achieve success within their first year. Hopefully the new agents will not only survive in their adjustments to the organization, but they will be able to effectively transition out of the entry stage of the system's approach and move into the colleague stage. Additionally they can develop an area of expertise and move from dependence to independence (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002).

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine how a pilot mentoring program benefited the protégés, mentors, and Florida Extension as a whole. The study will also determine effective guidelines and procedures for a formal UF/ IFAS mentoring program. The key objectives of this study included:

- Objective 1: To document the benefits and value of mentoring to new extension faculty (the protégés).
- Objective 2: To document the benefits and value of mentoring to seasoned extension agents (the mentors).
- Objective 3: To determine guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program for the UF/IFAS Extension System based upon results from this pilot program.

Need for the Study

The University of Florida's Extension System believes that a mentoring program will help achieve the transition of moving new agents from the entry stage to the colleague stage (N. Place, personal communication, October 20, 2003). At the Florida Extension Administration/Supervisors meeting on April 20, 2004, Nick Place proposed a mentoring program that would achieve the following goals: provide non-evaluative support for new employees in an open atmosphere, provide an opportunity to develop potential for professional growth and development, and provide an opportunity to develop continuing practical competencies to deal with issues affecting the UF/IFAS Extension Organization (UF/IFAS Administration/Supervisor Meeting, April 20, 2004).

UF/ IFAS Extension has a goal as stated above, but there is a void between this goal and reality because currently there is no formal statewide mentoring program. Although various forms of mentoring exist within the five districts of Florida, there is no formal mentor training, guidelines, or procedures for these programs. Consequently, new agents experience a myriad of challenges when entering the extension organization. Some new agents experience a more effective mentoring relationship, while others may experience a marginal relationship. Some may not have the opportunity to be in a mentoring relationship at all.

Because of this void between the UF/IFAS extension's goal and reality, it was decided to conduct a pilot mentoring program. This pilot program was conducted with guidelines and procedures that have been selected from mentoring research and other mentoring programs around the United States. All of the mentors were trained in basic mentoring skills and knowledge, and then the mentors were paired carefully with new agents.

As a result of this mentoring pilot program, there were several questions that needed to be asked. Did protégés and mentors benefit from the program? How effective were certain key points in this program, such as selecting and assigning mentors and the training program? And lastly, how effective and clear were the guidelines for the mentoring program?

Operational Definitions

County Extension Director (CED): The supervisor who is responsible for the county extension office and the county faculty at that office.

District Extension Director (DED): The supervisor who is responsible for a section of twelve to eighteen county offices in the state of Florida. The DEDs were the participants in this study that selected the mentors and paired the mentors and protégés together.

Evaluation phases of this study: In this study there are three evaluation phases. These are the time periods in which each evaluation was conducted. Phase one and two are formative evaluations which were conducted during the pilot mentoring program via questionnaires. The third phase is a summative evaluation conducted at the end of the pilot mentoring program via focus groups.

Florida Association of Extension Professionals (FAEP): An association that brings together all Florida agent associations to focus on administrative and programmatic issues and concerns. This is the association that was recommended to recognize the mentors for their help in the mentoring program at their annual meeting.

Mentoring: This is a relationship between a trusted counselor or teacher and a younger or less experienced person that enhances and develops the less experienced person's technical or life skills. (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998).

Mentors: A wise and trusted counselor or influential senior member that is experienced and knowledgeable, and committed to helping and supporting his or her protégé's professional career (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998). A mentor in this study is a seasoned UF/IFAS Extension faculty member that is paired with a protégé for a twelve month period.

Mentoring pair: In this study the mentor and protégé as one unit is called a mentoring pair.

New Extension faculty: Faculty members who have less than a year of experience within the UF/IFAS Extension System**.**

New faculty orientation and training: The process utilized to educate New Extension Faculty on the history, the mission, and the structure of the organization. This includes workshops on programming, evaluation, teaching and learning, managing volunteers, developing advisory committees, learning policies, procedures, roles and responsibilities (N. Place, Personal Communication, December 15, 2004).

Professional development: A process that continually develops the intellectual capital of professionals in any given field of expertise (N. Place, Personal Communication, December 15, 2004).

Plan of work (POW): A plan of work consists of the work the faculty intends on accomplishing for the year including the rationale, educational and evaluation plan objectives. The POW is where the mentors would plan their mentoring activities for the year along with their other job responsibilities (N. Place, Personal Communication, December 15, 2004).

Protégés: One whose welfare, training, or career is promoted by an influential person (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998). A protégé in this study is a new faculty member to the UF/IFAS Extension and is paired with a mentor for a twelve month period.

Report of accomplishments (ROA): Faculty report on year-end accomplishments and activities. The ROA is the report where the mentors would report on the work they did with their protégés (N. Place, Personal Communication, December 15, 2004).

Limitations of Design

This study included a purposeful sample of new and seasoned county extension agents and their respective District Extension Director. Therefore, the sample size was limited to the number of new agents in the UF/IFAS extension system at the time. The study represented four of the five districts in Florida, and there was representation from each of the major program areas.

The time period in which the data was collected could cause some limitations. The typical mentoring program should be a year-long program, but due to time restrictions and delays at the beginning of the program data was collected after eight months. This allowed time for the data to be analyzed and documented. The final summative evaluation was conducted nine months into the program instead of twelve months.

Summary

This chapter explained the need and background for the study. The importance of professional development and mentoring was explained. UF/IFAS Extension System's new faculty orientation process and the opportunity and need for a pilot mentoring program were described. The chapter also described the purpose of the program, and the objectives and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of the available literature on professional development, new employee orientations, and mentoring. Professional development was discussed to give the overall purpose and need for the development of employees in an organization. Secondly, the new employee orientation was analyzed to get a general idea of what is being done to assist new employees who are in the entry stage through the colleague stage. Lastly, the mentoring process was focused on to discover the benefits, practices, techniques, and criticisms in regards to the mentoring practice.

Professional Development

For the purpose of this study, literature on professional development was researched in the following fields of expertise: cooperative extension, education, medical, and business. There was a common theme that linked each one of these fields together. They all saw the importance of continuing the education of the individuals in each of these fields to be able to stay abreast of the rapidly changing times.

Extension agents need to learn quickly in order to educate their clientele's constant demand for the new methods and technologies. Teachers must learn new methods and technologies in order to educate the student to the best of their ability and meet standardized goals that are set for the teachers. Doctors and medical professionals are continuously learning new technologies and practices to ensure that their patients are diagnosed and cared for properly. Business men and women are relentlessly gaining new leadership and technical business skills to ensure that they have the best product, service, and most importantly; the highest profit margin in their industry. Professional development is used in each one of these fields to meet individual needs. Many different delivery methods and techniques are employed to ensure that professional development meets its purpose of educating individuals so that they can efficiently and effectively perform in their careers.

In each of these fields there are many delivery methods and techniques. For example, in the cooperative extension field they have taken the professional development task one level higher by breaking down the stages of an individual's career. The model is explained in more detail below, and it is important to note that this same method could be used in any of the fields mentioned above to gain insight on what type of professional development an individual will need. The method and content of professional development has been shown throughout the literature to be relevant to the participant or they will dismiss the information and avoid professional development practices in the future. This is where the model can offer insight on developing relevant professional development programs.

Within the extension system, one of the goals is to help the faculty grow and develop in regards to their career. The Ohio Cooperative Extension faculty has worked on a model that categorizes a person's career into stages. The stages are as follows: the entry stage, the colleague stage, and the counselor/advisor stage (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002). This model categorizes the stages and depicts what the motivator of each stage is, and then it denotes the strategies of professional development deliveries that can be used (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002). This approach allows the organization and the individuals in the organization to use all of the professional development delivery methods in the most effective way possible (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002). The following table (Table 2.1) outlines the stages, motivators and organizational strategies of this model. Motivators are the skills and tasks that particular individuals are challenged with at the time. For instance, an individual in the entry level stage might need information on building understanding about the organization and its structure and culture. Each stage has motivators, therefore the subject of a professional development program will be developed and directed toward the motivators of the target audience. The strategies are the most relevant methods of delivery for the particular stage that is being targeted for a professional development program. For example, the motivators for the entry stage might be delivered to this target audience via a peer mentoring program to assure that the individuals get special attention during the entry level stage.

It is also stated that this approach allows the faculty to enter the model at different stages in different times of their career. For example, a faculty member in the colleague stage of his/her career might be very effective in several areas, such as developing educational programs and literature. This same faculty member may also want to expand his or her knowledge in an unfamiliar area, such as web development, and would therefore enter into the entry level stage for job training or coaching. Even though this faculty member might be a counselor in his or her overall career, he or she would still need the entry level training (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002).

There are several different strategies or methods to deliver professional development. The following is a brief description of the professional development strategies used in the Ohio State University Extension Systems Approach Model. Most of these strategies are conformed to fit the organization or situation in which it is being used.

Table 2-1. Professional Development Model for the Stages of Extension Agents.

Career Stage	Motivators	Organizational Strategies
Entry Stage	~Understanding the organization, structure, culture ~Obtaining essential skills to perform job ~Establishing linkages with internal partners ~Exercising creativity and initiative ~Moving from dependence to independence	~Peer mentoring program ~Professional support teams ~Leadership coaching ~Orientation/job training
Colleague Stage	~Developing area of expertise ~Professional development funding ~Becoming an independent contributor in problem resolution ~Gaining membership and identity in professional community ~Expanding creativity and innovation ~Moving from independence to interdependence	~In-service education Specialization funds Professional association involvement ~Formal educational training ~Service on committees or special assignments
Counselor and Advisor Stages	~Acquiring a broad-based expertise ~Attaining leadership positions ~Engaging in organizational problem solving ~Counseling/coaching other professionals ~Facilitating self renewal ~Achieving a position of influence and stimulating thought in others	~Life and career renewal retreats ~Mentoring and trainer agent roles ~Assessment center for leadership ~Organizational sounding boards

(Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002)

The Entry Stage

The first method used in the entry stage is the peer mentoring program. This method is a program that is designed by the extension organization at the state, district, or county level. When the new agent is hired into the organization, he or she will be paired up with a mentor who could be a trusted advisor, friend, or a teacher. This mentor should not be a person that will later be evaluating this new faculty member (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002). This method of professional development will be explained in great detail later in this chapter.

The next method is professional support teams. This method is utilized when a new agent is hired into the system. The new agent will be introduced to his or her support team, which consists of a district level director, one or more district specialists, and a county chair. This support team has a responsibility of providing an environment for motivation, providing recognition of successes, identifying areas for change or improvement, setting goals for the future performance, identifying training and professional development needs and collaborating to evaluate performance (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002).

Leadership Coaching starts out with the new faculty attending a two day retreat. This retreat is a developmental experience for employees focused on twelve behavioral anchors. These behavioral anchors include organizational skills, interpersonal skills, sensitivity, communication skills, change management skills, diplomacy, decision-making skills, conflict-management skills, the ability to collaborate and be self-motivated, and obtain visionary skills and assertiveness. After the retreat, the new faculty will be paired with peer coaches. These coaches will help keep the new faculty focused on the professional development plans made during the retreat. These coaches will work with the staff member for a fourteen month period (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002).

Orientation job training is an orientation program that gives the new faculty information about the organization and their roles and responsibilities that are expected of them from the state and county level (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002). This method of professional develop will also be discussed in-depth in another section of this chapter.

The Colleague Stage

In-service education is designed to help the faculty stay current with the constantly changing culture. Keeping the faculty at high levels of their technical expertise is very important to meet the needs of the public that call on them for assistance. These programs are highly specialized and coordinated by individuals or groups within the extension organization. These program coordinators are encouraged to use sounding boards to help them provide programs that are needed by the faculty in need of in-service training (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002).

Formal education is also an option to further professional development needs. The extension faculty members are also employees of the land grant university in their state, so they have access to take undergraduate classes or even masters or PhD coursework. However, this is not always possible because of time restraints and geographical barriers (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002).

Counselors and Advisors

Life and Career Renewal Retreats are for the more experienced employees to engage in self-exploration, discovery, and personal reflection on work and life issues. The goals of these programs are as follows: to provide framework and strategies to assist people in examining their specific career and life issues, to provide a relaxed environment conducive to exploration and reflection, to communicate the shared responsibility for career development within the organization, and to provide tools for employment to develop action plans for both personal and professional renewal. This type of retreat consists of different activities such as presentations, group discussions, individual thinking, reflecting and planning, and dialoguing with facilitators and group participants. Kutilek, Gunderson, and Conklin have stated, "Organizations that recognize the need to maintain a healthy workforce often provide opportunities for employees to reflect and dialogue about their career progress and satisfaction" (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002, p.8).

The trainer agent is a supervisor who oversees several mentoring pairs in their district. They will keep close contact with the pair, they will follow up with the protégé after the formal mentor pairing, and they will also serve on the state mentoring developmental committee to help direct the future of the program. These faculty members in this stage of their career also have the opportunity to team up with the human resource office to help guide and direct new faculty as they grow in the extension organization (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002).

Kutilek et al stated that "The Ohio State University Extension developed an assessment center to assist in the analysis of current managerial abilities and future training needs of extension county chairs. The assessment center incorporates seven exercises that enable participants to demonstrate skills on fifteen job-related dimensions: oral communication, written communication, leadership, initiative, planning and organizing, decision making and judgment, development of coworkers, behavioral flexibility, organizational sensitivity, assertiveness, objectivity, perception, sensitivity, management control, and collaboration" (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002, p. 10).

The participants are evaluated on their performance by a team of trained assessors which are usually faculty members who are in the counselor or advisor stage of their careers. These assessors not only evaluate the participants, they also help assist the participants to apply what they have learned in the assessment of their work life by developing a professional development plan to fit their needs. This center has been recognized all over the country with more than four-hundred participants from twenty-five different states (Kutilek, Gunderson & Conklin, 2002).

Upon evaluating the professional development program, we see that there are many delivery methods such as face-to-face meetings, conference calls, web modules, web conferences and many more. There is also the actual program which may be a mentoring program, orientation/ job training, in-service education program, formal education, sounding boards, assessment centers, or a retreat. All of these methods of delivery and programs are developed to ensure that the information the faculty needs is brought to them in a convenient, accessible, and learner-friendly manner.

Throughout the literature in each of the fields mentioned above, professional development is perceived to be very useful and beneficial to the individuals by increasing their knowledge so they can continue to grow in their field of expertise and gain personal satisfaction in what they do. The organization will benefit as well by having employees that are constantly learning and developing their skills to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization.

New Employee Orientation

New employee orientation is a process that helps an employee enter into an organization and become a productive employee (Hacker, 2004). New employee orientation is more than a one shot program to get new employees up to speed; it is a process that starts before the new employee begins the job and continues up to a year after the person has started. The orientation process is the first impression the new employee will have about the organization. Organizations from around the country have found that these first impressions can be lasting ones. Orientation should welcome, comfort, and inform the employees in a creative and hands-on approach. Oriented employees had decreased levels of anxiety, increased job satisfaction, improved morale, and increased productivity. Consequently, since the new employees were happier and more productive, the companies throughout the literature oriented employees effectively saw a decrease in turnover and an increase in profits.

In most cases the orientation was viewed as a three-part process. The first part is the pre-arrival planning for the new employee. This is a planning period to make sure that everything is ready upon arrival of the new employee. The second part is the arrival of the new employee, which is the period where he/she is welcomed, gets familiar with the office, gets paired up with a mentor, and learns about the company. The third part is the time after all of the formal greetings and general information is learned. Throughout the first three months to a year, progress will be recorded and help will be readily available whenever the new employee needs it.

Stage One of the Orientation Process

The pre-hire stage is very important because this is a time when the employer and the co-workers can obtain all of the needed materials that the new-hire may need to complete his or her job. This will enable a new-hire to feel valued and welcomed as soon as he/she arrives. Anything that can be done beforehand to decrease the anxiety of the new employee is a great idea. A company in California calls the employee before their first day and lets them know that they are excited about their forthcoming arrival to the company and they also send a welcome packet with information such as parking suggestions, dress guidelines, the on-site café menu, and locations of the ATM and bike lockers (H.J, 2002). Some organizations will send out announcements to all the current employees to inform them of the new incoming employee. The announcement will give some details about the employee, so the current employees can be ready to welcome him/her into the office (Hacker, 2004). Some organizations will send the new employee a packet with the first week's agenda and some department information so that the employee will know what to expect, and not be surprised when they come to work the first day (Robbins, 2002). All of these preparations are to assure that the first impression of the company is a good one. The literature shows that if the new employee has a welcoming and smooth beginning, he/she will be more likely to stay and consider a career at the organization (Robbins, 2002). For this smooth beginning to happen, it's best to plan ahead to assure the new employee will feel welcomed and as stress free as possible (Hacker, 2004).

Stage Two of the Orientation Process

The second period of the orientation process is the arrival of the new employee. This is when all of the prior planning comes into play. The more that can be done to decrease the stress the better it will be for the new-hire (Hacker, 2004). This first day and up to a week is mainly for welcoming, getting the new employee familiar with the company and getting all the arrival paperwork complete (Hacker, 2004). In this first week, the employee needs to feel as welcomed as possible. Organizations will often celebrate the new arrival by having lunch catered so that everyone can eat together and meet the new employee. During this process, the employee will feel valued as well as meet a lot of his or her new co-workers (Hacker, 2004). This is also a good time to pair this employee with a mentor or a buddy. This mentor is a person who will show the new employee around the office to inform them about all of the office procedures, underwritten politics, and the culture of the company. Throughout the first year, this person will be someone the new employee can come to with any problems or issues.

Along with feeling welcomed, meeting people, and learning the rules; it is very important for the employees to learn about their job description and the organization as a whole. This period of learning about the organization and the job is very important. However, it can also be incredibly overwhelming for the new employee. Some of the important, but basic information that is learned during this period is consistent throughout the literature. This information includes the following: the history of the company, the vision and future for the company (American Society for Training & Development, 2000), the policies and procedures of the company; the available benefits, vacation, and sick or personal leave, and any technical information that needs to be addressed before starting the job (Robbins, 2002).

There are many different creative delivery methods and techniques that can be utilized to allow the employee to enjoy learning the new information and retain what they have learned. Some different ways the new employee can get the information is through reading the information, going through a training program, learning through observation, and learning through coaching or being mentored (ASTD, 2000). These methods can also be combined to assure optimal results. Depending on the information needing to be learned, it might be best that it be taught in a training program; or they may have optimal results if they learn it from a mentor on a one-on-one basis. There is no one way to deliver the necessary information, just as long as it gets to the new employee in a learner-friendly way.

The lecture type training method is a widely used method that teaches the new employees the information they need to know. Organizations have learned that this part of orientation can be long, boring, and ineffective if it is not delivered in a creative way. It is possible to alter this lecture style delivery method to an accelerated learning method. This accelerated learning method is explained by France and Jarvis as follows, "it involves highly interactive and experiential learning that engages the participants in applying or "activating" their learning immediately" (France & Jarvis, 1996, p.49). There are several techniques that are used to teach this learning method such as allowing the new employees to teach each other policies and procedures or having quick scavenger hunts to find different items around the building. This will also allow the new employees to become familiar with the office (France & Jarvis, 1996). Other techniques are to have roundtable discussions about the information being covered or group the new employees and allow them to present the information they have learned in the orientation to the CEO or other co-workers (H.J., 2002). These are all techniques to allow the new employees to be actively involved with the learning process so they will retain the information they have learned in the orientation.

The first week is a very important period of the orientation and it can play a vital part in the retention of the new employees. If the new employees are welcomed and the information that they must learn is presented in a learner-friendly manner, the new hire will be less-stressed and have a better first impression, which can result in his/her decision to stay with the organization.

Stage Three of the Orientation Process

The final part of the orientation will continue for the remainder of the new orientation process. This final period of the orientation program is going to focus more on the job description and establishing goals and milestones so that both the new employee and the supervisor know what is expected of them (Hacker, 2004). With the job description, goals, and milestones out in the open, the new employee and the supervisor can work together. It has been recommended that goals be broken into three-month time periods so that they are easier to understand and organize (Hacker, 2004). Throughout this period, it is a great time for the new employee to call on the mentor that has been assigned to them (Hacker, 2004). Allowing the new employee to call on a mentor for questions and assistance will decrease stress in this period because the new employee might not feel comfortable going to his or her supervisor for every question.

Overall Principles and Findings in regards to New Employee Orientation

The above steps are the common themes and practices found in the literature. If these practices are utilized, they will help increase the likelihood that the new employee will stay with the organization as a productive employee. Throughout the literature, there were also some common themes that were criticized. The main criticisms were mistakes made by organizations not being prepared for the new employee's arrival, not involving current employees in the orientation, making the orientation an event and not a process, and not using varied and creative methods to deliver the information.

Another important point is that all the people involved with the new employee should be involved in the orientation. This includes the supervisor, trainers, mentors, and other co-workers with whom the new employee will be in contact (ASTD, 2000). This is to assure that everyone has an opportunity to become acquainted, and if the new employees have questions; they will know who come to for answers. One of the main criticisms is when new employees are brought into a work place and not introduced to their co-workers. If the employee has little connection with the appropriate co-workers, he or she will suffer undue stress.

It was very obvious in the literature that using the process approach to orientation results in reduced employee turnover (ASTD, 2000). With an appropriate process approach, the organization should be ready for the new employee. When the employee arrives, he or she can ease into the job by participating in meet-and-greets, doing necessary paperwork, and attending various training sessions. With a one-shot orientation, an employee is less likely to feel connected; therefore, the employee has less of an opportunity to be a productive worker (Hacker, 2004). The orientation process is not just about teaching the person new information and then letting them go. It is a process of welcoming, goal setting, and assisting. In many cases, if the process is not fully carried out, it can result in higher turnover rates because the new employees are not comfortable in their new jobs.

The lack of creativity in the training process is another problem that was discussed. Sometimes, new employees have to suffer through a drawn-out orientation process and then do not remember any of it. This could be because they are on the receiving end of hours of information (France, Jarvis, 1996). For them to really learn the information and enjoy it to some extent, they need to be involved with the learning. There are many ways to be creative while teaching the information.

Orientation is a very effective and useful process for the organization and the new employees. As stated throughout this section, the orientation process can help reduce the stress and anxiety of the employee, improve employee morale, and increase productivity. All of these benefits of an orientation process are due to the fact that more time and energy were spent on the new employee to make him or her feel like a welcomed and valuable member of the organization (Robbins, 2002). When an orientation produces such results, it also affects the organization by reducing turnover. Organizations also see that when turnover decreases, they save money on training new employees.

In regards to new employee orientation in Cooperative Extension Systems, there was not much literature. It was noted that there is a great need for a stronger new employee orientation in extension systems (Ritchie, 1996). However, there cannot be a blanket statement that implies that all extension systems do not have a strong new employee orientation. The Cooperative Extension Systems across the United States are very unique and managed differently, so there may be very good orientations in some states and counties and weak orientations in others.

From the limited literature that was found, there was reason to believe that there are counties and states that need to strengthen their orientations. Ritchie, an extension specialist in Indiana, has indicated that new faculty members are frustrated, and they don't know where to start. This was a common theme within the literature regarding new employee training (Ritchie, 1996). Some extension systems have new employee orientations, but these orientations consist of very basic information such as: guidelines for required reports, the history of the organization; and other general courses such as stress management, personal growth, and how to balance your personal life and work. These are very general courses that are usually only held one time (Ritchie, 1996).

Ritchie and his team in Indiana are developing a program that will help new faculty throughout the year with information and guidance for topics and subjects such as: working with volunteers, program planning, financial management, accountability and evaluation. They highlight sources and resources that might be needed, and they teach communication skills to better communicate with their clientele (Ritchie, 1996).

Overall, an effective orientation process is a very important part of an organization. As Lloyd stated, (as cited in Schettler, 2002) "First impressions are lasting impressions. It's a gift to meet and greet new people who have made a decision to stay and potentially build a long career. Opportunities are never lost; they just go to someone else" (Schettler, 2002, p.40). If those first impressions aren't good ones (orientation process) then they will lose potentially great employees as well as the opportunity to benefit from the employee's skills and knowledge.

Mentoring

New employees are hired into organizations everyday, and each one of these new employees brings different sets of skills and knowledge to the organization that could benefit the organization if these skills are recognized and cultivated. Beginning a new job can be intimidating, especially if you don't know anyone. Consequently, organizations all around the world have put into place mentoring programs to build confidence and cultivate the skills, talent, and knowledge of their new employees. A mentoring program is where a senior employee pairs up with a less experienced employee to provide the new employee with support, direction, and feedback regarding career aspirations and personal development (Russell & Adams, 1997). These mentors are usually committed to motivating and providing upward support and mobility within a protégé's career (Kutilek & Earnest, 2001).

There are two primary functions within a mentoring program. The first function is to help the protégé advance in his or her career. The mentor might guide the protégé via coaching, protecting, exposure, and sponsorship (Russell & Adams, 1997). The psychosocial function is the second type of assistance that the mentor can provide for a protégé. This function is more along the line of personal assistance, where the mentor is a friend who is there to build confidence, counsel, and be a role model for the protégé (Russell & Adams, 1997). Throughout the literature it states that the psychosocial function gives the new employee an ally and a senior employee with the appropriate attitude, values, and positive view on the organization and life to talk to them about their thoughts, concerns, fears and anxieties. As mentors develop, guide, advise, validate, and motivate their protégés; they create a linkage between the protégé and the organization's expectations (Zimmer & Smith, 1992). When the mentor provides vision and support for the protégé, it allows the protégé to better understand what he/she can do for the organization (Zimmer & Smith, 1992).

Benefits of Mentoring

It has been found that mentors receive great rewards from mentoring. Personal satisfaction comes from sharing knowledge with a protégé and then watching that protégé grow and mature in the company (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997). The mentor might even be rejuvenated by the new perspectives and energy of a new employee (Russell & Adams, 1997). Building this relationship between the mentor and protégé also allows the mentor a chance to gain a new perspective on the lower levels of the organization. This will allow him/her to adjust the management style to best suit the lower levels of the organization (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997). The employee will also benefit from the organizational recognition that comes from teaching and advising a protégé to help build the skills and knowledge needed to improve the organization (Russell & Adams, 1997). Consequently, the organization will have a loyal, rejuvenated, and fulfilled senior employee.

It was obvious that in most cases the protégés benefited from being in a mentoring relationship. It has been found that mentors are a great source of organizational information, and the new employees that were in a mentoring programs learned more about the organization's issues and practices compared to others who had not been mentored (Viator, 2000). The information and help that protégés receive from their mentors results in both career and personal satisfaction, such as faster promotion rates, higher compensation, and faster career mobility (Russell & Adams, 1997). Learning the ins and outs of the organization more quickly can help lower stress levels, and lead to higher self-esteem, which will result in great job performance (Russell & Adams, 1997). Therefore, the outcomes are always positive when the organization has employees who have increased job satisfaction, personal productivity, and stability (Kutilek & Earnest, 2001).

When the mentor and the protégé benefit, the organization will most likely benefit as well. Mentoring benefits an organization in several ways. It increases employee productivity because protégés are learning fast and mentors are being rejuvenated. Loyalty is also increased because these new employees are paired with a long-time employee who is teaching the values and importance of his/her job and the organization as a whole. One of the most important benefits that will save the organization time and money is the reduction of turnover. Since the protégés are learning at a greater pace, they are not as stressed out, they see an importance in their job, and they have someone they can talk to about their problems; consequently they will not be as likely to change jobs as quickly (Russell & Adams, 1997). Then the organization will have employees who are more satisfied, loyal, and productive; therefore, decreasing turnover and saving money on training new employees.

Throughout the literature, it is clear that mentoring benefited the mentor, protégé, and the organization, but there can be a negative side. One of the negative aspects in a mentorship program is a dysfunctional relationship where one or both participants are not benefiting from the relationship (Scandure, 1998). There are several situations that could create a relationship that does not benefit either the mentor or the protégé. The first situation is when an employee becomes jealous of a protégé who receives special attention from a senior mentoring employee. This could lead to resentment towards the protégé from other employees (Allen, Poteet & Burroughs, 1997). The second situation occurs if the mentor is insecure about his/her job and worried that the new protégé might take his/her position. This could cause the mentor to possibly sabotage the protégé so that he/she will not advance. The third problem results when a mentor is excessively critical, demanding, or authoritarian. This could cause the protégé to avoid the mentor, and therefore not gain any benefit from the relationship. Fourthly, the mentor could be more focused on his/her own advancement, which could lead to the mentor exploiting the protégé by just using him/her to move up the political latter for the mentor's self-benefit. Lastly, one of the biggest problems is when the mentor or protégé neglects the relationship because one of the members of the relationship does not put forth the effort needed to make the relationship successful (Scandure, 1998).

If mentors and protégés are not paired up correctly and the pair has conflicting attitudes, beliefs, and values then there is going to be frustration and arguing that could lead to them wasting energy on negative relationship problems (Eby, McManus, Simon & Russell, 2000). All of these negative aspects can be very harmful to the pair and to the organization. These problems can result in frustration, anger, and envy. The problems will also reduce productivity due to misdirected energy and increased turnover (Scandura, 1998).

The various problems that arise can be helped through training and the ability to opt out of the relationship. First of all, educate the pairs that problems could arise and let them know how to handle the problem or let them know who to go to help them through it. In addition to training, let everyone know from the beginning that if they are not comfortable with the relationship, or they just want out, then they can opt out at any time with no hassle (Scandura, 1998). Training and opting out will help bring about awareness of problems and decrease the feeling of being trapped in a bad relationship.

Even though there could be negative aspects and outcomes within a mentoring program, it is also stated in the literature that there are more cases of positive relationships a negative relationships (Eby, McManus, Simon & Russell, 2000). Consequently, since a mentoring program is beneficial to the mentor, protégé, and the organization most of the time, organizations continue to use mentoring programs.

Selecting Mentors

The selection of mentors is an important issue for ensuring that the mentoring pair is successful. When selecting a mentor, a few common themes appeared. This includes finding a mentor that is open to share and talk to their protégés, has a positive attitude toward the organization, has the knowledge to be able to sufficiently help the protégés with problems and questions, and is experienced and secure with their own abilities so that they will not be threatened by their protégé.

In a teaching mentoring program, potential mentors are put through a rigorous selection process. The mentors that are selected for this teacher mentor program have to observe their protégés, talk to them about what they are doing well and what they can improve upon. They also have to be proactive in looking for the protégés needs and helping them before a problem arises (Moir & Bloom, 2003). This teacher mentor program over the last fifteen years has trained over ninety full-time mentors. Through these mentors, they have mentored more than nine-thousand protégés. Therefore this program that averages six-hundred protégés a year has to assure that no protégé goes unnoticed. The mentors have to be selected very carefully to assure that they are caring and have the desire to help each one of their protégés (Moir & Bloom, 2003).

Another suggestion is to have a screening period where a panel of supervisors will ask the potential mentors a series of questions about their motives on becoming a mentor. Not all potential mentors want to be a mentor for the right reasons. Some people might desire to be a mentor to have power over people, delegate unwanted work to their protégé, or put blame on the protégé to cover up their own faults (Eby, McManus, Simon & Russell, 2000). The mentor should have a true desire to help a new employee and give back to the organization. The potential mentor must have the technical and organizational knowledge to be able to fully help the protégé (Eby, McManus, Simon & Russell, 2000). The screening process is to ensure that the most caring, desirable, and knowledgeable mentors are chosen for the job.

When faculty members are very busy they can easily overlook their mentoring responsibilities, so they need to be willing to make mentoring a priority. Likewise, during the first year it can be very busy and overwhelming for the protégé. The mentor must remember those days and be understanding when the protégé comes to him/her with problems, questions, or concerns (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998).

There was limited information in the literature on the actual processes that are put in place to select the mentors. Two extension mentoring programs briefly described their selection process. One program allowed the supervisors within the extension systems to pick the mentors, but that was the extent of the discussion regarding the actual selection of the mentors (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998). The second program allowed extension faculty to pick three nominees. These nominees were selected on personality characteristics and technical expertise. Then a point system was utilized in which nominations from peers outside the named agent's geographical and program area received higher point values. This allowed agents with wide-spread recognition to be ranked higher than the agent whose reputation was limited to a specific area or program area. Nominees with the highest points were selected as mentors. They were then assigned to protégés according to location, program area, and needs of the protégé (Zimmer & Smith, 1992). Consequently, there is no one certain way that selection has to be done. It could be as simple as supervisors picking a mentor, or it could be more complicated via a system of self-selection and a ranking system to choose the mentors.

Training and Orientation

Throughout the literature, training has been cited as a needed part of the mentoring process. It may be training the mentors on how to be better mentors, briefing them on their roles and responsibilities, or simply briefing the protégés on what they can expect out of the mentoring program. Training involves an array of different subjects. There is no certain training manual that mentor programs abide by, but the most common themes that surfaced were the vision of the program, (Moir & Bloom, 2003) job descriptions, roles of the mentors, (supporting both the career and psycho-social roles) (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998) a checklist of topics to talk about between the mentor and protégé, teaching boundaries (sexual harassment, diversity), and openly discussing how to deal with conflict within a relationship (Scandura, 1998). It is also suggested that the protégé should be briefed about the program so he/she can have reasonable expectations (Scandura, 1998). Face-to-face meetings, distance education methods, and videos can all be used to provide the necessary training.

One program had quite an extensive mentor training program. This particular program had a three-day basic-training program that covered such topics as creating a vision of quality teaching, identifying new teacher needs, understanding the phases of new teachers, selecting support strategies, assessing a beginning teacher's practice, and reaching professional standards in mentoring. After that training session, the mentors went on a two-day training that covered topics such as effective ways to observe and coach teachers, how to collect data from the protégés, and how to use that data to help the protégés. There was also an ongoing program where the mentors got together each week for a half-day for ongoing professional development. Each week they were able to come together and share strategies, challenges, and successes. Each week they would reflect and work on their own professional development plan to help make them a great full-time mentor.

Mentor training is a needed part of any effective mentoring program. Training reinforces what the mentors should be doing and what the program is meant to do. Appropriate training ensures that everyone is on the same page before the program even begins.

Pairing Mentors and Protégés

The pairing of the mentors and the protégés is a crucial part of the mentoring process. Here are several important components that must go into this process: the pair should be compatible, they should have common work responsibilities, and they should work in close proximity to one another. For each pair that is matched, different circumstances and criteria must be considered. The common criteria that emerged throughout the literature in regards to matching mentors and protégés is as follows: program areas or job responsibilities, distance, protégés needs, whether it is safe to let the supervisor be the mentor, and how long the formal mentoring relation will last. Some mentoring programs require the mentors and the protégés to fill out a bio-sketch sheet that denotes strengths, weaknesses, program knowledge, needs, (Kutilek & Earnest 2001) attitudes, values, and beliefs (Eby, McManus, Simon & Russell, 2000). This information will allow for more suitable matching. It has been found that if the mentor's and protégé's attitude, values, and beliefs are not aligned then this causes negative mentoring experiences (Eby, McManus, Simon & Russell, 2000). If aspects such as attitude, values, and beliefs can be determined before pairing a match; mentoring experiences should have a more positive outcome.

It has been proven that similar programmatic responsibility is a strong criterion in matching mentors and protégés. When mentors and protégés have the same program area, they are able to plan and provide programs together. This results in interaction that allows for more practical understanding of the program area and the organization. They also learn from each other as they collaborate on their programming tasks.

Geographical location is another important criterion to consider when matching the pairs. It has been found that if the pair is closer in proximity, they are more likely to have additional interaction because they can plan educational programs together. If there is a great distance between the pair, there is going to be more travel time and cost that will be involved, so it could become more of a burden to work together (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998).

Many times in the business sector, protégés are paired with mentors who are senior members of the organization. When one of these senior members are paired with a protégé in the same office, other employees could feel jealous or left out because this senior member is not paying as much attention to him or her (Scandura, 1997). The literature did not say to avoid having mentoring pairs in the same office, it just suggested that it could be a possible problem.

The issue of supervisors being mentors to their subordinates has been studied quite extensively. There are studies that have found that mentoring supervisors help by being there on a day-to-day basis. In addition, they know the performance and needs of the protégé, and they have the means to provide the help that the protégés need (Fagenson-Eland, Marks & Amendola, 1997). The direct supervisor can provide frequent contact and communication which provides for a very functional mentoring relationship (Burk & McKeen, 1997).

In the business sector, it is recommended that one be aware of mentoring relationships when the mentor is in a higher organizational level than the protégé's direct supervisor. If the mentor is in a higher level than the direct supervisor of the protégé, the supervisor could get insecure because the protégé has a close relationship with his or her superior. The supervisor may feel threatened because he or she does not know what the protégé is saying about him/her. It is recommended that the direct supervisor be trained to be a mentor, and allow him or her to be the mentor in hopes of eliminating the possibility of the supervisor feeling insecure and taking his or her insecurities out on protégé (Fagenson-Eland, Marks & Amendola, 1997).

There are also studies that have found that the boss taking the role of a mentor may not be a positive relationship. In these studies, they found that the mentor/boss may even have greater power to control work assignments and career-enhancement opportunities. Then if there are personality conflicts, or any other issues, the protégé might not feel open with talking to the mentor. If the situation worsens, the protégé might want to get out of the mentoring relationship, but may fear that the boss will become angry or retaliate (Scandura, 1998). This could be a complicated situation, so it has been recommended to stay away from having a boss as a mentor.

As one can see, the matching process is not an easy task. It is very complicated and there are many aspects to consider such as program area, distance, the needs of the protégé, and whether or not the supervisor should be the mentor. This process is an important part of the program and if it is done right, the pair should form a positive relationship.

Initiation

After the mentors are selected and the pair is matched, the next time step is the initiation period. This is the period of the mentoring program where the mentor and the protégé become acquainted and form the mentoring relationship. It is stated that a successful initiation period is perceived to result in a more successful mentoring relationship (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998).

This initiation process is to be done as soon as possible because protégés have stated that the longer the initiation period is put off, the less beneficial the mentoring is (Zimmer & Smith, 1992). When more time goes by, the protégé is forced to learn the needed information on his or her own, and the mentor will no longer be needed. If the mentor was in place sooner, the protégé would not have to go through the stress of learning the organization without a mentor. It is said that the initiation process should begin no later than a month after the protégé starts the new job (Kutilek & Earnest, 2001).

The first contact should be initiated by the mentor and if possible face-to-face would be the best scenario (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998). It is best for the mentor to make the first contact and assure the protégé that he/she is not a burden. This could be a problem because the protégé might feel like the senior employee (mentor) feels like he/she is a burden. If the mentor initiates the contact and takes time to make the protégé feel confident that they are not a burden, then this will allow the mentoring relationship to grow in a positive way (Olian, Carroll, & Giannantonio, 1993).

There are several tools that are used to help the initiation process and break the awkwardness between the mentor and protégé (Mincemoyer &Thomson, 1998). One of these tools is the bio-sketch, which provides the mentor and protégé with general information that will help get a conversation started. Another tool is a needs assessment. The mentor can informally ask for the needs of the protégé, so it will give the mentor a starting point as to what they can jointly work on for the duration of the mentoring relationship (Mincemoyer &Thomson, 1998). These are a couple of tools that will help build a positive relationship between the mentoring pair (Mincemoyer &Thomson, 1998).

The initiation period might seem like one of the more simple tasks in the mentoring process, but this is not a part that can be overlooked. Without the mentor taking the first step to initiate the program within the first month, the rest of the program will not be as effective because this is where the awkwardness is broken and progress begins.

Communication and Interaction

Communication is the common theme throughout the mentoring literature. There are several different aspects that need to be examined at such as the frequency of contact, the topics that are shared between the pair, and the length of the mentoring relationship.

The frequency of contact or communication is a very important part of mentoring. Studies have shown that the amount of contact and communication positively affects the protégé (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998). It has even been shown that if the mentor neglects the protégé's needs then this will result in slower promotion rates and salary increases (Eby, McManus, Simon & Russell, 2000). When a mentor shares information solely on a need-to-know basis, it will inhibit the relationship and the growth of the protégé (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998).

The willingness of the mentor to share with the protégé is very important because it is clearly stated throughout the literature that the more time and information that is shared, the greater success the pair will have (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998). The contact is great if the pair can meet face-to-face, but that is not always realistic, so frequent interaction through the phone or email is still valuable communication (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998).

It has been recommended that there be guidelines for the minimum amount of communication and contact that the pair should have (Fagenson-Eland, Marks & Amendola, 1997). Specific guidelines for the amount of contact between the mentoring pairs were not stated and this is an area that should be studied more closely to find out the optimal level and types of contact.

There are common topics that if shared between a mentoring pair could promote a stronger mentoring relationship. The topics are as follows: program development processes, where to go for technical support, identification of resources, program development ideas, communication/presentation skills, marketing information, technical support, subject-matter information, encouragement to belong to professional associations, personal development/career guidance, balancing work/personal life, and culture of the organization.

From the very beginning, there should be communication between the mentor, protégé, and the direct supervisor of the protégé. This will allow the mentor and the supervisor to know their roles and responsibilities, so nothing will get left out. This will eliminate any feeling that the other one is taking their responsibility of developing the protégé. The direct supervisor must also be supportive of the mentoring program because if the supervisor is not in support of the pair, then it will make it hard on the mentors and protégés to communicate as much as they should (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998). During the duration of the mentoring program, the protégé should continue to develop relationships with their supervisors and co-workers as well as their mentor. In some cases, the protégé will rely greatly on the mentor and become very close to the mentor, and they may fail to form relationships with their supervisor and co-workers (Fagenson, 1994). Not staying connected to co-workers and the supervisor could create problems. First of all, the supervisor might feel uncomfortable or left out if the protégé is very close to another senior advisor. If the supervisor does not have frequent contact with both the mentor and protégé, an unfavorable evaluation could develop (Fagenson, 1994). The supervisor could feel insecure with his/her subordinate being so close to another senior employee (Fagenson-Eland, Marks & Amendola, 1997). When the mentoring program is over or the mentor moves to another office, the protégé is left with no real relationships or people to consult with in the office because the protégé never made an effort to build relationships with the co-workers outside of his or her relationship with the mentor (Fagenson, 1994). Communication between the mentor, supervisors, and co-workers is very important in making a mentoring program successful.

It is recommended that a formal mentoring program last one year (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998). One of the reasons is that it is consistent with the national guidelines for orientation (Smith & Beckley, 1985), and one year will allow the pair to go through a full program development cycle (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998). This could also be studied more in-depth to find out why a mentoring program should last one year long. Also no literature was found that discussed mentoring programs that were shorter or longer than one year.

Communication and interaction between the mentors, protégé, supervisors, and co-workers is a very important part of having a successful mentoring program. Combining frequent contact, discussing important topics, setting guidelines for minimum amount of interaction and open communication will help to ensure that the mentoring program is a success.

Record-keeping and evaluation

To keep improving the mentoring program and ensuring that mentors are keeping in contact with the protégé, there needs to be a record-keeping system, an evaluation method, and a follow-up program to ensure that the proper relationships are developing.

Record-keeping is a great asset to a mentoring program. A record-keeping system can help the program by providing a structured document that allows the mentors to document time spent and topics discussed with their protégés. This helps the program leaders monitor the development of the relationship. Since the mentors know that these documents are reviewed by the program leaders, this could prompt them to keep in frequent contact with the protégés. These records could help evaluate the program, and it will also help with providing information to improve the program in the upcoming years (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998).

As discussed above, neglect and lack of communication is a problem in mentoring. This problem can be present because the mentor is either too busy or disinterested in the relationship. This is why the mentoring pairs need to be monitored to make sure contact is being made, and that everyone is happy within the relationship. The pairs should also be monitored in order to verify that nothing unhealthy is occurring.

There are monitoring programs that could be put into place to really help the program. Having a contact person for the mentoring pairs to call if they have any troubles or questions is helpful. This contact person will also monitor the pair on a regular basis to ensure that they are keeping in contact, and that both the mentor and protégé are benefiting from the relationship. The contact should be a local individualized support person that can help the pair stay on track, and inform the pair of upcoming events or programs that might benefit them (Kutilek & Earnest, 2001). Other ways of monitoring the performance of the program are by gathering feedback from the mentor and protégé, and possibly from co-workers and supervisors as well (Eby, McManus, Simon & Russell, 2000).

From the literature, it is clear that it did not matter as much how the program was monitored or evaluated, just as long as the pairs were being monitored. This helps to ensure progress with assigned responsibilities and communication, and that records are being recorded so the program can be evaluated and improved upon year after year.

Rewards and Incentives

Mentoring is a time consuming task that caring, hardworking employees take on to benefit the well-being of both the protégé and the organization (Sweeny, 2003). These mentors deserve any reward or incentive that they might get. Most mentors will appreciate some type of reward or incentive (Sweeny, 2003). The following list shows an array of rewards and incentives with which to provide a mentor. As noted in table 2-1, these ideas can be used in many different ways and in several different combinations depending upon on what is best for each program (Sweeny, 2003).

Whether or not the incentive or reward is money, professional development opportunities, or recognition; it is important that the mentors know that their work is appreciated and not overlooked. It is critical that this recognition be evident throughout all levels of the organization.

Table 2-2. Incentives and Rewards List for Mentors in the Extension Organization.

The Range of Mentoring Incentives
Money • A salary differential • A stipend • Advance on the salary schedule

Table 2-2. Continued.

The Range of Mentoring Support
Released Time
• To mentor
• To do research
• To collaborate with peers on projects
• To receive training during work hours
Professional Growth Opportunities
• Allowed to present at conferences and meetings
• Payment given to reimburse conference fees
• Priority given to attend conferences
• Priority for courses taught
• Tuition reimbursement
The Range of Mentoring Recognition Strategies
Events
• A recognition banquet
• A formal thank you from administration
Expressions of Appreciation
• Official thank you letters in individual's personnel file
• A open letter to the community in the local newspaper thanking the mentors & naming new faculty members they helped
The Range of Mentoring Recognition Strategies
Gifts to Express Appreciation
• Pin
• Coffee Mug with symbol or program name or name of mentor
• Small Gift like "golden gator" or "paper weight" with name or "mentor" engraved on it
Other
• Priority given to mentors for budget support for programming items
• Use of personal days when desired (i.e. just before or just after a holiday)

(Adapted from Sweeny, 2003).

Formal verses Informal Mentoring

Chao provided definitions of formal and informal mentoring (as cited in Russell & Adams, 1997). Informal mentor relationships were defined as spontaneous relationships that occur without external involvement from the organization. The mentoring process begins through work or non-work interaction. The protégé proves himself/herself worthy of attention provided by the mentor. On the other hand, formal mentor relationships are managed and sanctioned by the organization. Organizations form mentor/protégé partnerships in a number of ways ranging from random assignment to pairing the mentors and protégés based upon personnel files (Russell & Adams, 1997). These two mentoring programs are very different, but they are both striving for a common goal.

Informal mentoring is a more natural approach of mentors and protégés engaging into a mentoring relationship. This type of mentoring relationship is not managed, formally structured, or recognized through the organization (Russell & Adams, 1997). The initiation of an informal mentoring program is a process of the mentor and protégé meeting each other and observing each other, and then as they feel comfortable with each other they might form a mentoring relationship (Viator, 2001). Studies show that the characteristics that the mentors and protégés look for in each other are common throughout the informal pairs. The protégés are looking for mentors who have power, self-confidence, and are willing to share and protect. The mentors are looking for a protégé who has already established a good performance, has a desirable social background, and has demonstrated commitment and loyalty (Viator, 2001). Since this relationship is a mutual agreement and no third parties are involved, these relationships usually have great chemistry and are very open and sharing. The mentor has an intrinsic motivation to help the protégé grow and develop (Fagenson-Eland, Marks & Amendola, 1997). These relationships work with evolving goals and objectives where formal relationships focus on specific goals and objectives (Viator, 2001). The informal relationship is going to continue as long as it needs to and will accomplish many goals and objectives that surface (Viator, 2001).

There are also some negative aspects to the informal mentoring relationship. When mentors and protégés select one another, only the high achieving protégés will be chosen instead of the employees who are not as outgoing or quick to adapt to the job. This is unfortunate because these are the employees who could potentially benefit the most from a mentor. These lower profile people are often bypassed because the people who want to mentor have already chosen the more outgoing and proven performers who will benefit the mentor as well (Olian, Carroll & Giannantonio, 1993). Mentors want to leave an impression and by mentoring high performers this could help them leave a greater legacy (Olian, Carroll & Giannantonio, 1993). Therefore, if an organization desires to ensure that all of their new employees are being mentored, they might want to rely on a formal mentoring program because so often the lower performing employees could be left behind in an informal program. In a formal mentoring program all new employees have an opportunity to be mentored.

Formal mentoring relationships have pros and cons also. The formal mentoring program is a structured program that is usually sponsored by the organization to ensure that every new employee gets a mentor to help them through the beginning stages of their new career. The mentoring pairs are selected through random assignments or matching based on personal profiles (Russell & Adams, 1997).

Formal mentoring programs may lack in chemistry and discourage communication; but is has also been found that protégés within a formal mentoring program receive the same amount of psychosocial support, career guidance, and role-modeling as the ones in an informal relationship (Fagenson-Eland, Marks & Amendola, 1997). If the mentor and protégé are paired up properly and both have a desire to be in the program, the relationship has the potential to have the same chemistry as a mentoring pair in an informal mentoring relationship.

Therefore, from the literature reviewed, both the informal and formal relationships have pros and cons. The formal mentoring relationships received the same support as the informal. Consequently, if a comfortable open environment can be created, then the formal relationships can achieve the same results as the informal ones (Fagenson-Eland, Marks & Amendola, 1997).

Mentoring Conclusion

All types of professions use mentoring to help develop new employees into more productive employees. This will assist the employee in being more satisfied with their job and eventually more effective in the work place. The benefits of developing skills, improving performance, and developing new employees into assets for the organization is a great benefit for the planning and preparation that is involved in running a mentoring program. The task of selecting the mentors, training them, pairing the mentors and protégés, and finally watching them develop their relationship is not an easy task. However, the benefits are happier employees who perform at a higher level. This not only benefits them, but the mentor and the organization as well.

Final Conclusion

In conclusion, professional growth and development is an incredible experience to go through as well as to watch others experience. Throughout this chapter, professional development, new employee training, and mentoring have been discussed. From the broad sense of professional development, there was an understanding developed for the need of professional development in different fields of expertise. New employee orientation was also examined, and it was found that this process is a vital part of professional development. And finally, the mentoring program was examined and discussed as well as the benefits that affect a protégé’s skill development. In addition to the protégé’s skill development, the increased performance levels give the mentor satisfaction that he/she is helping a younger member of the organization succeed. The organization as a whole benefits by reducing turnover as the protégés become more productive and loyal workers.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH PROTOCOL

In this chapter, the methodology used to accomplish the objectives of the study will be explained. The three objectives for this study were to document the benefit and value of mentoring to new extension faculty, to document the benefit and value of mentoring to seasoned agents, and to develop guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon results from this pilot program. The research design, target population, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis will be explained.

Research Design

The research design of this study is descriptive by nature because it is describing the participant's perceptions of what they gained from the program and what they thought was effective and ineffective. This study used three phases to collect the data necessary to accomplish the objectives of the study.

Phases one and two were formative evaluations, which are evaluations conducted throughout the study. These two formative evaluations were implemented to provide ongoing information about the study, such as is the program proceeding as designed, is expected progress being made, what conditions are necessary for the study to succeed, have those conditions for success been met and can the current conditions be improved. This data will provide the researchers with information that will allow them to make adjustments, modifications, or revisions during the current pilot mentoring program as well as future implications for a statewide mentoring program (Guskey, 1998). These formative evaluations for phase one and two were collected via questionnaires, which consisted of open ended and Likert-scale questions to develop guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program.

The third phase was a summative evaluation, which was conducted at the end of the study. This evaluation was to provide the researchers with the overall value or worth of the program. The summative evaluation provides data of what was accomplished during the study. The findings from this evaluation will provide information for the researcher to make decisions and recommendations for the future of the program (Guskey, 1998). This third phase used four focus groups consisting of one group of each of the following extension positions: DEDs, CEDs, mentors and protégés. These focus groups provided the participants' perceptions, benefits, and values from the pilot mentoring program.

Since this was primarily a descriptive study, qualitative methods were utilized to collect the data. Objectives one and two were accomplished through the questionnaire and focus groups. Perceptions of the orientation, trainings, guidelines, and procedures of the pilot program were all collected in these focus groups. The third objective was accomplished through focus groups in the third phase. The focus groups were divided as explained above, and this method allowed the participants to openly share their perception of the program.

The independent variables of this study are the individual participants as well as their demographics such as race, gender, age, years in extension, extension tenure, program area, and demographics of their area of work. The dependent variables of the study are the participants' perception of the program and what the participants perceived they had gained from the program.

Population

This study consisted of four populations of participants. The protégés were ten of the newest county faculty in Florida extension who had not yet gone through the new faculty orientation between October 2003 and April 2004. The mentors were selected by the DEDs of the particular district that the protégés and mentors were located. The selection of the mentors was based upon the protégés' weaknesses, geographical area, and a similar program area in order to assure that the mentee was able to obtain the most guidance possible in the needed areas. The CEDs were automatically selected if they had a mentor or protégé in their office and they were then asked to participate in evaluating the pilot program. The DEDs were also automatically selected if there was a mentor or protégé in their district. There are five districts in Florida, and the program had mentors and protégés in four of those districts. Consequently four DEDs participated in the program.

Instrumentation

This study was conducted using three instruments to collect the data. The first instrument was an open-ended qualitative questionnaire, which was administered to all four populations via email. This instrument collected data for objectives one and three where the focus was on the participants' perception of the following variables: the effectiveness of the time spent with the mentor/protégé, the selection process, the initiation process, the training sessions for the mentors, the orientation for the protégés, and finally the overall communication between the program coordinators (Appendix A). The second instrument was a questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions as well as Likert–scale questions. This instrument was administered via email as well, but only to the mentors and protégés. This questionnaire focused on the following: the participants' experiences in the mentoring relationship, the level and type of contact between the pair, how satisfied they were with the level of contact, the help they received or provided, if the communication was open and clear, any problems, and what help could be given to improve any undesired situations. It also included a few demographic questions such as agent title and rank, years in extension and county makeup (rural, urban, and suburban) (Appendix B). The third phase consisted of four focus groups for the four different populations. This phase focused on the participants overall perceptions of the program, what was effective and ineffective, and how they benefited from the program (Appendix C).

Transferability and dependability were considered in this study. Transferability is known to be the degree to which the findings of a qualitative study can be applied or generalized to other contexts or groups (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2002). Because qualitative researchers don't specify transferability, the researcher, in this case, provides great detail and description in the context of the study to allow future researchers the ability to decide whether the method is transferable. Dependability is when the consistency is examined as to the extent to which variation can be tracked and explained (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2002). To ensure the consistency of the study is dependable; the researcher used several strategies such as triangulation, audit trail, working with a team, and member checks.

Triangulation is when a researcher uses multiple observers, multiple uses of data, and/or multiple methods. They then collect major themes or patterns in the data from these various sources, which lend credibility to the study (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2002). In this study, two methods of data collection were used (questionnaires & focus groups) along with four different populations of people who were participants in the program. The two data collection methods and the four populations of people allow for proof of credibility of the study.

The researcher in this study also used the audit trail strategy. This is where the researcher documents how the study was conducted. This audit trail contains the raw data such as focus group transcripts and raw questionnaires from the participants (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2002). The researcher has documented and collected all of this data to ensure that a third party auditor could examine the trail to determine the dependability.

A team approach was also used to increase the trustworthiness of the study. The researcher and an advisor were the prime teammates throughout the study. However, a group consisting of a DED, a CED, a state specialist and a grad student met at the beginning of the study and provided direction and vision as to where the program should go. Therefore great strides were taken to ensure that the transferability and dependability were achieved.

Phase One

In phase one, the questionnaires were emailed to the four different populations, which were organized into two groups for the questionnaire and data analysis. The first group was the administrators, DEDs, and CEDs while the second group consisted of the mentors and protégés. Each group received similar questions with slight variations to fit the exact population.

The questionnaire that was sent to the DEDs and the CEDs was very similar with only a slight variation. The CEDs’ questionnaire did not have a section of questions pertaining to the two mentor training sessions because the CEDs were not involved in those sessions. There were four questions asked of each of the two training sessions.

These open-ended questions were geared to determine the overall perception of the training program in order to increase the effectiveness of the training.

Open-ended questions were used throughout each phase to ensure that the study received rich and in-depth information. The questions effectively recorded the benefits that the participants received from partaking in the program as well as a clear picture to what needs to be improved and changed within the program in order to better benefit the participants and the extension organization in the future.

The remainder of the questionnaire was the same. There were four sections that focused on different aspects of the pilot program probing for their perceptions in these different areas. The sections that were asked about were: the selection process, the pairing, the initiation period, questions pertaining to how communication can be improved upon between the DEDs, CEDs, and the professional development staff who were conducting the pilot mentoring program. These questions were asked to gain a greater insight on what was perceived as being beneficial for the program as well as what could be done to make the program better.

The mentors and the protégés both received similar phase one questionnaires with questions pertaining to the general mentoring program. Since the mentors and the protégés both had different training sessions, they had questions that were specific to the training in which they were involved.

The mentors had two different training programs. The first training program consisted of an introduction to the program which covered the purpose of the pilot program and the mentoring guidebook that specifies the guidelines, procedures, mentoring roles, characteristics of a good mentor, and other helpful suggestions that will enable the mentoring process to progress smoothly. This was a two-hour program that was held April 20, 2004 via Polycom (video conference call) since the participants were located all throughout Florida. The Polycom delivery method saved travel time and money since they could participate in the training from their office. This program was conducted before the initiation of the mentors and protégés in order to allow for any questions that might need to be answered before the program started (Appendix D). Following the protégés' orientations, (April 27, 2004) the mentors were then asked to contact the protégé and start the actual program.

The second mentor training program was held June 29, 2004. This was a two hour training program via Polycom as well. This training program was to help teach and build on some mentoring skills that would assist in the mentoring pair. The Interim Associate Dean welcomed the mentors, thanked them for participating, and shared the value of mentoring to the Florida Extension Systems. A professor in the department of Agriculture Education and Communication at the University of Florida taught effective communication skills, and another professor from the same department taught on the subject of coaching techniques and tips. This training was conducted to provide the mentors with some effective mentoring skills to help develop the protégés into productive faculty members (Appendix E).

The protégés also had an orientation program. It was an hour-and-a-half session conducted via conference call. Conference call delivery was chosen since this was not a teaching session, but it was primarily an overview of the program. This session was very similar to the mentors first training session, but it did not go into depth about the importance of the mentoring roles and characteristics. This session covered the purpose of the pilot program, the history of Florida mentoring programs, and the mentoring handbook. The handbook covers topics like what is expected of the protégé, what he/she can expect of the mentor, and guidelines and procedures to follow while in the program. This session was facilitated to introduce the program to the protégés and allow an opportunity for any questions or concerns to be addressed. After this orientation session, the mentors were then allowed to contact the protégés and start the process.

These were the three training sessions that were held before the phase one questionnaire was administered. In both the mentor and protégé questionnaires, the same questions were asked, but directed to the particular training sessions that were appropriate for that questionnaire. The four questions asked were geared to help the researchers determine what aspects were effective, what needed to be improved, the perceived adequacy of the time allotted, and the best delivery method utilized to provide the training sessions. These questions helped the researchers determine what was effective and what needed to be improved upon in order to assure a more effective training program.

Questions were asked pertaining to the key aspects of the mentoring program to receive the mentors' and protégés' perceptions and suggestions to improve these main aspects of the program. There was one question on both sets of questionnaires that contributed to objective one, which asked for their perception of the effectiveness of time spent with the mentor/protégé. The remainder of the sections on phase one questionnaires contributed to objective three. These sections were the selection process of the mentors, the pairing process, the initiation, and what can be done to help improve these different aspects of the mentoring program. Another section that was asked of the mentors and protégés pertained to questions regarding contact level. These questions were asked to investigate the amount of contact that had accrued, the type of contact, (email, phone, face to face, travel, coordinating a program together, etc) and their perception of its effectiveness. These questions were asked in order to see how much the pairs were contacting each other and if they were meeting the recommended levels of contacts (Appendix F).

Phase Two

Phase two questionnaires were administered to only the mentors and protégés. The reason for only administering this questionnaire to them was because during this phase, the DEDs and CEDs did not have much contact with the mentoring pairs. The majority of the contact and communication was between the mentors and protégés, so it was not deemed beneficial to survey the others.

This questionnaire was developed to determine what was happening within the relationships, to find out what was effective and ineffective, and to determine what needs to be done to help improve any non-effective situations. This questionnaire used two different types of questions such as open-ended questions and Likert-scale questions. The first section of open-ended questions focused on the level of contact and the type of contact that was being used to interact and communicate.

The second section consisted of Likert-scale questions, and these questions were designed to determine the average levels of satisfaction with the interaction, the availability of the mentor and protégé, the level of career and technical assistance the mentor can give the protégé, and the level of effective communication. Basic statistics were used to find the average satisfaction in the different aspects of the mentoring relationship. Each question had a scale from one to five, one being the least satisfied and five being the optimal level of satisfaction. The Likert-scale was decided upon because it would allow the participants to easily rank their satisfaction of each one of the questions, and it would also allow the researches to accurately analyze the data. The researchers could also determine what was actually happening within the relationship such as contact level, the mentor's knowledge, communication level, and availability of the mentor/protégé. In the mentoring literature, frequent contact is a determining factor to the success of the development of the protégé, but there are also other factors such as the mentor's knowledge and listening skills. If the researchers could determine if there was a lack in these areas, then it could be improved upon with encouragement or other methods.

The third section of open ended questions was developed to examine what the mentors and protégés perceived to be going well and not so well in the relationship. These questions determined what type of problems there might be such as logistical problems, any external factors that might hinder the relationship, or any conflicts within the relationship. The questions were developed to determine if anything was going wrong and what could be done to improve the situation.

The fourth section of questions was simply three demographic questions such as agent title and rank, years in extension, and primary county make-up (urban, suburban, and rural). These questions enabled the researcher to gain a greater insight into whom the participants were and determine if any demographic aspects affected the mentoring relationship in any way.

Phase Three

The third and primary evaluation phase consisted of four two-hour focus groups that were conducted via Polycom (DEDs) and conference calls (CEDs, Mentors and Protégés) (Appendix G). The DEDs, CEDs, Mentors, and Protégés were divided to ensure that each group would be open and not feel constricted by having their supervisors and other administration in the same focus group. These focus groups all consisted of open-ended questions to allow in-depth discussions about the mentoring program. These focus group questions were developed to gather information for all three objectives.

The same questions were primarily asked for the DED and CED focus groups. Within the first two sections, questions about objectives one and two were asked to determine the following: what they perceived the mentors and the protégés had gained or benefited from the program, if they had experienced any issues or problems within these mentoring relationships, and what could be done for the mentors in regards to rewards or incentives to attract the most qualified faculty to become mentors. These two sections gave the researchers input from the direct supervisors of the participants to provide a different perspective of the benefits that the mentors and protégés received from the program.

The third section focused on objective three. This section was to focus more on the guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program. The questions were geared to obtain the perceptions of the DEDs and CEDs about mentoring guidelines and structures. The main topics that the questions focused on were the selection process, training sessions, pairing of the mentors and protégés, initiations period, the way issues should be handled, the way the program should be coordinated, and the roles of the state coordinators, DEDs and CEDs within the mentoring program. The recommendations of these administrators and the mentors and mentees will help provide guidelines and structure into a mentoring program.

The mentor and protégé focus groups were very similar in regards to the type of questions asked, but each question was tailored to the specific group. For objectives one and two, the mentors and protégés were asked the following: what their overall perception of the program was, how they benefited, how they perceived their partner benefited, what was effective, what the protégés learned from the mentors, what promoted learning within the relationship, and what issues or problems came up. These questions captured the personal side of the program, what they got out of the program, and what they thought their partner got out of the program.

The third section focused on objective three. These questions focused more on the guidelines, procedures, and structure of the program. The questions focused on the main aspects of the program such as the selection process, training and orientations sessions, initiation, their perception on the mentoring handbook, the pairing process, interaction/communication, incentives/rewards, what could be improved, how should mentoring be coordinated, and recommendations for the roles of the DEDs, CEDs and state coordinators. Questions were asked in each of these topics to obtain the participants' perceptions and to determine how they would improve a mentoring program.

The questions asked in the questionnaires and the focus groups were all derived from the major topics discussed in the mentoring literature. The researchers then developed and compiled the questions to best benefit this pilot mentoring program.

Data Collection and Analysis

The formal review of this study by the Intuitional Review Board (IRB) was completed during the first data phase of the study. The first phase of the data collection process actually began prior to IRB approval in order to capture early formative data from the participants. The data collection started July 19, 2004, and the IRB was approved August 23, 2004. The IRB-02, located at the University of Florida, is the department that reviews non-medical research proposals for ethical soundness. The IRB approved the research proposal, and assigned it an IRB protocol number (2004-U-636) (Appendix H). The participants of the study consented to participating in the pilot mentoring program, and the three phases of evaluation for the study upon initial entry into the program. At that time, the participants were provided with the time requirement in this study. Participants opted to participate voluntarily in the study with the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

A state-wide mentoring program has been in the development process for several years now in Florida. Currently each of the five districts have different methods of mentoring, resulting in inconsistent mentoring of new faculty members. As a result, extension administration has pushed to start a formalized state-wide mentoring program.

Following the decision to develop a mentoring program, research was done to develop a mentoring program that would be the most beneficial to everyone involved. Cooperative Extension Systems in the following states: Ohio, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Kentucky, Texas, Georgia, Virginia, and Tennessee were all contacted to generate information about how they structured their program, how they coordinated their program, what was positive and negative about their program, and what they would change to make it better. Each one of these states was very helpful in discussing general mentoring topics and what they do in their programs. These states also sent packets of information including mentoring handbooks, purpose statements, mentoring guidelines, and other materials that would help develop the Florida mentoring program.

Following this process of gathering mentoring information, a task force of two DEDs, two state specialists, a CED, and a graduate student was formed by the dean's office to develop a plan for mentoring among new county faculty. Out of this task force group, one DED, one state specialist, one CED and one graduate student met and discussed the mentoring information that was pulled together from the different extension mentoring programs around the country. Following the discussion of the different programs; mentoring topics such as the length of the program, the mentors, how they would be trained, what would be expected of them, the pairing process, guidelines, curriculum and rewards for the mentors were discussed.

Throughout the discussion, there were many differences in opinion about mentoring; therefore, it was decided to develop a pilot mentoring program that would enable the Florida Extension Systems to test the training, structure and curriculum of a mentoring program prior to pursuing a formalized program. Therefore, a plan was established to develop and evaluate a pilot mentoring program with guidance from the task force and from current mentoring literature. The following details explain how the program was developed and implemented.

In November of 2003, the decision was made to develop a pilot mentoring program. At that time, ideas, curriculum, guidelines and mentoring program structures were combined and adapted to the Florida Extension System to develop a pilot mentoring program that would be conducive to the Florida System. From November of 2003 to February of 2004, the program was developed. It was decided that the DEDs and the CEDs would pick the mentors and pair them with the new faculty selected for the pilot program since they best knew each particular county faculty. It was at this time that the

DEDs were contacted by phone to see if they would be willing to help in the program, and all of the DEDs were willing to help. A research-based document (Appendix J) was prepared to give to the DEDs that explained how the mentors would be selected and the pairs would be matched. This document provided insight on what the literature recommended for choosing mentors and pairing the pairs in a way that would be the most beneficial to everyone. Due to time limitations, the CEDs were notified after the mentors and protégés were chosen. The ideal situation would be to have them team up with the DEDs in order to pick the mentors and join up the pairs, but due to time restraints the DEDs solely completed the picking and pairing.

After evaluating several mentoring handbooks, it was decided to seek approval from the Penn State Cooperative Extension to adapt their Mentoring Handbook to fit the Florida Cooperative Extension pilot mentoring program. This decision was made because Penn State's Mentoring Handbook contained the needed information in a compact and applicable way. After it was approved, the researcher adapted the handbook to meet Florida's needs. It then consisted of the mentoring program agreement, the mentor/protégé biographical sketch, the protégé needs self-assessment, a guide to meet the protégé's needs, the frequency of contact, the positive mentoring behaviors, listening techniques, and the roles of the mentor and mentoring activities log (Appendix K). This document laid the framework for what the mentors and protégés should do within the mentoring relationship. The adapted Handbook was sent to the IFAS communication department where the researcher and the IFAS communication staff worked together to develop a booklet for the Florida pilot mentoring program. This handbook was completed and formatted in a word document and emailed to all of the participants for the orientation/training sessions. Then shortly after the initiation period of the mentors and protégés, the final mentor handbook (in booklet form) was completed and a hardcopy was mailed to all of the participants in early May 2004.

The training sessions were then developed to introduce the mentors and protégés to the program. As explained earlier in this chapter, there were two training sessions for the mentors and one orientation session for the protégés. These sessions were to give an overview of the program and help teach the mentors key aspects of mentoring that could help improve the mentoring relationship.

Following the development of the basic guidelines, the curriculum, and the training sessions, the participants of the program were then selected. In February of 2003, the DEDs office pulled together a list of new county faculty members that had been most recently hired and had not been through the New Faculty Orientation as of October 2003. There were ten that fit this time period, and out of these ten new hires, four of the five districts in Florida were represented. The four districts that were represented in this program were Northeast Florida (two protégés), Northwest Florida (two protégés), South Central Florida (two protégés) and South Florida (four protégés). The next step was to contact each one of the DEDs of these districts by phone. They needed to know that there were new faculty members in their district that had been chosen to be in the pilot mentoring program, and to confirm that they were willing to support the program and choose mentors to be paired with the protégés. All four of the DEDs committed to cooperating.

The protégés were then contacted by the researcher via phone to find out if they were willing to take part in the program. They were all willing to participate. The DEDs were then notified that all the participants were willing to be a part of the program. The DEDs then selected the mentors for the protégés. This selection period was during the months of February and March, but the pairs were not officially paired up until the last orientation session. It was found that one DED had already paired two of the protégés up with the mentor before the announcement of the formal mentoring program, so in this case the mentor and protégé remained a pair and they continued to mentor, but within the pilot mentoring pair. As the DEDs let the researcher know who would be a mentor, the researcher called and asked him/her about participating, and they all agreed.

By April, all the mentors were chosen and the pairs were selected. After the first initial contact via phone, the majority of the contact was through email. Before the first orientation/training sessions, an email list was developed for the DEDs, mentors, and protégés to allow each group to set up the best times for everyone to conduct the training programs. The dates participants had available for the training sessions were collected via email, and then the researcher decided on the best dates to conduct each of the training sessions. The participants that were not available to attend the training sessions made arrangements with the researcher to conduct a private training session at his/her own convenience.

On April 20, 2004, the first training program was conducted via Polycom for the mentors. Polycom's use was coordinated through the IFAS IT department days before the training/orientations were held. On April 27, 2004, the protégés went through their orientation via conference call. All of the mentors, protégés and three of the four DEDs completed the training/orientation program.

The mentors were told that they could contact their protégés to start the mentoring relationship after April 27, 2004. An email was sent out to everyone thanking them for their participation and wishing them success in this program. The researcher's contact numbers were also given out in case any problems arose.

The second mentor training session, explained earlier in the chapter, was conducted June 29, 2004, via Polycom. Seven of the ten mentors participated and one of the four DEDs participated. Polycom was set up through IFAS's IT department and it was a great way to be able to allow everyone to verbally and visually participate.

It was after the second training program and before the first evaluation when an email notice was sent out to all of the CEDs that they had a mentor or a protégé in the pilot mentoring program. It was explained to them that due to time constraints, it was not possible to contact all of the CEDs and get them on board before the program started. Then it was explained that their participation in the evaluation process would be greatly appreciated. Throughout the whole pilot mentoring program, six of the thirteen CEDs participated in the program.

Evaluation Process

Following the orientation/training sessions, the initiation process, and two months for the participants to start developing the mentoring relationship; the first evaluation was conducted. This phase one evaluation, as explained earlier in the chapter, would evaluate the following: the selection, pairing, initiation, contact level, ways to help, and the effectiveness of the orientation/training sessions. These were all of the main aspects of the program up until this point.

The evaluation was emailed to all of the participants on July 19, 2004. The email consisted of two attached documents, the cover letter second and the evaluation questionnaire. The cover letter explained aspects of this first phase of the evaluations such as the following: this is the first of three evaluations, the approximate time it should take to complete the questionnaire, the fact that this evaluation would provide the researchers with greater understanding on how to improve the program (objective three), that the document will be anonymous, when and where the document should be completed and emailed back to the researcher, and lastly a thank you for their participation.

The participation was marginal in phase one. Two out of the four DEDs, three out of the thirteen CEDs, seven out of the ten mentors, and seven out of the ten protégés completed and returned the phase one questionnaire. It was understandable that the CEDs would not have a great response rate since they were not involved in the first part of the program. One brief email reminder was sent to all of the participants four days before the August 6th deadline just to remind the ones that had not completed their questionnaires. After the deadline, two more reminder emails were sent out within two weeks after the deadline. These reminder emails helped retrieve three of the late questionnaires.

As the questionnaires were completed and returned, the data was compiled on four separate master data sheets (word documents). Then the data from the four separate data sheets were compiled on to one master data sheet that included data from all of the participants. Since this was a formative evaluation, it allowed the researcher to evaluate the program's progress at that particular time in order make any modifications or adjustments to improve the program. It also served as data that would be evaluated at the conclusion of the study to make recommendations on how to improve the mentoring program.

Phase two of the evaluation process was structured similar to phase one, but with some differences. This phase also consisted of emailing questionnaires out to the participants, but the target groups were only the mentors and protégés. It was decided to only target them in this phase because the questionnaire focused on their relationship, targeting key topics such as contact/interaction, availability, knowledge, who is seeking help, effectiveness of communication, pros and cons of the relationship, logistics, what assistance is needed, and demographic questions. A cover letter was not attached to the email; directions were simply stated on the questionnaire itself.

This questionnaire was emailed on October 1, 2004, and completed questionnaires were due back by October 15, 2004. Just as in phase one, a reminder email was sent out four days before the questionnaires were due to remind the participants about the upcoming due date. Several of the questionnaires were not emailed in by the due date because of the hurricanes causing great distress among the people. After the reminder email, there were two weeks where there was no pressure on the participants due to the hurricanes. After everything settled down, another reminder email was sent and the final count for the questionnaires received was six out of ten mentors and nine out of ten protégés. Due to the horrific conditions in Florida at this time and the extra pressure put on the extension faculty in a time of natural disaster, the researchers were pleased with the number of returned questionnaires.

The data from these questionnaires were also compiled onto one master document. This allowed the researcher to compare and analyze the data from both the mentors and the protégés on one document. As the data from this phase was compiled, it was determined if any modifications or adjustments needed to be made for the program to operate more smoothly. Then after this data was briefly reviewed, the data from phase one and two was compiled on to one master document. Each population group was color coded and each response was marked to signify if it came from phase one or two. This color coding and marking system was to ensure that the researcher knew what population group the data came from and from which phase it was collected. The master sheet was organized into the three objectives and each question was cut and pasted within the correct objective. This method organized the data in a way that made it easy for the researcher to review the data and determine the major and minor themes.

Phase three of the evaluations was completely different from phase one and two. As explained earlier in the chapter, this phase consisted of four separate focus groups for the DEDs, CEDs, mentors and protégés. It was decided that the most convenient and economical way to conduct these focus groups would be to do them via conference call or Polycom. Due to the number of participants that would be participating in the CEDs', mentors', and protégés' focus groups, it was conducted via conference call. When using the UF/IFAS Polycom system with more then four sites, including the UF home site, it is required to use the University-wide Polycom system. In the past, there have been technical problems with the county sites not being able to connect or stay connected with this system. Therefore it was decided to use the conference call system for these three focus groups to ensure that everyone would be able to participate with minimal technical problems. Since each one of the DEDs had a Polycom system in their office, using

Polycom for this group was beneficial because of the convenience and all of the participants could see each other.

The focus groups were set up similar to the training sessions. On September 30, 2004, an email was sent out to all of the participants to set up the dates for the phase three focus groups. This email updated all of the participants on the progress of the program and thanked them for their participation and informed them about phase three. They were asked if they could email their preferred dates back by October 8, 2004, so the dates could be evaluated and the most convenient time for all participants could be chosen. Only one focus group could be conducted for each group. So the dates were chosen to best accommodate as many of the participants as possible. Due to more hurricanes at this same time, it took three extra weeks to get all of the available dates in, but by October 20, 2004, the final focus group dates were emailed back to all of the participants. The focus group dates were Dec. 8, 2004, from 1:30 to 3:30 for the DEDs; Dec. 15, 2004, from 1:30 to 3:30 for the CEDs; Dec. 14, 2004, from 1:30 to 3:30 for the mentors; and Dec. 14, 2004, from 10:00 to 12:00 for the protégés.

To collect the data from the focus groups, each focus group was conducted in the same manner. There was a facilitator that read the questions from the interview guide and probed the participants for further understanding. There was also a note-taker that documented key points that arose. This note-taker also made sure that the audio tape was recording properly. Each group was taped with a mini recorder with the permission of all of the participants. This allowed the researchers to have all of the focus groups' tapes transcribed to capture the main topics and themes for complete documentation and analysis of the data, and to support the three objectives in the study.

After the audio tapes where professionally transcribed, the researcher read through the transcripts and colored-coded each question and the discussion that was associated with that particular question. The color coding was to allow the researcher to easily identify when there was a topic change in the transcript. This allowed the researcher to easily review each topic and transfer the data from these topics to one master document. The data was also compiled onto one document by study objectives so each of the population's responses could be reviewed and analyzed together. This allowed the researcher to have only two master documents with the data from all three phases.

The participation for phase three was not what was expected due to busy end of the year schedules. Other tasks seemed to take priority over the mentoring focus group. Four out of four DEDs, five out of thirteen CEDs, five out of ten mentors and five out of ten protégés participated in the phase three focus groups. It was explained to all of the participants that this would be the end of the formal evaluations, but it did not have to be the end of the mentoring relationships.

Analysis Process

The analysis of the data is a critical part of the study to ensure that all of the major and minor common themes are documented and recommendations are accurately made according to those themes. As stated above, the phase one and two completed questionnaires were compiled onto one master document. This allowed the researcher to analyze the data for the common themes from each section/question. The common themes were detected in each of the main sections such as selection, pairing, initiation, help needed, contact/interaction, communication, and training/orientation. In phase one and two, questions from the questionnaires contributed to objective three with only one question in phase one that contributed to objective one. Therefore, most of the data collected for objective one and two were collected in phase three to ensure that the perceptions of the mentors and protégés would be the collective perceptions of the entire program.

In phase two, there were five Likert-scale questions asked of the mentors and six of this same type questions asked of the protégés. The mean was calculated and each question was analyzed.

In phase three, all four focus groups were taped (audio only) then the transcribing was out-sourced to ensure that the job was done to its highest quality and within a reasonable amount time. The transcripts for each focus group were carefully evaluated and major and minor themes in each section were drawn out of these transcripts. Because the open-ended questions on the questionnaires and the in-depth focus groups consisted of qualitative data, a data analysis process was developed and utilized. This analysis process consisted of four categories: analysis, interpretation, judgment, and recommendations (Archer, 1987).

The data was analyzed via a cut-and-paste methodology (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). Data from the first two phases was cut and pasted onto one document that was arranged according to the study objectives. Then phase three's data was compiled onto one master document and separated into the study objective sections. This method allowed the researcher to compile all the data for topics within each objective onto one document. This also allowed each topic to be grouped together and then categorized into groups of responses consisting of the same topic and response type. The response type consisted of responses that were negative, positive or could have been a recommendation or suggestion for a certain topic.

Within objective three, the data was grouped even more specifically into subgroups such as the selection process and the pairing process. These subgroups were grouped separately to enable easier and more complete data analysis. From this grouping, major and minor themes were recognized for mentoring guidelines and recommendations.

Data interpretation involved defining descriptive patterns and associations and linkages between these patterns. This consisted of finding major and minor themes that emerged from the data. As the data was cut and pasted, it was then grouped into logical topics within each study objective. Responses within each topic were reviewed from data from all three evaluation phases. From reviewing each response in each topic the researcher made judgments as to the major and minor themes within the data.

The major themes were decided on by selecting the most common responses within each topic area. Major themes were those areas where dominate themes arose within each topic area. The minor themes were those responses that were not dominate, but were stated by one or more participants. This method of determining the major and minor themes was deemed very thorough in evaluating and analyzing responses within each topic area

As the major and minor themes emerged, they were used by the researcher to make recommendations from the data that was collected in this study. If the theme was stating a value or benefit this theme was simply documented. If the theme was stating a perception, idea or suggestion that could make a future mentoring program more effective, then the theme was documented as a recommendation. These major and minor themes provided the researcher with an overview of the participants' perceptions of the benefits they gained as well as the aspects of the program that were effective and the ones that could be improved upon.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the research protocol that was used in this study to evaluate the UF/IFAS Cooperative Extension Systems' pilot mentoring program for new county faculty. The primary data collection methods were formative and summative evaluation questionnaires and focus groups. This chapter covered the steps and procedures utilized for the design, implementation, and analysis of these findings. A combination of the questionnaires and in-depth focus groups provided depth and richness. Questionnaire and focus group findings were organized and interpreted based on common themes that emerged. As these themes emerged, judgments and recommendation were made and documented.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter provides comprehensive results of the pilot mentoring program. The results are presented within the framework of three objectives. The chapter was organized by stating the data within each objective. Under the objectives, each phase was addressed. Other than a few Likert-scale questions in phase two, the majority of the data was qualitative. The qualitative data included in this chapter represents common themes frequently mentioned by the participants of the study in the surveys as well as the focus groups.

There were two fundamental data collection procedures used to achieve the objectives. The first was qualitative questionnaires, and the second included focus groups among the four participant groups. The data collected within the focus groups provide depth, richness and breadth to the results obtained by the questionnaires.

Participants

To help understand each group of respondents, the following information was collected during the study through discussion and questionnaires. There were four DEDs surveyed in the study that had county faculty participating in the study. All of the participants in this DED group were males. Six CEDs were surveyed in the study as well. Like the DEDs, the CEDs had county faculty working in their county who were participants in the pilot mentoring program. This group was made up of three males and three females. Nine mentors were surveyed in the study. This group consisted of six females and three males with an average of nineteen years of experience in extension.

The protégé participant group consisted of nine protégés, four females and five males. This group all had one year or less of extension experience.

Objective One

Objective one was to document the benefits and values of a mentoring program among new extension faculty. The questions in regards to objective one were designed to document the benefits and values of mentoring among new extension faculty during the first and third phase of the study. The decision was made to briefly address objective one in phase one in order to evaluate the effectiveness of how the mentoring program could benefit the new faculty throughout the first section of the program. In phase one and two, questions in regards to this objective were only asked to the mentors and protégés, but in the third phase questions where asked to every participant.

Phase One

Benefits and values were found within this first phase. Mentors and protégés were asked a question to evaluate their perception of the effectiveness of the time spent with their partner. The responses from this question were primarily positive. Phase one was primarily concerned with evaluating the first three months of the mentoring program. The common theme that arose within the answers was that these first three months were very effective and time well-spent. It was documented that the protégés benefited by being involved in the mentoring program through a decrease in overwhelming feelings that the new faculty often experience when coming into the extension organization. Protégés said that they learned a great amount, gained insight, and obtained valuable information regarding programs and process. It was said by both the mentors and the protégés that the time was well spent.

There was only one negative response to this question, and it was by a mentor that was paired with a protégé who would not allocate time to meet with the mentor. The mentor, a female CED/program leader with 25 years of experience in extension in a suburban county, stated that the protégé, a female 4-H agent who had prior experience in extension in another state, was contacted and meeting times were attempted to be scheduled, but no time was allocated on the protégé's part. In this case the mentoring program had no benefit or value to the protégé or the mentor.

Phase Two

There was no data collected in regards to objective one within phase two of the study. Phase two was designed only to collect data for objective three. Phase two was an excellent time to utilize a formative evaluation to collect data on the structure and guidelines of the pilot mentoring program in the core months of the mentoring program.

Phase Three

Each participant was asked questions to collect data on what kind of value the protégé received from this pilot mentoring program. Data was collected from each participant, with the exception of the DEDs, who reported not having enough contact with the protégés to be able to comment on the program's benefits. In the data collected for this objective, common themes emerged from the answers.

One of the common themes was that the protégés found that they appreciated the structure of having someone other then a person within their chain of command (DEDs and CEDs) assigned to them, so that when they had a question or concern, they could simply call or email them. It was noted by the protégés that before they were in the mentoring program they had no one to ask questions to unless it was their DED or CED. They did not feel comfortable in asking their supervisors questions because they felt like they would be judged if the supervisor thought the question was unintelligent. The existence of a mentor enabled the protégé to feel comfortable in asking questions that they may not have asked someone in their chain of command. This assured them that they were not alone during this beginning period.

It was also established that the protégés found value in being able to assist their mentors with their programs. This gave the protégés a chance to have hands-on experience and gain new knowledge, which they could take back to their county and develop as part of their own programs. In addition, it was found that the protégés benefited from the mentors through helping them develop advisory groups to ensure that they were able to develop successful programs for their clientele.

The next common themes were primarily from the protégés themselves and focused on the value and benefit that they gained by being in this program. Some of these themes may relate to those mentioned above, but they all emerged from the protégés' data. The protégés reported that they received general advice and ideas as well as needed support and encouragement from their mentors. More specifically, they developed skills in volunteer management, gained insight on how the extension organization works, received technical support, were assisted in organizational techniques for developing and reporting POWs (Plan Of Work) and ROAs (Report of Accomplishments), and lastly they learned who the major program supporters in the surrounding communities and industries were and how to get acquainted with them.

Therefore, all of the participants in the three populations who responded to this objective reported very positive results that the protégés gained value and received benefit from being a part of this program.

Objective Two

Objective two was to document the benefits and values of mentoring among seasoned extension faculty. It was hoped to determine if mentors received any value or benefit from being a mentor in the program. Data for this objective was only collected in the third evaluation phase and questions where asked to each population in regards to this objective.

Phase One and Two

Data for objective two was not collected in phase one or two. It was decided that it would be best to only collect data about how the mentoring program benefited the seasoned extension faculty in the summative focus group evaluations in the third phase.

Phase Three

Questions were asked to all of the participants in the pilot mentoring program, but just as in objective one, the DEDs had too little contact with the mentors to know if they received any value or gained any benefit from this program. However, they did state some potential benefits that the mentors could receive from fulfilling the role of mentor. The common themes that arose from this topic were consistent across all three of the participant groups who saw benefits and values that the mentors received from this program. Therefore, there is one set of common themes for all three groups.

First of all, the DEDs did not have enough contact with the mentors to notice any benefits the mentors might have received from the program. They did state, however, several benefits and values that mentors might receive by being in this program. They stated the following benefits and values: it could help the mentor develop their listening skills, reflect on their own needs, enhance their ability to network with people of different personalities, and allow them to strengthen their own leadership abilities.

From the other three participant groups (CEDs, mentors and protégés), it was found that the mentors received personal satisfaction and enjoyment from knowing that they were helping new faculty grow and develop into productive extension faculty. As they worked with the new faculty, it was noted that they gained a new perspective on their work, they learned new ideas from the protégé, and the protégé brought about a renewed sense of excitement and freshness.

Being paired up with the protégés, gave the mentors a chance to get to know the protégé and exchange programming ideas as well as discuss different extension issues. It was found that the mentors gained new knowledge from the protégés and simply enjoyed getting to know them. This relationship also gave the mentor a new contact to co-plan programs together. If the protégé was in a different county, they could potentially work together on some multi-county programs.

It was also established that the mentors found being asked to be in the program flattering because someone in administration thought highly enough of them to ask them to be a mentor. Being a part of this program could also be another great activity the mentors could add to their promotion packet to help them move up in the organization.

Therefore, this program was looked upon very positively in regards to benefits that the mentors received. Overall, it was found that they received personal satisfaction, new ideas, and a new contact for programming help in the future.

Objective Three

Objective three was to determine guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon the results from this pilot program. This objective was meant to collect data that would allow the researchers to improve and develop a formalized mentoring program by making guidelines and recommendations from the major themes that emerged. Data was collected for this objective in each phase and all participants were asked for their perception on the improvements and developments that the mentor program needed. However, only the mentors and protégés were surveyed in the second phase because the questions primarily focused on their contact and interaction.

Phase One

The mentor selection topic was addressed by all four populations and a strong theme appeared that the DEDs and CEDs should be the ones selecting the mentors for the program.

Selection process

Selection of the mentors for this program was a vital aspect of the program. The common theme that emerged was that the DEDs and CEDs should work together to select the mentors. The CEDs are the mentors' direct supervisors and the DEDs are a part of the mentors' evaluation process, which puts both the DEDs and CEDs in the best position for selecting a proper mentor. The DEDs and CEDs are able to better select a mentor who has respect from their peers, program and organizational knowledge, provides successful programs, and has several years of experience in extension as well as the available time to lend to a mentoring program. It was suggested that if the DEDs and CEDs selected a mentor, they could discuss the role of a mentor and provide initial input. The potential mentor could then make the decision whether or not to participate in the program.

Pairing process

After selecting faculty who were qualified to be a mentor, the next task would be to pair the mentors and protégés. Two common themes emerged including which individuals should do the pairing and what criteria should be evaluated when pairing.

As said in the selection findings, it was best for the DEDs and CEDs to pick the mentors due to the fact that they know them and their work ethics, and the same common theme emerged in the pairing section as well. It was felt that the DEDs and CEDs would do the best job to couple these pairs because they already know the mentors. Most likely they also know the new hire because they would have personally interviewed him or her. Consequently, at the time of hire, the DEDs and CEDs are in the best position to do the pairing.

Another common theme emerged in regards to who has input in the pairing, and if that pair can be changed once a selection is made. Different suggestions were given such as when DEDs and CEDs are coupling the pairs, they could also seek approval from the mentor and protégé. Sometimes the mentor or protégé may already have someone in mind that they have previously connected with before hiring or in the first couple of days before the pair has been made. Another suggestion involved allowing the protégés an option to change their mentor if there was another mentor that would be better suited for him or her.

Several criteria for pairing mentors and protégés were evident. The strongest theme was the geographic location of the mentor and protégé. It was important for both the mentors and protégés to be in close proximity to each other in order to increase their contact. There are several reasons why proximity is so important. The first reason is that it allows the mentor and protégé to work jointly on program. If there is too much distance between the pair, it will be too difficult to allocate time for projects when the pair is required to drive long distances or be limited to phone calls or email. Secondly, it gives more of an opportunity for the protégés to observe the mentor at work. A mentor will find it convenient to simply come by the office for an informal observation. Lastly, being close to each other simply gives an opportunity for the pair to meet face-to-face more often to discuss programming and current issues in extension. Contact and frequent interaction was viewed as being vital for a mentoring relationship. Close proximity was connected to making it easier to have the frequent contact that is needed for the mentoring relationship to thrive.

Having the same job responsibilities and/or program areas was viewed as being very important in the mentoring pair. This proved to be very beneficial because of the knowledge and experience that the mentor had to share with the protégé. This was a primary criterion for the pairing process.

The needs of the protégé were acknowledged in regards to pairing. It was felt that along with the other pairing criterion, the protégé should also be paired with a mentor who can effectively address his/her needs. With this focus on the protégé's specific needs, he or she can become a more productive faculty member.

Personalities were also criteria that emerged in regards to pairing. It was found by some pairs that having similar personalities such as two very expressive extraverts paired together worked better than an expressive extravert paired with a more serious introvert. The pairs with similar personalities seem to grow and mature into having stronger relationships. The point was also made that pairs with different personalities could also have different work styles. Having different work styles can decrease the amount of time that the pair works together. For example, if one person in the pair is very structured and the other person is not then this could cause frustration when planning programs together.

This frustration could cause the pair to work less together. Personality is definitely a criterion to consider when joining the pairs.

Overall, the pairing was viewed very positively. Common statements were made that the pairing was very beneficial because good personal relationships developed from these pairs. Also the protégé had an experienced person on whom to rely.

Training process

The next aspect of the mentoring program was the training/orientation sessions for the mentors and protégés. This next section refers to findings regarding the April 2004 training/orientation programs as well as the June 2004 mentor training program. This section focused on what was effective, what could be improved, the participants' perceptions of the length of the sessions, and their perceptions of the delivery method (Polycom, conference call).

The first training session that was evaluated was the mentor training session on April 21, 2004. The study was initially looking for the participants' perceptions of the mentor training. The following common themes for this training session were gathered from the mentors. The common theme was that the training session provided understanding about the mentoring program, informed the participants of what the program entailed, and gave them a description of the responsibilities. It was noted that this session let the mentors know what to expect and helped them get started in the program.

Most of the participants were very pleased with the length of the training session. There was one mentor (female, program coordinator for 4-H, 8 years in extension, urban county) that thought the session should have less discussion on the value of mentoring because she commented that most people already recognize this as being important. The common perception among others was that the length was satisfactory.

The most common theme in regards to what should be changed was that the first training session should have been face-to-face. Within this common theme, several minor themes emerged as well. One thought was that the session could be held in each district for the mentoring participants or in a central location. The other theme was that the mentors and protégés should all meet at this face-to-face training session. It was stated that this first face-to-face meeting would make the program more personable and increase interaction in the future. It was also mentioned that this would be a great time for the administration to have some involvement in order to show that they really value the program.

Consequently, it was clear that for the first session the Polycom delivery method was not the method of choice. Body language and other visual communications were lost due to conducting the training session via Polycom. There were also some technical difficulties with the Polycom. These technical difficulties decreased the communication and effectiveness of the training session. Although Polycom may not be the best delivery method for the first training session, it was said that it did cut down on travel and expenses.

Overall, the mentors' perceptions of the first training session were that it was an effective length and successful in preparing them to be a mentor.

The next orientation/training session evaluated was the one for the protégés that took place on April 27, 2004. This study was looking for the protégés' perceptions on the information covered during that training session. What was valuable, what could be improved, and what they thought of the delivery method (conference call) were all questions that were asked. The protégés were the only participants that were surveyed on this orientation session because the DEDs, CEDs, and the mentors were not involved with this session.

The general perception of the information that was covered was that it was adequate and clearly explained. The protégés did not go into great detail of what they thought of the particular information that was covered.

The information that the protégés thought was valuable varied. Some thought that all the information was valuable. There were other more specific comments such as they appreciated the background of why they were picked to be a protégé, and they thought the explanation of how the mentoring program was to work was valuable.

The survey also focused on what could be improved. A couple of suggestions emerged such as to explain more clearly the amount of contact expected, and to be more open to addressing issues or concerns from the protégés. There were some protégés who either did not answer this question or said they would not change anything.

In regards to the delivery method, the protégés thought that the conference call method was a good way to make the necessary information available. It was said that this method was good because it allowed the participants to stay in their counties or offices so they did not have to spend time and money on travel. Only one protégé (female, program coordinator for Florida Yards and Neighborhoods, Agent 1, 10 months in extension, Suburban County) thought that this session should be a face-to-face meeting. Overall, the protégés were happy with this orientation session.

The last mentor training session held June 29, 2004, was only for the mentors, but one of the DEDs sat in on this session. Therefore, the DEDs and the mentors were asked questions regarding this session on the phase one questionnaire. These questions focused on what was effective, what could be improved, the participants' perceptions of the length of the session, and the effectiveness of the delivery method. Most of the input from these questions was from the mentors.

The participants were asked what they thought was effective within this training session and several common themes emerged. The first theme was that they enjoyed the discussion and interaction between the participants. It was said that the ideas brought up during the discussion time were very helpful for mentoring. The effective communication and time organization topics were also perceived as effective aspects of the session that helped them in their mentoring task.

The next topic that was surveyed was what could be improved. The major theme was that the session needed more interaction time for the participants. It was said that there needed to be more question and discussion time to acquire additional ideas about how to be a more effective mentor. To help with the discussion, it was mentioned that more interactive techniques could be used such as role play, which would assist in constructive questioning, and active learning. One participant (female, CED, Suburban county) said that the topic areas could be decreased so that only a few references are provided and if any of the participants needed to follow-up and get more information later, they could. It was stated that some of the information shared was prior knowledge and did not need to be reviewed.

The major theme for the length of the program was that it was fine to cover the information that needed to be covered. There was, however, some conflicting data from the mentors who did not think the time was adequate. One mentor (female, CED, Suburban County) thought that the training was too long. While other mentors said that the time was too short, and the time could be increased to allow for more interaction and discussion among the mentors. Therefore, there were some differences in the mentors' perceptions of the length of the session, but the major theme was that the length was adequate to cover the information that was taught.

The delivery method was also discussed. The participants would prefer to meet face-to-face, but they did not have the time and money to spend going to training sessions in a location outside of their county. Although participants would prefer face-to-face meetings, Polycom made these training sessions more convenient for everyone to participate. If the technical problems were taken care of for enabling the sessions to run more smoothly, Polycom would be the most convenient and realistic delivery method.

Initiation period

The initiation period was the time period when the mentors and protégés commenced their relationship. The study focused on the participants' opinions about the effectiveness of the beginning of the relationship, their perceptions of the bio-sheets, and what they thought were the most valuable and least valuable points on the bio-sheet. The study also probed for suggestions to make the initiation period more engaging and asked what the University of Florida's staff could do to improve this initiation period.

The overall perception of the initiation period was that it was necessary and effective, and it gave the mentors and protégés a chance to get to know each other and start building their relationship. The participants were also asked what could be done to make the initiation period more engaging. In addition, they were asked to evaluate the mentor program coordinators in order to see what they could do to make the program more engaging. The most common theme was to have a face-to-face group meeting for the first training/orientation session in order to allow all of the mentors and protégés an opportunity to meet and schedule time to get together one-on-one when they got back to their counties. Within that main theme, different suggestions emerged in regards to when the meeting time should be arranged. Suggestions included the following: a retreat training program for all participants (DEDs, CEDs, mentors, and protégés), or a meeting within each district to allow the protégés and mentors to meet.

Other ideas were recommended about what the mentor program coordinators could do in order to add structure to the initiation program and assure that the pairs were meeting. It was suggested that times and dates in which the pairs could meet should be set up. In addition, a coordinator should monitor this period to make sure the initiation is being made. It was also suggested to allow the protégés a time to go visit the mentors for a couple of days to observe them and see how they conduct their business. Therefore, both the mentors and protégés wanted to meet face-to-face for the first orientation program. The protégés also wanted more structure after the first initial training session to ensure that contact was being made, and they get the help they need.

There were several prevalent themes when looking at the insight about the bio-sheets. First of all, the list of topics they wanted to discuss gave them time to think about how they would address these discussion topics. Secondly, the needs and interests of the protégés were noted as very valuable points to the mentors, so that they could focus on the most important issues first and then move to less important issues. But overall, the most valuable aspect of the bio-sheets was the information that gave the protégés and mentors more insight into their mentoring partners' strengths and weaknesses.

The least valuable part of the bio-sheet was also reviewed. The overall theme was that all of the information was relevant and helpful to enhance and make the initiation period as effective as possible. Some of the participants stated that all of the information was relevant and useful, but if they had to pick any information that was not as valuable, it would be the personal information questions such as family, hobbies, and hometown.

Contact and interaction

In this phase, the contact that accrued between the mentors and protégés was analyzed such as who initiated most of the contact, the amount/level of contact, the type of contact, and the effectiveness of the contact.

The first aspect of this section was who initiated most of the contact. This referred to the contact being made after the initial contact that started the mentoring relationship. That first contact was to be the mentor's responsibility and then after that, it was up to the pair to keep in contact with one another. In this questionnaire, the main theme was that both of the mentors and protégés made contact back and forth. There was a minor theme that if both of the members in the pair did not make contact back and forth then the mentor usually did all or most of the contacting. They did not give any elaborate reasons for these themes.

The level of the contact varied from pair to pair with contact occurring as little as four to five contacts within three months to contact on a daily basis. The three pairs who contacted each other the most all had similar or the same program areas. Two of these groups consisted of female pairs, and the pair with the most contact was a male and a female who worked in the same office and thus were able to communicate daily. The other pairs contacted each other around three to five times within the first three months of the program.

The type of contact also varied from pair to pair, but the common themes involved the pairs predominately using methods such as email, phone, face-to-face meetings, and planning and coordinating programs together. These were the most common methods of contact used between the mentoring pairs. Other methods of contact that were used, but not as frequently as the methods used above, included meeting for lunch and traveling to meetings or conferences together.

The participants were also asked how effective the contact was during this time period. Primarily participants felt that the contact was very effective. It was noted that the protégés gained great insight into programming success, they learned their way around the extension organization, and overall they felt that the time was well spent. All of the mentoring pairs that had time to invest into the mentoring relationship thought the contact was very effective. The pairs that had difficulty scheduling time to spend together did not find the contact effective because they had very little or no contact. Two of the pairs who participated in phase one could not make the time to meet and have effective contact because of scheduling conflicts or lack of interest in the program. Therefore, the participants who invested time into the relationship got effective results and the ones who had problems scheduling contact times did not have effective results.

Comments and suggestions for the program

Overall, there were comments that stated that the program was beneficial and how valuable the program could be for new faculty coming into the organization. There were also several suggestions to improve the program. The first suggestion was to make sure the CEDs are involved in the mentoring process. The mentors might need the CED's assurance that he or she can spend time mentoring in the program. It would also be beneficial if the mentor could communicate with the protégé's CED to assure him/her that the protégé is getting all the help that he or she needs. It was mentioned that the protégé should participate in a real-life activity with the mentor such as a program, local newspaper article, radio program, or a TV appearance. Other suggestions were to make sure the mentors were experienced faculty with more than an Extension Agent 1 rank. The more experienced faculty are better equipped to help the new faculty with problems, and the more seasoned faculty also have more insight as to how to handle issues that emerge. It was suggested that the pairs be in the same office and expertise area if possible. The last suggestion was to allow retired extension faculty who still live in the community to be mentors. Having a retired mentor in the same community would allow the protégé to have easier access to their mentor rather than having a mentor in another county. This would cut down on travel time, money and allow a willing retired extension faculty to continue helping the extension organization.

Phase Two

Phase two was conducted to collect data from the mentors and protégés about their perceptions on the mentoring relationship and locate the improvements that need to be made. Data was collected on the contact level and type, listening skills, the effectiveness and openness of communication, and any challenges or conflicts. They were asked to give suggestions of what could be done to avoid or eliminate any conflicts or challenges.

Contact and interaction

The level of contact between the pairs was measured by how often they made contact (weekly, every other week, monthly, every other month, none). The pairs ranged from weekly contact to no contact at all. The pair that was housed in the same office and had similar program areas was able to meet each week and sometimes even daily. Another pair that involved two females who were both family consumer science agents met every other week. Five of the pairs contacted each other monthly. Two pairs that consisted of only males contacted each other every other month. One pair had no contact at all. The mentor of this pair with no contact stated the protégé was contacted to set up meeting times, but the protégé had no involvement. This pair was made up of two females both having 4-H responsibilities.

The types of contact (consisting of phone, email, face-to-face, sitting in on meetings, co-planning an event, travel, and "other") the pairs were engaged in were also analyzed. Within the types of contact, the major theme was that the pairs used email, face-to-face meetings and phone calls equally. A few of the pairs used other methods such as attending meetings together, sharing a meal, shadowing a mentor's program, traveling together, and attending faculty meetings together. There were no common themes that linked these pairs together, other then the fact that they used the typical communication channels of contact as well as different methods.

Therefore, the only link between the frequency of contact and the variation of types of contact was limited to the pair that was housed in the same office. They were able to have frequent contact as well as a variation of types of contact.

Likert-type questions

This section of phase two questionnaire was based upon Likert-type questions. These questions were asked to gain a better understanding about the mentors' and protégés' opinions on their mentoring relationship. The Likert-scale ranges from 1 to 5, 5 being the most positive score and 1 being the least positive. Each question from their questionnaires was evaluated. The high and low score and the average of each of the questions were recorded to discover emerging themes. The findings from these Likert-scale questions are documented throughout this section and in Table 4-1.

The mentors were asked if the protégés sought help from them and the responses varied. The high score was a 4, the low was a 1, and the average was 2.5. It was clear that the protégés did not seek a great amount of help. In the case of the low score of 1, the mentor replied that the protégé did not seek any help at all. This particular protégé did not actually participate in the study even though she had agreed to participate.

Along the same line of thinking, the protégés were asked if they were satisfied with the level of contact with their mentors. It was obvious that they were satisfied because their high score was 5, the low was 4, and the average score was 4.5. Even though they did not contact them a great deal, they seemed happy with the level of contact.

The mentors were asked if they had been available to help their protégé and they considered themselves very available. The high score was 5, the low score was 4, and the average was 4.6.

The protégés were asked if their mentor was available when they needed help. The protégés were very pleased with the availability of their mentors. The high was 5, the low was 4, and the average was 4.6. This shows that the mentors were available when the protégés needed help as well as the congruency between the responses.

The next question the mentors were asked was if they had been able to help the protégés with their questions and concerns. The feedback was varied from a high of 5 to a low of 2 with an average of 3.8. The low was the mentor with the protégé that did not ask any questions; therefore, the mentor put a low score. If this low score had not been averaged among the other scores, the average score would have been 4.1.

The protégés were asked if their mentor had been knowledgeable in answering the questions they asked them. Most of the protégés were quite satisfied with a high score of 5, the low a 3, and the average a 4.5. On a whole, the mentors did a great job at fulfilling the needs of their protégés.

The next question was in regards to how effective the mentor thought the communication was between the two of them. The replies varied with the high being a 5, the low a 2 and the average a 3.6. The low score was because of the non-participating protégé that brought the average down, and if the low score was dropped the average would be 4.0.

When the protégés were asked the same question in regards to communication, the high was a 5, the low a 3, and the average a 4.2. This is similar to the mentor's average, so the communication has some room for improvement.

Communication was addressed again in regards to how open the mentor thought they were within the relationship. The high was 5, the low was 3, and the average was 4.2. With the low score dropped for the same reason as above, the average would be 4.4.

The protégés were then asked the same question. The high was 5, the low was 4, and the average was 4.4. The data showed that both the mentors and protégés were satisfied with their communication.

Listening skills were taught in the second mentor training program, so the protégés were asked if they thought their mentor had adequate listening skills. The data was collected on the same five-point Likert-scale as the questions above. The high was 5, the low was 4, and the average was 4.6. This clearly showed that the protégés were happy with the listening skills of their mentors.

Table 4-1. High, Low and Average Scores for the Likert-Type Questions

Questions	Mentors			Protégés		
	High	Low	Average	High	Low	Average
Has the protégé sought help? (Mentor)	4	1	2.5			
How satisfied are you on the level of contact with your mentor? (Protégé)				5	4	4.5
Has the mentor been available to help the protégé?	5	4	4.6	5	4	4.6
Has the mentor been knowledgeable in the areas the protégé has sought help in?	5	2	3.8	5	3	4.5
Have the mentor and protégé communicated effectively during the program?	5	2	3.6	5	3	4.2
Have both the mentor and protégé communicated openly with each other?	5	3	4.16	5	4	4.4
How adequate was the mentors listening skills?				5	4	4.6

Mentors perception of the positive aspects of the mentoring program

The mentors were asked to describe their perception on what they thought had gone particularly well in their mentoring relationship. Several positive aspects of the relationships were shared. One protégé presented his first paper at an annual conference and increased his confidence in speaking in front of people following the advice and guidance from the mentor. One mentor stated that the ideas shared went really well. One protégé participated in a program that the mentor was putting on and that was a beneficial to the protégé. One mentor commented on how easy going and receptive the protégé was and that made the whole relationship a pleasant one.

Challenges and obstacles within the mentoring program

The most common theme involving challenges was scheduling time to make contact. Time was a big obstacle that was expressed by most of the participants. They all stated they were busy, and it was hard to coordinate a time between the pair to meet and talk. The 4-H faculty, in particular, stated that there was a time issue and between summer camps, and other 4-H events, it was really hard to make time for mentoring.

Other challenges emerged as well, including natural disasters (hurricanes) that shifted the priorities of the participants from learning about the organization and their new jobs to just helping accommodate the people in the community during the hurricane season. Another challenge that two mentors encountered was that their protégés did not seek much help. One mentor tried to make contact, but other commitments always took precedence over the mentoring program. The other found that the protégé did not seek as much help because there was a seasoned faculty member in the same office as the protégé, and this person was able to give the protégé a lot of help. This resulted in the informal mentor being able to be a greater benefit than the formal mentor.

Encouraging interaction

The participants were asked what could be done to encourage interaction between the mentoring pairs. The participants that responded to this question stated that they were happy with their contact within their mentoring pair. However, they did have suggestions that they thought would help the pairs interact more throughout their mentoring relationship. It was mentioned again to have a face-to-face meeting at the beginning of the relationship to allow the pairs to meet and schedule meeting times that would fit both of their schedules. A common theme was to encourage the mentors and protégés at the beginning of the relationship to make a plan of when they would meet and how often they would have interaction with each other. Scheduling interaction in advance would give the pair a good base of meeting times that are in both of their schedules and then they could add to those times if they wanted too. There was a suggestion that a list be developed consisting of questions and topics that the pairs could talk about when they first meet to help break the ice.

They were also asked what else the DEDs and CEDs could do to encourage interaction. Several suggestions were mentioned. The first suggestion was that the DEDs and CEDs should try to pick pairs with similar personalities to increase the possibilities of the mentor and protégé wanting to interact and consequently build a strong mentoring relationship. The second suggestion was for the DEDs and CEDs to encourage the pairs to travel and participate in in-service trainings together. This would encourage interaction, and they could use travel time to discuss any questions or issues that have emerged. It was also suggested that the DEDs and CEDs encourage district-wide planning in order to allow the pairs the opportunity to work together on co-planning programs. The CEDs of the protégé could also be in contact with the mentor to let the mentor know what he or she is observing in regards to how the protégé is progressing during this transition period. This would give the mentor some insight on what to talk about if the protégé does not bring it up first. The fifth suggestion involved having the DEDs and the CEDs encourage the pairs to draw-up a meeting schedule to ensure that some planned meeting times would be scheduled in advance. The last suggestion was to make sure that the mentors are recognized on their evaluation for the effort they have put into the mentoring program.

Even though most of the pairs were happy with their interaction, they still saw some room for improvement. The major theme that ran through each of the questions regarding encouraging interaction was that the pairs needed to meet for the first time face-to-face. This would give them the opportunity to review and compare their schedules as well as set dates to meet with one another. They could also talk about how they would interact with one another other than face-to-face meetings.

Demographics of the participants

The mentors and the protégés who participated in phase two were all asked three demographic type questions. The first question asked about the agent's title and rank. The second question asked how many years they had been an extension agent and how many of those years were in Florida. Lastly, it was asked what the primary county makeup was (urban, suburban and rural).

The extension organization has a ranking system of one to four, one being a new agent and four being the most seasoned agent. This particular study consisted of three Extension Agent fours, one Extension Agent three, and two Extension Agent twos. The combined number of years of experience in extension was one-hundred and eighteen years with one-hundred of those years being in Florida. The mentor with the most years in extension had twenty-nine years and the one with the least had seven. The average amount of years between the mentors who participated in phase two evaluation was 19.1 years over all in extension and 16.6 years in Florida. Overall, these mentors had a significant amount of experience in Florida extension and extension as a whole. As to the mentor's county makeup, three of the mentors were from urban counties, one was from a rural county, and two were from a suburban county.

The protégés were asked these same demographic questions. Nine of the protégés were agent one's and one protégé was an agent two, but this agent had no experience in extension. This protégé was ranked a level two because of prior experience elsewhere. Only one protégé had a full year of experience and the other eight had ten months or less. One of those agents had less than a year of experience in another state and no experience in Florida. The county makeup was that four of the protégés worked in urban counties, three worked in rural counties, and two worked in suburban counties. It was found that the protégés were matched up to the mentors' county makeup very closely. This was to ensure that they would have similar clientele in their counties, which would allow the protégé to watch and learn from the mentor.

Table 4-2. Demographic Data for the Mentors and Protégés in the Pilot Mentoring Program

Demographics	Mentors	Protégé
Extension Agent Rank:		
EA 1		8
EA 2	2	1
EA 3	1	
EA 4	3	
Years in Service:		
Range	7 to 31 years	6 months to 1 year
Average	19.6	6.7 years
Gender:		
Male	4	5
Female	6	5
County Demographics:		
Rural	1	3
Suburban	2	2
Urban	3	4

Phase Three

Phase three involved collecting data on several different aspects of the mentoring program. The topics that were discussed in phase three were as follows: the selection period, the base skills and characteristics that a mentor should have, the pairing process, training/orientation, contact or interaction information, the participants' perceptions of the mentoring handbook, topics the protégés might need help with, incentives/rewards for mentors, issues and challenges, and the need for state coordinators. Each of these topics was discussed, but not all participant groups had input to offer for each of the topics. The participant groups that were used to collect data from each topic will be identified.

Selection process of mentors

All of the participant groups were used to collect data in regards to the selection process. The data was varied across the different groups, but for the most part, all of the groups thought it was appropriate that the DEDs and the CEDs work together to select the right mentors since they know all of the seasoned agents. The variation in data had to do with the DEDs and the CEDs. The mentors were weary of creating a pool of mentors that would be trained and ready to be paired with a protégé. They thought this could cause negative reactions from other seasoned agents who were not placed in the pool. In contrast, the CEDs thought that it would be great to create a pool of trained mentors and replenish the pool every so often. There was no talk of extra pay or elitism. Therefore, other than the varied data about having a mentoring pool, the rest of the data was very clear that the DEDs and the CEDs should make the final decision of who should be a mentor.

Base skills and characteristics a mentor should possess

The entire group of participants' input was used to collect data for this topic of the study. There were four dominate themes that emerged across the groups and then there were seven themes that were stated within each group. The major common themes were that the mentors had to be willing to be a mentor. These mentors had to have an interest in mentoring and helping new agents. A mentor should also be an open, sharing, and giving person. The smaller themes within each group varied among the individual groups. The DEDs had no additional input in regards to the base skills and characteristics a mentor should possess. The other groups listed more characteristics and skills. The CEDs thought the mentor should be a knowledgeable person who is successful in their own program. The mentors viewed a successful mentor as someone who was a good listener, patient, had enough time to help the protégés, and possessed a positive attitude. The protégés noted that an experienced extension agent that has been through the promotion process and has knowledge of the extension organization would be a good mentor.

Pairing

Each of the groups was used to collect the data for this section. There were several major themes that were the same for each group and there were minor themes that two groups suggested. The most common themes for all of the groups were as follows: to allow the DEDs and the CEDs to do the pairing, to pair them as soon as possible, to pair mentors and protégés with similar personalities and work styles, to pair them within a one-hour traveling radius to allow for more face-to-face contact, to pair them in the same county to decrease confusion about different district policies, and lastly, to make sure that the mentor and protégé are in similar types of counties.

Minor themes emerged as well. The DEDs and the mentors thought that a protégé should be paired up with a dominate mentor, but also be introduced to other people that could help them in each part of their jobs. Some faculty members might have split job responsibilities such as horticulture and 4-H; therefore, if the major mentor was a horticulture agent then the protégé with the split responsibilities would also need help in 4-H. This is to make sure the protégé gets help in each program area for which they are responsible.

Another minor theme that emerged was that the CEDs and the mentors thought it might be best to have the mentors and protégés in close, but different counties, so the protégé would get the perspective of another office. Overall, the four groups had similar ideas in regards to the pairing aspects of the program.

Training and orientation

This aspect of the study was broken up into two parts, the training sessions for the mentors and the orientation for the protégés. Data from the DEDs, CEDs, and mentors was collected for the two mentor training sessions. The protégés were only questioned in regards to their orientation session because no other participants were involved in this orientation session.

First of all, there were several common themes that emerged from the three groups in regards to the mentor training. It was clear that the training session was needed to give an overview of the program and specifically state the guidelines and objectives of the program. It was also said that the basic and successful principals of mentoring should be shared with the mentors along with communication information. In addition, it was made clear that the trainings should be short and no travel should be involved. If they have to put extra time into traveling to training programs, then they would be less likely to do it.

To help with this, distance education was recommended. They thought the Polycom session was better than travel, but it was sometimes difficult when technical problems happened. A common theme that everyone seemed to like was using web modules. The same information could be put on the web and as the person gets picked to be a mentor, they will have a timeline to read through the information, and if they have any questions they can call the state coordinators or the DED. This would allow the mentor to do this on their own time and they would not have to travel.

For the protégé orientation program, the protégés stated that the orientation was needed and beneficial. They said it was great to be able to learn the overview and guidelines of the program. They also said that the conference call was a good method to utilize.

Mentoring handbook

Both the mentors and protégés were asked questions about the mentoring handbook that they received at the beginning of the program. The data from these two groups conflicted. The mentors really liked the handbook, but the protégés did not like it at all. The mentors thought that the books were very useful. They thought it was a good starting point, it provided useful guidelines, it was a good overview, and they really thought the bio-sheet was a useful aspect in order to gain insight on their protégé and what he/she wanted to get out of the program.

The protégés had totally different views on the hand book. They thought the book was too formal, and the information was too general and basic. They wanted more specific guidelines that would help them walk through what they needed to do. They stated that they did not know how to start the mentoring relationship. If they had a specific guideline that would help them know what to do first, the pairs could talk about it, and then move to the next section. This could be a weekly or monthly meeting; it would all depend on the pair.

Contact and interaction

The mentors and protégés were both questioned on the aspect of contact. Both of the groups had the same comments about the initial contact, and they agreed with the recommended contact levels. They all thought the initial contact should be made within the first couple of weeks (as soon as possible) and the first contact should be face-to-face if possible. The participants gave recommendations such as the protégé going over to the mentor's office for the day or just meeting for an informal lunch. This is a good time just to get to know each other. This is also a time to sit down and schedule several meeting and contact times.

The mentors and protégés both said that the recommended contact time in the handbook was good, but that should just be the minimum amount suggested. The participants said they used email and phone calls frequently, but they also benefited from participating in programs with their mentor and meeting face-to-face with them. They stated contact should be more than the recommended level because if you don't communicate frequently, then the program will not be as effective. It was found that the level of experience the protégé had before they began with extension affected the amount of contact that he/she thought was needed. Therefore, if the protégé is new to extension, he or she might need more help than if he/she has already worked for extension.

Topics the mentors and protégés can work on together

Throughout the program, feedback was received from the mentors and protégés in regards to developing a list of prime topics to discuss. If the pair had a list, it would help initiate conversation. Therefore, in this phase, the CEDs, mentors, and protégés were asked questions about what would be the most beneficial for the pairs to work on together.

This first list of topics includes topics that the protégés would like to work on with their mentors.

- Creating a system to file their years work, so they can effectively report on their work for the year and plan their work for the next year (i.e. help with their ROA and POW)
- Knowing how to work with their volunteers so that each person's talents and abilities are maximized.
- Developing and planning programs.
- Meeting the important people in the county, and how to develop working relationships with them.

This next list is what the CEDs and mentors have noticed from their experience that the protégés may need (some of the topics are the same as above).

- Programming skills
- Technical knowledge in the assigned area of expertise
- Balancing work (meetings, office work, clientele, programming, evenings and weekends, learning to say no)
- Balancing work and family
- Learning the Florida Extension System
- Advice on how to be flexible in the extension organization
- Organizing their work to help them with their ROAs and POWs
- Pointing them in the right direction to find the information they need
- How to respond to clientele effectively
- Learning their roles in terms of academic scholarship
- Setting up an advisory committee

- Let them know what tasks to begin with upon arrival to their new career
- Meeting the important people in the county and how to develop working relationships with them

The protégés were questioned on what the mentor did to make the mentoring experience more productive. It was mentioned that frequent emails, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings allowed them to have the necessary interaction. One protégé mentioned that his/her mentor would call about every other week just to check-up and make sure everything was going well and to see if any help was needed. Other protégés benefited greatly from helping with the mentors' programs and getting hands-on experience. Others found it nice to sit down and eat lunch together. One protégé found it comforting that the mentor had common personal interests, and they were able to connect not only on a working level, but also on a personal level. This extra conversation made it more personal. These various aspects of the relationship were different in every pair, but they each thought it helped their mentoring relationship.

Incentives and rewards for mentors

All of the participants were asked questions about what kind of incentives or rewards mentors should receive for their mentoring role and to entice other seasoned agents to want to mentor in the future. There were some major common themes across the participant groups as well as some varied feedback from various groups.

The first major common theme is that all of the participants thought that mentors should want to be mentors simply to help out and not because there are desirable incentives attached to the role. They were all in agreement that there should not be any money or salary incentives. Each group, including the mentors, thought that being a mentor was in and of itself very satisfying and flattering. Therefore extra incentives are not needed.

There were several minor themes as to how the mentors should be shown that they were appreciated for their help. Each of the participant groups mentioned recognizing them at the FAEP meeting and maybe simply giving them a certificate. But the mentors did note that they did not need another certificate. The CEDs and mentors stated that being recognized and commended by their DED and CED is very important in getting satisfaction out of the program. The DEDs mentioned paying for professional development opportunities that the mentors are interested in to show their appreciation.

Another topic that was somewhat varied was the topic of whether or not the mentoring task should be a part of the mentors POW (plan of work). The CEDs and the mentors were in favor of this because this mentoring task would not just be another task added to an agents' busy schedule, but it would be an integral part of their job. It was mentioned that on the new reporting system, there should be a box to allow them to report this activity. This would allow the mentors to be able to do a better job at planning for mentoring instead of it being a secondary task. Some of the DEDs stated that if this is put into the plan of work then the mentors would drop their least favorite task and do mentoring instead. All of the participants stated that this is a great task that would be good to use in their promotion and tenure packet.

Challenges and obstacles

All of the participants were asked questions about what kind of issues or challenges they encountered. The data was very consistent with what kind of issues and challenges occurred during this program, and there was advice to help avoid encountering issues in the future. The first major theme was that time was an issue with the mentors and protégés. They were not able to meet as frequently as they would have liked because they were always busy. This problem was common with all of the pairs. The 4-H agents reported that during the summers it was almost impossible to meet because of all of the camps and other activities. The hurricanes made it very difficult for the pairs to meet as well since communication modes were out of order and travel was difficult. They stated that they wanted to meet more frequently, but could not find the time.

On the other hand, there was one mentor who reported that the protégé did not want to meet because he/she had prior experience, and did not feel as if the mentor's help was needed. Another mentor reported that although he and his protégé met and had contact throughout the program, the protégé had an informal mentor in the same office which decreased the need for the formal mentor. There were some protégés who reported that their mentors were too busy to meet when the protégé needed to meet. Lastly, in one mentoring pair, the mentor dropped out three months before the program was complete.

The DEDs stated that the training programs were a great benefit to everyone, but they need to be scheduled several months earlier than what the programs were scheduled during this course. The Polycom technical problems needed to be worked out and the programs needed to be more interactive to get the participants' attention.

The CEDs suggested some issues that need to be addressed in the future, such as matching pairs with the same personalities and similar types of counties. They stated that the more similar the counties are, the more effective the pair will be.

The DEDs and the CEDs both mentioned that having mentors and protégés in two different counties could cause a problem because of the difference in how each county operates. Therefore, the protégés and mentors need to be aware of the differences. The protégé's CED and mentor need to be on the same page in regards to the mentor giving specific advice on topics such as flex time and evaluation procedures.

The DEDs brought up an issue that could be a problem in the future, which is the lack of communication between the CEDs, DED, mentor, and protégé represented in each pair. They mentioned that when a new faculty member is hired, the DEDs should talk with both the potential mentor's CED and the potential protégé's CED in order to ensure all parties are in agreement with the mentor selection and pairing process. They stated that everyone should be in agreement with the mentor and the pairing process.

Roles of the state coordinators, DEDs, and CEDs

As far as the role of the state coordinators, DEDs, and CEDs the data was very clear in areas, but in other areas minimal amounts of data were collected to be able to report any findings. Throughout the study, one common theme emerged from each group of participants. This theme was that the DEDs and the CEDs should select all of the mentors and make all of the pairing selections rather than a state coordinator.

One issue that was brought up between the DEDs was the issue of who would take care of any problems between the mentoring pairs. Some of the DEDs thought that the problems should be taken care of by someone outside of the chain of command, meaning the DEDs and CEDs should not get involved in problems unless they become out of control. They feel that the pair would feel more comfortable going to a person who is housed in the Agricultural Education Department or in the IFAS Personnel Office. This would prevent the DEDs or CEDs from getting involved. The protégés were also asked how they thought problems should be solved if they could not solve them between each other, and they also thought that it would be best to go to a third party person. This would enable them to feel more comfortable with talking about the problem, and they would not feel like the DED or the CED would be looking down on them. In contrast to what was stated above, there were a couple of the DEDs that thought that everything should be taken care of by the DED in the district, and there should not be a third party handling the problems.

The CEDs brought up a point that the Florida Extension System needs an overall general approach to mentoring. The CEDs felt that the state should have a basic mentoring philosophy, rules, training system, and expectations. Then the program needs to be implemented at the district level where all of the selection of mentors and pairing takes place. Possibly, one of the DEDs could be in charge of the state-wide mentoring program, so there would not have to be a new position made at the state level.

This is the extent of the discussion of what the state level coordinators should do or not do. It was made very clear from each participant group that there needs to be a unified state-wide mentoring program with one set of rules, guidelines, training sessions, and expectations. This would enable the UF/IFAS Extensions Systems to have a consistent mentoring approach in regards to mentoring newly hired county faculty. The state wide mentoring program would ensure that every new county faculty member would receive the same quality mentoring experience.

General comments

At the conclusion of the focus groups, two of the participants expressed their thoughts about the program. One comment made by a DED was that the program is needed and that it would be good to have a structured mentoring program in place. It was also mentioned by a mentor that the institutionalization and formalization would be beneficial because mentoring has been going on for a while, but it has not been recognized by all.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the research of the pilot mentoring program. The benefits and values of mentoring that were perceived by the participants were documented. Also the findings of the participants' perceptions of guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program were documented as well.

CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, a brief overview of each of the three objectives and methodology is explained followed by a brief discussion of the key findings of the study and a discussion and conclusion section for each of the objectives. Throughout the discussions, there were recommendations to help provide guidance for the implementation of an effective mentoring program for new employees. These recommendations could also be used to implement a state-wide mentoring program for UF/IFAS Extension Systems.

Objectives of the Study

The overall purpose of this study was to determine how a mentoring program could benefit new extension employees, mentors and the extension organization as a whole. Determining effective guidelines and procedures for a formal UF/ IFAS mentoring program was also a key objective within the study. There were three significant objectives in this study:

1. To document the benefits and values of mentoring to new extension faculty.
2. To document the benefits and values of mentoring to seasoned extension agents.
3. To determine guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon results from this pilot program.

Methodology

This study focused on the participants' perceptions on the benefits and values that the mentors and protégés received during the pilot mentoring program. In addition to the benefits and values, the study focused on the participants' recommendations on developing guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program. There were two data collection procedures that were used to collect information for the three objectives. The first method was formative evaluation questionnaires which consisted of open-ended questions that were asked in order to obtain the participants' opinions of and recommendations for the program. The second method that was used was the summative evaluation focus groups. This method provided the study with depth and breadth of the participants' perceptions. The data collected from these two methods helped the researcher detect common themes that the participants stated throughout the study.

Key Findings

The findings of this study have shown that the protégés have benefited from the comfort and encouragement that they have received from the mentors as they came into the UF/IFAS Extension organization. These protégés also gained knowledge from their mentors in numerous areas within this transition period such as learning how to plan and provide educational programs, developing an advisory committee and also learning about the extension organization as a whole. Other topics learned included how to get travel money, learning about flextime and other information that a new faculty member needs to know to be able to function in the UF/IFAS Extension Organization.

The mentors benefited from the mentoring program by gaining the personal satisfaction of sharing knowledge and comforting a new faculty member.

Several guidelines, procedures and recommendations were also stated. First of all, it was found that the DEDs and the CEDs were the most appropriate people to select the mentors and do the pairing. Participants wanted mentors that had a true desire and time to mentor, and they wanted pairing to happen within the first few weeks of starting the new job.

The training and orientation sessions were seen as a great benefit to the participants. The participants thought these programs were very helpful in getting everyone on the same page in regards to the structure of the program, the roles of all the participants and the expectations of the participants. The preferred method of delivering training and orientation sessions was distance education methods such as web-modules and conference calls that would decrease travel time and expenses.

The training handbook was viewed as helpful by the mentors and the protégés. They felt that the handbook could be made more helpful if the activities log sheet was not mandatory. This log sheet seemed to make the mentoring relationships more formal. It was also suggested that the list of activities in the handbook be placed on a timeline so the mentors and protégés know when to talk about certain subjects or topics throughout the mentoring relationships.

The participants viewed the contact and interaction between the mentoring pairs to be sufficient and beneficial. They thought that the guidelines in the handbook for contact was helpful, but they would suggest meeting more often because they felt that even greater contact would make the relationship more beneficial.

Incentives and rewards were viewed by the participants as being a part of the program that should be considered, but not emphasized. They felt like the mentors should want to mentor without receiving rewards or incentives. The participants felt that if there were too much emphasis placed upon rewards and incentives then the wrong type of mentors would be attracted to the program. The participants felt the mentors needed to be recognized, but in small ways such as recognizing them at the statewide FAEP meeting, allowing them to include their mentoring task on their POW, and also paying for the mentors to participate in a professional development opportunities of their choice.

It was found that there should be a key person at the state level to provide leadership and structure for a mentoring program to ensure the consistency and structure that would benefit each new faculty member hired into UF/IFAS Extension. This person would also be a third party to address issues that may arise between the mentoring pairs.

Conclusions and Discussions

Objective One

Objective one was to document the benefits and values of mentoring to new extension faculty.

Each of the four participant groups were surveyed during phase one and phase three to determine the benefits and values the new extension faculty gained from the program. From these two phases, common themes emerged that the participants benefited and gained value from the mentoring program. It was noted that the protégés in this program were very happy to have a mentor that was designated just for them, who was not a supervisor such as a DED or CED. First of all, having a mentor that was designated for the protégé decreased the stress of the protégé having to find a person they could trust to talk to about their problems, questions, and concerns. Secondly, the protégés felt more comfortable going to someone who was not a supervisor because sometimes the protégé might feel uncomfortable going to their supervisor to talk about something they do not understand. The protégés expressed that there were questions they needed to ask someone, but they felt like their supervisors would look down on them for asking such a simple or uneducated question.

The two main benefits that the protégés gained was the comfort they received from having someone to talk to and also the valuable knowledge gained from their mentors. It was documented that protégés gained knowledge in areas such as: learning how to find and build relationships with important clientele in the community, learning how to manage their volunteers, learning how the extension systems work, learning technical information about their program area, learning how to develop an advisory committee, and learning how to create systems to report on the ROA and POW more effectively.

The only negative comment from this program was in the case of the protégé that did not want to meet with the mentor because she thought she had enough experience and did not need any help. Therefore, since the protégé did not participate, she received no benefit or value from the program. Overall, the participants (protégés, mentors, and CEDs) perceived that the protégés benefited and gained a great amount of value from this program.

The findings from this study were in congruence with Zimmer and Smith. The protégés benefited from the vision and support of being paired with a seasoned agent (Zimmer & Smith, 1992). The findings were also similar to Viator's work. The protégés gained valuable knowledge about the extension organization that enabled them to function productively in the extension organization because they were more familiar with the organization (Viator, 2000).

Objective Two

Objective two was to document the benefits and value of mentoring to seasoned extension agents.

The data for objective two was collected from the CEDs, the mentors, and the protégés during the third and final phase. The results were positive overall. It was noted in the data that first and foremost the mentors gained great personal satisfaction by being able to comfort and share knowledge with their protégé. They not only gained personal satisfaction, they also gained fresh new perspectives on the way they viewed extension and the programs that they conducted. Most of the time, new faculty members are excited and enthusiastic about learning about the extension organization and their program area; therefore, they bring fresh new ideas with them.

This mentoring partnership also provided benefits for the mentors by giving them the ability to meet and get to know someone new in their program area. The connections between the mentors and protégés could possibly lead to working relationships where they could conduct multi-county programs in the future.

Mentors were able to gain recognition from their supervisors for being a mentor. The mentors will also benefit from being a mentor because as they apply for promotions or have their annual evaluation, serving in this role will be looked upon favorably in their ROA and promotion packet.

The findings from this study were similar to Russell and Adams because it was found that the mentors gained personal satisfaction as a result of helping new faculty members through their first year in the extension organization. The mentors also felt rejuvenated by working with a younger, more enthusiastic protégé (Russell and Adams, 1997).

Objective Three

Objective three was to determine guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon results from this pilot program.

Data for the third objective was collected in each of the three phases. This data was also collected from all of the participants in each phase. The perspective of the participants provided a clear view of what was effective and what needed to be changed to make the program more effective for everyone. In this objective, the major aspects of the program as well as the major issues and challenges that occurred throughout the program were examined. The main aspects of the program were: selection of mentors, pairing of the mentors and protégés, training/orientation contact and interaction, the mentoring handbook, incentives and rewards, and the role of the state coordinators, DEDs, and CEDs.

Selection process

The first major aspect was the selection process of the mentors. The participants were all in agreement that the DEDs and the CEDs should work together to pick all of the mentors because they know the seasoned agents the best and they also know who would make the best quality mentors.

There were different thoughts of how and when the mentors should be chosen. Some thought that a group of mentors should be selected once or twice a year and then trained as a group, creating a pool of trained mentors that could be called upon throughout the year. Some DEDs did not like that idea because they thought this pool of mentors could be perceived as an elite group, superior to the other faculty. Other DEDs thought that the mentors should be chosen and trained on an “as-needed basis” when the new faculty are hired. This method could be solved according to the training method that is chosen. The training aspect will be discussed later in the section.

All of the participants were asked what traits, characteristics, and skills the mentors’ should possess. It was evident that all of the participants wanted a mentor who had a desire to be a mentor; therefore, the protégés wanted a mentor who would make the mentoring relationship a priority.

All of the participant groups also described an open, knowledgeable, and caring person as a good mentor candidate. Every faculty member is different and there is no one set of criteria that can be attached to the selection process of the mentoring program. However, throughout this study, it was evident that the senior faculty members who had been successful in their programming were interested in mentoring new faculty.

The findings from the selection aspect of the program were in congruence with Eby, McManus, Simon and Russell. The findings from this study and theirs' found that it was important to select a mentor with the desire to mentor as well as someone with adequate program area and organizational knowledge to share with the protégé (Eby, McManus, Simon and Russell, 2000).

Pairing process

The pairing process is a very important part of the mentoring program because if the pairs are not matched correctly, the protégé is not going to benefit from the program.

It was decided by the participants that it was best for the DEDs and the CEDs to pair the mentors and protégés because they have already interviewed and become acquainted with the new employee. There was some early discussion about letting the protégés have a chance to pick their own mentor, but by the end of the study most of the participants were in favor of the DEDs and the CEDs picking a mentor for the protégé.

Findings from this study show that allowing the DEDs and CEDs to match the pairs within the first couple of weeks is the most effective way to go about this process. This gives the protégé a designated person to talk to if they have any problems or concerns.

For the most part, the mentors and protégés were happy with their pairs. It was evident that the pairs who had similar personalities, geographical areas, program areas, and county types were better able to focus on similar issues and concerns. These were the main points that continued to be emphasized relating to having an effective mentoring pair.

There was discussion about whether the mentors and protégés should be in the same county. In this study, the one pair that was in the same county had a positive experience because they were able to meet on a day-to-day basis. This is an issue that will have to be determined on a case-by-case base because the pair in this case proved that having a pair within the same county can be a great success. However, the protégé does not get a different perspective of how another county conducts programs, but in this case the amount of one-on-one interaction the protégé had with the mentor was more productive than having a mentor outside of the county. Just as in the selection process, there can be guidelines and recommendations on how to pair the mentors and protégés, but each pair has to be examined individually to determine what will be the best fit for the protégé.

The pairing process is not an exact science; it is more of an art to try to match the pairs to get the very best results from the program. The main aspects that have emerged which have also been cited in the mentoring literature are to match people with similar personalities, similar counties, and program areas within an hour distance of each other.

Similar findings can be seen in the literature from Zimmer and Smith in regards to pairing process. It was found that the mentors and protégés must have comparable personalities, program areas, and be close in proximity to each other. It was also found that the pairs should be matched within the first couple of weeks of hire (Zimmer and Smith, 1992).

Training and orientation

Overall, the training/orientation programs for the mentors and protégés were perceived as being a benefit because they brought everyone to the same point of understanding and clearly stated the expectations, guidelines, and procedures that need to be followed within a mentoring program.

Although the materials to help educate the protégés and mentors on the mentoring process were perceived to be very beneficial, there was some criticism. A seasoned mentor thought the information was too broad and that some of the more seasoned participants might have already known the information. Another criticism was that participants thought the training programs should be more interactive to foster an environment of active learning. The final criticism was that the Polycom method had some technical problems that need to be worked out before providing the training in this manner again. Therefore, with some simple changes, the training program can be more effective.

The first training/orientation program for the mentors and protégés was appreciated, and it was said to be time well spent. Nonetheless, throughout the study from the first phase to the third phase, the participants' perceptions varied about how the first training/orientation program should be delivered. In the first phase, the majority of the participants wanted group training with the mentors and protégés to start the program together, but by the end of the third phase the participants wanted to utilize distance education technologies such as Polycom, conference calls, or web modules as much as possible because of time constraints.

Therefore throughout the study the participants realized that although a face-to-face meeting seemed to be the most enjoyable way to meet, distance education was the most convenient way so that the participants could spend more time making arrangements to make contact and meet with their protégé or mentor.

By the third phase, the participants made it clear that distance education was the delivery method of choice. There were many discussions about the delivery method. The participants wanted a method where they did not have to travel; therefore, the suggestion of having the training session on a web module was mentioned. This method of delivery was very interesting to the participants because it could solve several perceived problems. First of all, it could solve the problem of whether to train the mentors on an as-needed basis or train them all at once. If the web modules were used for training, mentors could be chosen throughout the year and they could train themselves. This would also allow the seasoned mentors who were already knowledgeable about the information being taught to focus on only the information they need. Most importantly, this is a very convenient method that could be done on personal computers whenever it is convenient to them.

The protégés thought that an orientation program was needed, and they were satisfied with the conference call method that was used with them. It was also mentioned that this first training session could be via conference call and web modules. This would allow the participants to learn on their own time and also have the conference call to clear up any misunderstandings or ask any questions that they needed to ask. Overall, the training for the mentors and protégés went well. The information that was shared was well received and suggestions were made to be able to improve the delivery methods.

There was congruency between the findings in this study and the findings in Moir & Bloom in regards to what should be addressed in the training and orientation sessions.

The similarities conveyed that it was beneficial to share the vision, roles of the participants, guidelines, and procedures of the program to all of the participants to ensure that everyone is well-informed (Moir & Bloom, 2003).

The mentoring handbook

The mentoring handbook was issued for all of the mentors and protégés in the pilot mentoring program. The mentoring handbook was an interesting issue because the mentors thought that it was a very helpful tool to make sure they were staying within the guidelines and following the procedures. The protégés, however, perceived the handbook to be troublesome because they felt that logging all of the activity within their mentoring relationship was a tedious task, and this made it more like a chore rather than simply having a relationship with their mentor.

The protégés explained exactly what they wanted instead of a mentoring handbook. They explained that they wanted a very detailed task-list that they could sit down with their mentors and discuss. The protégés stated that they did not know where to start, so a handbook that clearly stated the topics would be beneficial. They thought that having a timeline with tasks that should be completed throughout the first year would be a great benefit. The mentor and protégé could work on this task list throughout the year to ensure that the protégé is comfortable in the tasks that they need to accomplish.

Because the mentors liked the handbook, they should still receive it while the protégés receive a book of procedures, guidelines, and other information that will enhance the relationship. They need to be assured that logging activity is optional. This would eliminate the protégés feeling unnecessary stress from an unwanted task. The protégés should be informed that the handbook is simply for a reference if they feel they need some guidance. It should not be a hindrance to the relationship. In addition to the handbook, a task-list should be developed and given to the mentors and protégés to work on throughout the year.

Contact and interaction

Contact and interaction between the mentors and protégés helps determine the effectiveness of the mentoring pair. The contact recommendations that were suggested to the participants were perceived to be adequate. The contact level of the groups appeared to be above the recommended level. The participants thought that the contact recommendations were good for a minimum level of contact, but they stated that the mentors and protégés should meet more than the recommended level for optimal effectiveness. Overall, the participants were happy with the amount and types of contact that they received during the mentoring program.

It was said throughout the study that the first initial contact needs to be face-to-face to start the relationship off with personal interaction. This would build a solid foundation for the rest of the relationship. The initial contact period of the mentoring process is a time when the pair can plan other contact times throughout the year. If a time is already scheduled in the calendar to meet with the mentor or protégé, it helps the participant make the relationship a higher priority. After this first initial interaction, it was commented that frequent contact is vital to keep the relationship growing and helping the protégé with their growth and development.

For the most part, the participants were happy with the interaction they had between their pairs. A lot of positive feedback was given from the protégés in regards to how much they learned and grew from the contact they had with their mentors. Protégés reported having a variety of contact such as phone calls, emails, face-to-face meetings, traveling, and programming together. It was said that email and phone were used the most because of convenience, but the protégés also benefited from the hands-on learning from helping their mentors with programming.

There were some problems in the contact and interaction area as well. Extension faculty members are very busy people, and it may be hard for them to break away from their work to meet with their protégés or mentors. Time was the biggest factor that affected the pairs in a negative way. That is why the participants recommended that the mentors and protégés schedule times at the very beginning of the relationship to be able to meet or talk on a regular basis. The mentoring program must be high on the participant's priority list, otherwise the contact and interaction between the pairs will be neglected. There were also problems with participants who had no desire to participate in the program. This is why it's so important to make sure the mentor and the protégé want to be a part of the program. If one of the participants does not want to be a part of the program, then the program is going to be ineffective and a waste of time for both of them. Therefore, it is best to make sure both participants have a strong desire to be a part of the program. It is the DEDs and CEDs responsibility to determine if the employees should participate in the program based upon their true level of interest and intent.

Contact is a vital part of the mentoring process. It is very important for the development of the new faculty. The more frequent communication and interaction was between the mentor and protégé, the more benefits the mentoring pair received. This was found in this study and some of the literature (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998).

Incentives and rewards for mentors

The issue of how to reward mentors to encourage participation in the program was very clear after evaluating the data in the study. It was clear from each participant group that the mentors should not be given incentives to make them want to be a mentor. It was evident that the mentors should want to help out and not have to be bribed to be a mentor. The protégés want mentors who naturally have a desire to help develop them into productive faculty members. The mentors agreed. They mentioned that if a mentor has to have a reward or incentive, then he/she is not participating for the right reason. They all felt if monetary incentives or rewards were given it could attract the wrong types of people. Nonetheless, the participants did say that they feel like the mentors should be rewarded or recognized in some small ways to let them know that their help was greatly appreciated.

There were two incentives suggested for the mentors. The participants thought that simply recognizing the mentors at the statewide FAEP meeting would be a fine recognition. It was also suggested by a DED that the extension organization pay for a particular professional development activity in which the mentor would like to participate. These suggestions may not be incentive enough to cause them to want to become a mentor, but the recognition would show the mentors that they are appreciated.

Along with the recognition and help with a professional development activity, it was also mentioned by most of the participants that the mentors should be able to include their participation in their POW and ROA. This would be a reward in itself because they would not have to add this extra activity to their regular work, but they could make mentoring a part of their POW and effectively plan and schedule for the mentoring task. As mentioned above, the time issue is one of the biggest problems in trying to make contact with the protégés, and the ability to make mentoring part of their POW would help with the time constraints.

From the findings in the study, the mentors need to be able to add this mentoring task to their POW so they can plan to spend time with the protégé and not just fit this mentoring program into their schedule when they can. There were some concerns about the POW. Some of the DEDs thought that if the mentors were able to put the mentoring task on their POW, they would begin to drop their least favorite activities to do mentoring. However, if these are trusted seasoned faculty members, they should be trusted to choose what is of least priority on their list and drop it in order to add a much needed task. If these mentors cannot be trusted to adapt their own priorities and task-lists, then perhaps they should not be trusted to be a mentor. Faculty members are taught to say no to tasks that they feel they cannot devote adequate time to, and if they are asked to add another task to their list of things they should have the right to eliminate something else.

The participants of the program were weary of incentives or rewards because they did not want the wrong types of people to be attracted to the task. They were not against offering recognition or professional development opportunities, but they wanted to ensure that the wrong people did not get attracted to the program because of incentives and rewards.

There were similarities in the findings of this study and the literature of Sweeny in regards to the common theme that mentors did not want to receive rewards or incentives. Successful mentors choose to take on this role primarily so they can help new faculty develop into productive faculty members and co-workers (Sweeny, 2003).

The roles of the state coordinators, DEDs, and CEDs

The coordination of the mentoring program is very important. Within this mentoring program, the DEDs selected the mentors and paired the mentors and protégés together. The state coordinators were responsible for the overall coordination and leadership of the program. The state coordinators developed the guidelines, procedures, training curriculum, and coordinated the training and orientation sessions. Additionally, the state coordinators were available if any of the participants had a problem or issue in regards to the mentoring program. Throughout the study, there was some discussion about who should continue taking on these tasks.

As noted earlier, it was mentioned that the DEDs and CEDs would be a good pair to work together in the mentor selection process as well as the pairing. As each mentor is picked on an as-needed basis, the DED and CED of that mentor should be in agreement on the decision in choosing that mentor. The same procedure should be used each time a pair is placed together. The DED and the CED of the mentor and protégé should approve of the pair before it is made.

The participants in this study made it clear that they liked the statewide uniformity and structure of the mentoring program. This assured them that all of the mentors were trained, and all the protégés went through the same orientation. Consequently, since everyone was in agreement, they were better prepared to develop effective mentoring relationships.

In order to allow this program to continue to be a formalized statewide program, there needs to be consistent statewide training curriculum, procedures, guidelines and expectations. These aspects of the program can be done at the state level, whether the position is in the Agricultural Education Department or in the IFAS Personnel Office. It was evident that the overall structure and training system needs to be in place and within a structure where the DEDs and CEDs will select the mentors and match the pairs.

Another idea that was presented in the CED focus group was that one of the DEDs could take over the responsibility of overseeing the statewide mentoring program. This could potentially be a good idea, but that particular DED would have to have the time and desire to oversee the program for the entire state. Regardless of who coordinates the program or where this person is housed (Agricultural Education Department or in the IFAS Personnel Office), there needs to be a key point person at the state level to coordinate this statewide mentoring program.

Another issue that was brought up in regards to the role of the DEDs, CEDs or state coordinators is who a mentoring pair should go to if a problem occurs between the pair. Most of the participants stated that they wanted to go to a third-party person who was not one of their supervisors such as their DED or CED because they would not feel comfortable talking about their problems with them. They feel like the DEDs or CEDs might look down on them because they can't make the mentoring relationship work without help. Therefore, there is a need for a state coordinator who is not a DED or CED. Only two of the DEDs said that the problems within the mentoring pairs should be handled within the district by the DEDs. However, if the mentors and protégés do not feel comfortable, this could be a major problem. Additionally, there is the possibility that the pair could choose not to continue contact with their protégé or mentor instead of talking to the DED or CED, and then neither the mentor nor protégé would benefit from the program. Therefore, a state-level coordinator who is not in an administration position or a DED or CED would be in the best position to handle the issues within the pairs and the overall structure of the program.

Each of the roles of the people involved in the mentoring program should be clearly defined to ensure that jobs will get done properly. In order to eliminate the possibility of confusion and miscommunication, the roles of each of the participants in the program should be clearly stated. In addition to making sure that the roles are clearly defined, the right people need to fill the positions in order to ensure that everyone is comfortable with the lines of communication. For instance, in the study, it was clear that the protégés wanted a mentor who was not a supervisor of theirs such as a DED or CED; and as stated above, the majority of the participants wanted a third party to talk to should the need arise. The right people need to be in place, and all of the roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined to decrease the possibility of miscommunication.

Summary

Throughout this study many benefits were discovered and documented among the participants. Recommendations and suggestions in regards to guidelines, procedures and expectations of the mentoring program were also expressed and documented. Based upon the results of this study, I feel that this pilot mentoring program was successful in collecting data for the three study objectives. The data from this pilot mentoring program provides a solid foundation for a future statewide mentoring program for UF/IFAS Extension.

Recommendations

Several recommendations were discovered throughout this pilot mentoring program. These recommendations are divided into each aspect of the mentoring program including; the selection process, the pairing process, training/orientation, contact and interaction, the handbook, incentives and rewards, and the role of the state coordinators, DEDs and CEDs.

Selection Process

- Allow the DEDs and CEDs to work together to pick the most qualified and willing mentors since they know the personalities and type of work the mentors do.

- Select mentors on an "as-needed" basis as the new faculty are hired.

Basic Characteristics of a Mentor

- A person must have the desire to mentor. There are many county faculty members who are great in their subject area, but they do not have a desire to help new faculty. If they are pushed to be a mentor, most of the time they will agree, but then they will only do the minimal amount of work within the program which will not be much of a benefit to the protégé.

- A person must have technical and organizational knowledge. The mentor will not only need to know the subject matter, but they will also need to know about the extension organization because the new faculty could potentially have many questions.

- The person must be experienced, someone who has already been through the tenure and promotion process. This is so that the person adequately knows all about the organization and what the protégé will have to do in preparation for the promotion and tenure process.

- Necessary interpersonal characteristics include: openness, caring, patient, successful in their own programming, good listener, and positive/upbeat attitude.

Pairing Process

- The DEDs and CEDs should work as a team to pair the mentors and protégés.

- There should be clear communication between all three supervisors involved with the pair. This includes the DED of the district and the CED of both the mentor and protégé. All three of the supervisors should know about the pairing before the pair is made.

- The pairing should occur within the first couple of weeks of work. Give the new faculty a day or two to find everything in the office and meet everyone and then the CED or the DED will tell them about the mentoring program. The mentor should then be contacted to give them the clearance to make the first contact with the protégé.

- The mentor and protégé should be no more than one hour in distance away from each other. The closer the pair is in location, the greater the opportunity to interact.

- The counties in which the mentors and protégé are in should be of the same demographics (example: pair a mentor in a rural county with a protégé in a rural county). Rural, urban, and suburban county faculty all deal with different issues and challenges therefore pairing the mentors and protégés according to county demographics, will be more beneficial, so they will be dealing with similar issues and concerns.

- Mentors and protégés should be paired with similar personalities and work styles to increase the likelihood of them working well together.

Training and Orientation

- Conduct training via distance education to save travel time and cost.

- Train the mentors on a case-by-case basis.

- The training should be conducted via two methods such as web modules and the phone. All the training material should be available as web modules, and as the mentors are chosen to be paired with a protégé, the mentor will then be contacted and informed of the web modules and how to use them. They will receive a date that they need to have the training completed by, and then they should contact the mentoring coordinator when they have any questions and/or when they are finished. After the training is completed, the coordinator will inform the mentor when it is time to make the initial contact with their protégé.

- The training materials for the mentors should cover the vision of the program, guidelines, procedures, expectations, the roles of the mentor and protégé, coaching skills, communication skills, conflict resolution, and successful basic fundamentals for mentoring.

- After the protégé's DED or CED informs them of the mentoring program, the protégé will be informed to call the mentoring coordinator to let them tell the protégé about the program's vision, guidelines, procedures, expectations, and roles of the mentors and protégés.

Contact and Interaction

- The initial contact should be face-to-face as soon as possible after being paired. It is encouraged that the mentoring pair schedule several permanent routine interactions throughout the year at this first initial meeting.

- The contact recommendations in the mentoring handbook are the very minimum amount of contact that should occur (phone and email contact at lease every other week and 3 face-to-face meetings during the duration of the mentoring program).

Topics Mentors and Protégés Can Discuss to Increase Interaction Between the Pair

- Helping the protégé discover their clienteles' needs, developing a program to meet those needs and evaluating the program.

- Helping the protégés learn how to organize and document their accomplishments throughout the year to help the protégés complete their ROAs (report of accomplishments) in the most efficient and effective manner.

- Helping the protégé develop an advisory committee by identifying the key people that would be effective advisory members and then help the protégé recruit them.

- Helping the protégés find who the important people in the county, such as stakeholders and collaborators, and then help the protégés develop a working relationship with them.

- Helping the protégés work with and manage volunteers.

- Helping the protégés balance their work load (teaching them when to say no and how to balance office work, programming tasks, and clientele needs).

- Helping them understand balancing work and family (then personal and professional lines).

- Helping them learn the ins and outs of the extension organization.

- Teaching them how to respond to clientele's needs efficiently and effectively.

Mentoring Handbook

- A mentoring handbook should be provided to all participants.

- Make sure all of the participants use the bio-sketch (it is a benefit to the mentors and protégés at the initiation stage of the program).

- Take the activities log out of the handbook.

- Add a task-list and timeline that consists of what tasks the protégé should start doing from the first day and tasks throughout the year. This will give the protégé some structure in regards to where to start and what to do as they progress through their first year with the extension organization. The mentor and protégé can meet weekly and monthly to discuss the upcoming tasks and how it should be handled.

Incentives and Reward for the Mentors

- Allow the mentors to report mentoring as a part of the POW (plan of work) and ROA (report of accomplishments).

- Recognize the mentors for their mentoring task at the annual FAEP conference.
- Pay for professional development opportunities that the mentors would like to attend.
- Do not give salary incentives for mentoring.

The Role of the State Coordinator

Throughout the study, it was stated that a statewide mentoring program is needed to provide consistent structure, guidelines, and training. Therefore with the need for a state-wide program, there should be a person at the state level who has the roles of:

- Developing and coordinating the training programs and web modules for the mentors.
- Providing an orientation session about the mentoring program for each of the new faculty coming into the extension system.
- Ensuring that every new agent who desires to be a part of the program is paired with a trained mentor.
- Being available for any of the mentors or protégés who are having issues with the mentoring program (third-party person).
- Ensuring that the state-wide mentoring program structure, guidelines, procedures, evaluation of the program and expectations are upheld to the highest standard.
- Being the key point person between the DEDs, CEDs, mentors and protégés.

With the implementation of these recommendations to the framework of the existing pilot mentoring program, it could be implemented as a state-wide mentoring program. The UF/IFAS Extension System would benefit greatly from obtaining a statewide mentoring program. This would allow each new county faculty member to be assigned with a seasoned extension faculty member who has been adequately trained for the mentoring task. This program could have the potential to decrease stress as well as prevent burnout within the protégé. This would allow them to become more productive county faculty members; educating their clientele to the best of their ability.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research in the area of mentoring for the UF/IFAS Extension Systems is greatly needed. Now that a small-scale study has been completed, and it has been proven that a mentoring program is beneficial to the mentors and protégés; recommendations have been made for implementation into the framework of this pilot mentoring program to capitalize on its strengths and improve its weaknesses. Therefore, a study needs to be conducted on a statewide mentoring program that encompasses all of the new faculty members who come into the UF/IFAS Extension Systems. A long-term study should be conducted by performing exit interviews of the participants' perceptions of the program. This would give the study breadth and depth to determine what effect this program has on the participants as well as the value it has to the organization, and to find out what needs to be improved to make the program more effective.

Summary

This chapter provided conclusions and discussion on the findings of the participants' perceptions of how the pilot mentoring program benefited them and what they thought could be improved on to make the program more effective. It also addressed the implications for current knowledge and how the study's findings aligned with the current literature in the mentoring field. Recommendations for a formalized mentoring program were derived from the pilot mentoring program, and were detailed as well as the resulting implications.

APPENDIX A
PHASE ONE QUESTIONNAIRES

Mentoring Pilot Program Evaluation
Phase 1
DED’s

- What is your perception of the selection process for choosing the mentors?

- What did you think about the pairing of the mentors and protégés?

- How effective was the initiation period of the relationship?

    1. What did you think were the most valuable points on the bio sheet?

    2. What did you think were the least valuable points on the bio sheet?

    3. What could have been done to make the initiation period more engaging?

- What do you perceive the university staff could do to help facilitate the initiation period to make this time period more engaging?

- How do you think the communication can be opened up more between the mentor program coordinators (University Staff), DED’s, CED’s, and mentors and protégés in the following situations?
    1. When picking mentors.

2. When pairing mentors and protégés.

3. When coordinating the training sessions.

- Answer the following questions in regards to the initial training session held on April 21, 2004.
    - In general, what was effective with the session?
    - What could have been improved on in this training?
    - What was your perception on the time length of the training program?
    - What was your perception of the way the orientation was delivered (poly com) do you think there would be a more effective way of delivering the training program?

- Answer the following questions in regards to the second training session held on June 29, 2004.
    - In general, what was effective with the training program?
    - What could have been improved on in this training?
    - What was your perception on the time length of the training program?

- What was your perception of the way the orientation was delivered (poly com)? Do you think there would be a more effective way of delivering the training program?

- To ensure that this program is as effective as possible we would like to hear any additional questions, concerns, or suggestions that you my have.

Mentoring Pilot Program Evaluation
Phase 1
CED's

- What is your perception of the selection process for choosing the mentors?

- What did you think about the pairing of the mentors and protégés? Please state any questions, concerns or suggestions.

- How effective did you perceive the initiation period of the relationship to be?

    1. What did you think were the most valuable points on the bio sheet?

    2. What did you think were the least valuable points on the bio sheet?

    3. What could have been done to make the initiation period more engaging?

- What do you perceive the university staff could do to help facilitate the initiation period to make this time period of the mentoring relationship more engaging?

- How do you think the communication can be opened up more between the mentor program coordinators (UF Staff), DED's, CED's, and mentors and protégés in the following situations?
    1. When picking mentors.

    2. When pairing mentors and protégés.

    3. When coordinating the training sessions.

- To ensure that this program is as effective as possible we would like to hear any additional questions, concerns, or suggestions that you my have.

Mentoring Pilot Program Evaluation
Phase 1
Mentors

- What is your perception of the selection process for choosing mentors?

- What did you think about the pairing of the mentors and protégés?

- How effective was the initiation period of the relationship?

    1. What did you think were the most valuable points on the bio sheet?

    2. What did you think were the least valuable points on the bio sheet?

    3. What could have been done to make the initiation period more engaging?

- What do you perceive the university staff could do to help facilitate the initiation period to make this time period more effective?

- Answer the following questions in regards to the initial training session held on April 21, 2004.
    - In general what was effective with this session?

    - What could have been improved on in this training?

- What was your perception on the time length of the training program?

- What was your perception of the way the orientation was delivered (poly com)? Do you think there would be a more effective way of delivering the training program?

- Answer the following questions in regards to the second training session held on June 29, 2004.
  - In general what was effective with this session?
  - What could have been improved on in this training?
  - What was your perception on the time length of the training program?
  - What was your perception of the way the orientation was delivered (poly com) do you think there would be a more effective way of delivering the training program?

- Explain what your level of contact has been with your protégé.
  1. About how many times have you been in contact with your protégé?
  2. What kinds of contact have you and your protégé had (example: email, phone, face to face, travel, coordinating a program together, etc.)?
  3. Who has initiated the contact?
  4. What would be your perception on the effectiveness of the time spent with your protégé?

- To ensure that this program is as effective as possible we would like to hear any additional questions, concerns, or suggestions that you my have.

Mentoring Pilot Program Evaluation
Phase 1
Protégés

- What is your perception of the selection process for choosing the mentors?

- What did you think about the pairing of the mentors and protégés?

- How effective was the initiation period of the relationship?

    1. What did you think were the most valuable points on the bio sheet?

    2. What did you think were the least valuable points on the bio sheet?

    3. What could have been done to make the initiation period more engaging?

- What do you perceive the university staff could do to help facilitate the initiation period to make this time period more effective?

- Answer the following questions regarding the program orientation held on April 27, 2004. (conference call)
    1. What is you perception on the amount of information given to you through the program orientation? If more information is needed, please explain.

    2. Explain what was valuable in the orientation.

    3. What could have been improved on in this orientation?

4. What was your perception of the way the orientation was delivered (Conference call)? Do you think there would be a more effective way of delivering the orientation?

- Explain what your level of contact has been with your mentor.
    1. About how many times have you been in contact with your mentor since the beginning of the program?
    2. What kinds of contact have you and your mentor had (example: email, phone, face to face, travel, coordinating a program together, etc.)?
    3. Who has initiated the contact?
    4. What is your perception on the effectiveness of the time spent with your mentor?

- To ensure that this program is as effective as possible we would like to hear any additional questions, concerns, or suggestions that you my have.

APPENDIX B
PHASE TWO QUESTIONNAIRES

Mentoring Pilot Program Evaluation
Phase 2
Mentors

Thank you for participating in the second phase of evaluations for this mentoring pilot program. Your input is very valuable and will have a great impact on the success of the mentoring program in the future.

As you complete this evaluation we would greatly appreciate it if you would email your response back to Ashley Bailey at jabailey@ufl.edu no later then Friday October 15th. Thank you for your help and if there are any questions or concerns please contact Ashley Bailey at the email stated above.

- What is your level of contact between you and your protégé? (circle the most appropriate option)
  ____Weekly ____Every other week ____Monthly ____Every other month

  ____No contact other: ____

- What kind of contact have you had with your protégé? (check all that apply)
  ___Phone ____Email ____Face to face meetings ____Sitting in on meetings

  ____ Co planning an event ____ Traveled together

  Other: _______________
  Other: _______________

For the following questions, circle the number on the scale that best represents your situation.

- Has your protégé sought help from you?

  Did not seek help 1………2………3……….4……….5 Sought lots of help

- Have you been available to help the protégé when he/she was in need?

  Never available 1……..2…….3……..4……..5 Always available

- Have you been able to help your protégé with his/her questions and concerns?

  Not able to help 1……..2………3……….4………5 Always able to help

- Have you and your protégé communicated effectively during this program?

  Poor communication 1……2……..3……..4……..5 Great communication

- Have you both communicated openly with each other?

  Close communication 1…….2…….3………4………5 Very open communication

- What has gone particularly well during this time of mentoring?

- Have you faced any challenges in the mentoring program? If so, what are they?

- Have any logistical challenges affected you and your protégé?
  Yes:
  No:
  If so explain:

1. Have there been any other external factors, such as time and access, which have affected your interaction in any way?

- What assistance would you need?

- Has there been any conflict between you and your protégé and if so explain?
  Yes:
  No:
  Explain:

- What can be done to encourage more interaction between you and your protégé?

- What else can the program coordinators, DED's or CED's do to encourage more interaction?

Demographic Questions:

1. Agent Title and Rank (example: program coordinator, Agent III)

2. How many years have you been an extension agent?
   How many of those years were served in Florida?

3. Primary County make up: (circle the appropriate answer)
   Urban
   Suburban
   Rural

Mentoring Pilot Program Evaluation
Phase 2
Protégés

Thank you for participating in the second phase of evaluations for this mentoring pilot program. Your input regarding this mentoring pilot program is very valuable and will have a great impact on the success of the mentoring program in the future.

As you complete this evaluation we would greatly appreciate it if you would email your response back to Ashley Bailey at jabailey@ufl.edu no later then Friday October 15th. Thank you for your help and if there are any questions or concerns please contact Ashley Bailey at the email stated above.

- What has been your level of contact with your mentor? (check the most appropriate option)
  ___Weekly ____Every other week ____Monthly ____ every other month ____no contact
  Other: ____

- What type of contact have you had with your mentor? (Check the most appropriate options)
  ____phone __ email ____ face to face meetings ____ sitting in on meetings

  ____ Co planning an event ____ traveled together

  Other: ________________________

  Other: ________________________

For the following questions, circle the number on the scale that best represents your situation.

- How satisfied are you on the level of contact with your mentor?
  Not satisfied 1………2………3………4………5 Very satisfied

- Is your mentor available when you need their help?
  Not available 1………2………3………4………5 Very available

- Has your mentor been knowledgeable in the areas in which you have sought help?
  Not knowledgeable 1………2………3………4………5 Very knowledgeable

- How adequate are your mentor's listening skills?
  Poor Listener 1………2………3………4………5 Great listener

- Have you and your mentor communicated effectively during this program?
  Poor communication 1………2………3………4………5 Great communication

- Have you both communicated openly with each other?
  Closed communication 1………2………3………4………5 Very open communication

- Have you faced any challenges in the mentoring program, if so, what are they?

- Have any logistical challenges affected you and your mentor?
  Yes
  No
  If so explain what?

1. Have there been any other external factors, such as time and access, which have affected your interaction in any way?

- What assistance would you need?

- Has there been any conflict between you and your mentor and if so explain?
  Yes
  No
  Explain:

- What can be done to encourage more interaction between you and your mentor?

- What else can the program coordinators, DED's or CED's do to encourage more interaction?

Demographic Questions:

3. Agent Title and Rank (example: program coordinator, Agent I)

4. How many years have you been an extension agent?
   How many of those years were served in Florida?

3. Primary County make up: (circle the appropriate answer)
   ____Urban
   ____Suburban
   ____Rural

APPENDIX C
PHASE THREE QUESTIONNAIRES

Mentoring Pilot Program Focus Group Questions
Phase 3
DED’s

The purpose of this study is to determine how the pilot mentoring program has benefited the protégés, mentors and the organization, and also to determine effective guidelines and procedures for a formal UF/ IFAS mentoring program. The key objectives of this study are to document the benefits and value of mentoring to new extension faculty, to document the benefits and value of mentoring to seasoned extension agents, and to develop guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon the results from this pilot program. In order to gather the most relevant and important data, we will be conducting focus group interviews with four different groups (Mentors, Protégés, CED’s and DED’s).

Your answers and comments are confidential. Nothing you say will be identified with you personally to ensure confidentiality. With your permission, this interview will be recorded only to ensure completeness and accuracy.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

- What do you think of when you hear the term mentor or mentoring?
    1. What comes to mind?
    2. What experiences come to mind?
- What experiences have you had with mentoring in your career?

1. Have you ever been mentored? If so, describe your experience.
2. Have you ever been a mentor? If so, describe your experience.

Objective 1: To document the benefits and value of mentoring to new extension faculty.

- Are you aware of any value or benefits that the new faculty has gained from this pilot program? If so, discuss what you noticed.

- Have there been any issues or problems? If so, what were they?

Objective 2: To document the benefits and value of mentoring to seasoned extension agents.

- Are you aware of benefits that the seasoned extension agents have gained from being in this program? If so, discuss what you noticed.

- How do you think this program can enhance the professional development of seasoned faculty in the future?

- Have there been any issues or problems for the mentors? If so, what were they?

- We know faculty members are very busy. What are ways we can position this program to be able to attract the most qualified faculty to participate whole heartily?
    1. Incentives (Professional Development)
    2. Build it in to the reporting system.
    3. Awards
    4. Recognition
    5. Upon becoming a mentor what needs to done to give the mentors the time to balance their work schedule and mentoring.

- Is it important enough to do this?

Objective 3: To develop guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon results from this pilot program.

- How do you think a mentoring program can benefit new faculty in the future?

- What are some areas in which new faculty seem to need help?

- What are some ideas and/or suggestions that could be used in selecting mentors?
  1. Should they be nominated? And if so by who and when?
  2. Should they just be picked by CEDs and DEDs?
  3. How many are needed?

- What do you consider to be the basic skills and characteristics for agents who are selected to be mentors?
  1. Programming skills,
  2. Technical subject matter,
  3. Interpersonal skills/characteristics.

- How and when should the mentors be trained?
  1. How many times a year?
  2. How many a year?

- Should there be baseline training for mentors?
  1. Should the training be required?

- What type of training is needed?
  1. Content
  2. Length of the training session (2 hour sessions)

3. How should it be conducted (poly com, conference call, Face to face)?
4. Length

- What are some ideas that could be used in pairing the mentors and protégés?
  1. Should they be in the same office?
  2. Same District?
  3. Close Proximity?
  4. Same program area?

- When and how should the mentors be paired with the new faculty?
  1. Who should pair them up?
  2. When (First day or week)?
  3. Should they meet face to face at first?

- When and how should they make the initial contact?
  1. How can the initial contact be most effective?

- Should more contact be recommended in the following areas?
  1. Phone calls and Emails (At least every other week)
  2. Face to Face (Three time within the year)
  3. Working together (Strongly encouraged)

- What should be done to increase the time spent between the mentors and protégés?

- What are ways we can improve the communication between the CED’s and DED’s in regards to a UF/IFAS Extension mentoring program?
  1. When selecting mentors.
  2. When pairing the mentors and new faculty.
  3. Training

- How should issues between mentors and protégés be handled?
    1. By who?
- What type of communication is needed?
- How should this program be facilitated and coordinated?
    1. New assistantship,
    2. A half time person (program assistant) to coordinate the training, pairing and other details that need too be taken care of.
- What should be the roles of the:
    1. State coordinators,
    2. DED's,
    3. CED's

- Are there any other suggestions, recommendations, or question?

- Thank you for your participation and input.

- Next steps: Ashley
    1. We would like the mentoring pairs to continue for the length of the year. They will conclude the program at the end of April and then we will conclude the program with a final evaluation.
    2. In the mean time, I will be compiling all of the data from the first two evaluations and this focus group for my master's project.
    3. Then we will be taking the data and recommendations of this pilot program to Extension Administration to propose a state wide mentoring program for UF/IFAS Extension.

Thanks for all of your help!!!!

Mentoring Pilot program Focus Group Questions
Phase 3
CED's

The purpose of this study is to determine how the pilot mentoring program has benefited the protégés, mentors and the organization, and also to determine effective guidelines and procedures for a formal UF/ IFAS mentoring program. The key objectives of this study are to document the benefits and value of mentoring to new extension faculty, to document the benefits and value of mentoring to seasoned extension agents, and to develop guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon the results from this pilot program. In order to gather the most relevant and important data, we will be conducting focus group interviews with four different groups (Mentors, Protégés, CED's and DED's).

Your answers and comments are confidential. Nothing you say will be identified with you personally to ensure confidentiality. With your permission, this interview will be recorded only to ensure completeness and accuracy.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Objective 1: To document the benefits and value of mentoring to new extension faculty.

- Are you aware of any value or benefits that the new faculty members have gained from this pilot program? If so, discuss what you noticed.

- Have there been any issues or problems? If so, what were they?

Objective 2: To document the benefits and value of mentoring to seasoned extension agents.

- Are you aware of any benefits that the mentors have gained from being in this program? If so, discuss what you noticed.

- How do you think this program can enhance the professional development of seasoned faculty in the future?

- Have there been any issues or problems for the mentors? If so, what were they?

Objective 3: To develop guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon results from this pilot program.

- What are some areas in which new faculty need help?

- What are some ideas and/or suggestions that could be used in selecting mentors?
  1. Should they be nominated? And if so by who and when?
  2. Should they just be picked by CEDs and DEDs?
  3. How many are needed?

- What do you consider to be the base skills and characteristics for agents who are selected to be mentors?
  1. Interpersonal skills/characteristics.
  2. Programming skills,
  3. Technical subject matter,

- Should there be baseline training for mentors?
  1. Should the training be required?

- What type of training is needed?

1. Content
2. Length of the training session (2 hour sessions)
3. How should it be conducted (poly com, conference call, Face to face)
4. Length

- How and when should the mentors be trained?
    1. How many times a year?
    2. How many a year?

- We know faculty members are very busy. What are ways we can position this program to be able to attract the most qualified faculty to participate whole heartily?
    1. Incentives (Professional Development)
    2. Build it in to the reporting system.
    3. Awards
    4. Recognition
    5. Upon becoming a mentor what needs to done to give the mentors the time to balance their work schedule and mentoring.
        - Is it important enough to do this?

- What are some ideas of that could be used in pairing the mentors and protégés?
    1. Should they be in the same office?
    2. Same District?
    3. Close Proximity?
    4. Same program area?

- When and how should the mentors be paired with the New Faculty?
    1. Who should pair them up?
    2. When (First day or week)?
    3. Should they meet face to face at first?

- Should more contact be recommended in the following areas?
    1. Phone calls and Emails (At least every other week)
    2. Face to Face (Three time within the year)
    3. Working together (Strongly encouraged)

- How can we have the most effective communication between CEDs and DEDs in regards to a UF/IFAS Extension mentoring program?
    1. When selecting mentors.
    2. When pairing the mentors and new faculty.
    3. Training

- How should issues between mentors and protégés be handled?
    1. By who?
- How should this program be facilitated and coordinated on a state wide basis?
    1. New assistantship,
    2. A half-time person (program assistant) to coordinate the training, pairing and other details that need too be taken care of.
- What should be the roles of the:
    1. State coordinators
    2. DED's
    3. CED's

- Are there any other suggestions, recommendations, or questions?

- Thank you for your participation and input!

- Next steps: Ashley

1. We would like the mentoring pairs to continue for the length of the year. They will conclude the program at the end of April and then we will conclude the program with a final evaluation.
2. In the mean time I will be compiling all of the data from the first two evaluations and this focus group for my master’s project.
3. Then we will be taking the data and recommendations of this pilot program to Extension Administration to propose a state wide mentoring program for UF/IFAS Extension.

Thanks for all of your help!!!!

Mentoring Pilot program Focus Group Questions
Phase 3
Mentors

The purpose of this study is to determine how the pilot mentoring program has benefited the protégés, the mentors and the organization, and also to determine effective guidelines and procedures for a formal UF/ IFAS mentoring program. The key objectives of this study are to document the benefits and value of mentoring to new extension faculty, to document the benefits and value of mentoring to seasoned extension agents, and to develop guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon the results from this pilot program. In order to gather the most relevant and important data, we will be conducting focus group interviews with four different groups (Mentors, Protégés, CED's and DED's).

Your answers and comments are confidential. Nothing you say will be identified with you personally to ensure confidentiality. With your permission, this interview will be recorded only to ensure completeness and accuracy.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Objective 1: To document the benefits and value of mentoring to new extension faculty.

- Are you aware of any value or benefits that the New Faculty protégés have gained from this program? If so please discuss.
- Are you aware of issues or problems that have occurred for the protégés? If so please discuss.

Objective 2: To document the benefits and value of mentoring to seasoned extension agents.

- What is your overall perception of the mentoring program?
- Have you benefited from being in this program? If so how?
    1. Were you able to learn from your protégé? If so how?
- Were there any conditions or situations that promoted learning within your mentoring relationship? If so, discuss.
- Have there been any issues or problems for the mentors? If so, what were they?

Objective 3: To develop guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon results from this pilot program.

- What are some general areas in which the new faculty members need help?
- What are some ideas or suggestions that could be used in selecting mentors?
    1. Should they be nominated? And if so by who and when?
    2. Should they just be picked by CEDs and DEDs?
- What was your perception on the training sessions?
    1. Content (What could be added or eliminated to better the program?)
    2. Length
    3. The way it was delivered (poly com)
- What is needed for training?
    1. Content
    2. How to deliver?
- Was the mentoring handbook a benefit to you?
    1. What were its strengths?
    2. What were its weaknesses?
    3. What needs to be added or subtracted?

- What are some ideas that could be used in pairing the mentors and protégés?
  1. Should they be in the same office?
  2. Same District
  3. Close Proximity
  4. Same program area.

- How could the initiation process be more effective?
  1. Schedule to meet face to face first thing?
  2. Was the Bio sheet effective?
  3. Would it be realistic to have the initiation within the first week?

- What is the appropriate amount of contact that should be recommended in the following areas?
  1. Phone calls and Emails (At least every other week)
  2. Face to Face (Three time within the year)
  3. Working together (Strongly encouraged)

- Should this time be increased?
  1. What could be done to help you increase the time spent with your protégé?

- Were your protégés willing to engage themselves into this mentoring relationship?
  1. What could be done to encourage the protégés to engage themselves in the relationship and take ownership?

- How could we position this program to make agents want to be a mentor and give time to new agents?
  1. Incentives (professional development, funding, recognition, awards)
  2. Making mentoring a part of your plan of work?
  3. Upon becoming a mentor what needs to done to give the mentors the time to balance their work schedule and mentoring.
     - Is a mentoring program important enough to make efforts like stated above?

- What can you as a mentor do to better your relationship with your protégé?

- What do you see that your protégé can do to better the relationship?

- Based upon your experience with this program and extension, what should be done to make improvements on a future mentoring program?

- Are there any other suggestions, recommendations, or questions?

- Thank you for your participation and input!

- Next steps: Ashley
  1. We would like the mentoring pairs to continue for the length of the year. They will conclude the program at the end of April and then we will conclude the program with a final evaluation.
  2. In the mean time I will be compiling all of the data from the first two evaluations and this focus group for my master's project.
  3. Then we will be taking the data and recommendations of this pilot program to Extension Administration to propose a state wide mentoring program for UF/IFAS Extension.

Thanks for all of your help!!!!

Mentoring Pilot program Focus Group Questions
Phase 3
Protégés

The purpose of this study is to determine how the pilot mentoring program has benefited the protégés, the mentors and the organization, and also to determine effective guidelines and procedures for a formal UF/ IFAS mentoring program. The key objectives of this study are to document the benefits and value of mentoring to new extension faculty, to document the benefits and value of mentoring to seasoned extension agents, and to develop guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon the results from this pilot program. In order to gather the most relevant and important data, we will be conducting focus group interviews with four different groups (Mentors, Protégés, CED's and DED's).

Your answers and comments are confidential. Nothing you say will be identified with you personally to ensure confidentiality. With your permission, this interview will be recorded only to ensure completeness and accuracy.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

- What do you think of when you hear the term mentor or mentoring?
  1. What comes to mind?
  2. What experiences come to mind?

Objective 1: To document the benefits and value of mentoring to new extension faculty.

- What has been your overall perception of the mentoring program?

- Have you benefited from being in this program? If so how?

- Did you learn from your mentor? If so how?
- Were there any conditions that promoted learning within your mentoring relationship? If so, please discuss.
- Have there been any issues or problems? If so, what were they?

Objective 2: To document the benefits and value of mentoring to seasoned extension faculty.

- Are you aware of any value or benefits that the seasoned extension faculty has gained from this program? If so, explain.
- Are you aware of issues or problems that have occurred for the mentors? If so please discuss.

Objective 3: To develop guidelines and recommendations for a structured mentoring program based upon results from this pilot program.

- How do you think this program can benefit seasoned extension faculty in the future?
- What are some general areas that can be focused on to benefit you as a new faculty member?
- What are some ideals that could be used in selecting mentors?
  1. Should they be nominated? And if so by who and when?
  2. Should they just be picked by CED's and DED's?
- In the protégé initial orientation what are topics that can be covered to help you better understand the program?
  - What could be added?
  - What could be subtracted?
  - What was your perception on how it was delivered (conference call)?
- How could the initiation process be more effective?

1. Schedule to meet face to face first thing?
2. Was the Bio sheet effective?
3. Would it be realistic to have the initiation with in the first week?

- Was the mentoring hand book a benefit to you?
  1. What were its strengths?
  2. What were its weaknesses?
  3. What needs to be added or subtracted?

- What are some ideas that could be used in pairing the mentors and protégés?
  1. Should they be in the same office?
  2. Same District?
  3. Close Proximity?
  4. Same program area?

- What is the appropriate amount of contact that should be recommended in the following areas?
  1. Phone calls and Emails (At least every other week)
  2. Face to Face (Three time within the year)
  3. Working together (Strongly encouraged)

- Should the time be increased?
  1. What could be done to help you increase the time spent with your mentor?

- Were your mentors willing to meet the contact guidelines given to you all?
  2. What could be done to encourage the mentors to engage themselves into the relationship?

- What should /could be done in regards to incentives that you would like if you were a mentor?
  1. Incentives (professional development, funding, recognition, awards)
  2. Making mentoring a part of your plan of work?
  3. Upon becoming a mentor, what needs to done to give the mentors the time to balance their work schedule and mentoring.
  - Is a mentoring program important enough to make efforts like stated above?

- What can you as a protégé do to better your relationship with your mentor?

- What do you see that your mentor can do to better the relationship?

- Based upon your experiences with this program and the needs that you have, what should be done to make improvements on a future mentoring program?

- How should issues between mentors and protégés be handled?

    1. By whom?

- How should this program be facilitated and coordinated on a statewide basis?

    1. New assistantship,
    2. A half-time person (program assistant) to coordinate the training, pairing and other details that need too be taken care of.

- What should be the roles of the:

    1. State coordinators
    2. DED's
    3. CED's

- Are there any other suggestions, recommendations, or questions?

- Thank you for your participation and input!

- Next steps: Ashley

    1. We would like the mentoring pairs to continue for the length of the year. They will conclude the program at the end of April and then we will conclude the program with a final evaluation.
    2. In the mean time I will be compiling all of the data from the first two evaluations and this focus group for my master's project.
    3. Then we will be taking the data and recommendations of this pilot program to Extension Administration to propose a state wide mentoring program for UF/IFAS Extension.

Thanks for all of your help!!!!

APPENDIX D
TRAINING AND ORIENTATION AGENDAS

Agenda

The mentor training session
April 20, 2004

1:00 Introduction (10 min.)

- Name
- How long have you been in extension?

1:10- 1:25 Purpose of Pilot Program (15 min.)

- Research Protocol
  1. Why are we doing this study?
  2. Formative evaluation
  3. Summative evaluation

1:25-1:30 History of mentoring. (5 min.)

1:30- 2:10 Purpose and value of mentoring (40 min.)

- Effectiveness
- Characteristics of a good mentor.

2:10- 2:35 Looking through the Mentoring Guide Book. (25 min.)

- What is this book for?
- How is it going to be used?

2:35-2:50 Questions and Answers (15 min.)

2:50- 3:00 Wrap up. (10 min.)

- When, Where, and what is the next training going to be about?

Agenda

The protégé training session
April 27, 2004

1:00	Introduction (10 min.) • Name • How long have you been in extension?
1:10- 1:25	Purpose of Pilot Program (15 min.) • Research Protocol 1. Why are we doing this study? 2. Formative evaluation 3. Summative evaluation
1:25-1:30	History of mentoring. (5 min.)
1:30- 1:55	Looking through the Mentoring Guide Book. (25 min.) • What is this book for? • How is it going to be used?
1:55- 2:10	Questions and Answers (15 min.)
2:10- 2:15	Wrap up. (10 min.)

Mentor Training Agenda
June 29,2004
1:00 to 3:00 PM (Eastern Time)

1:00 to 1:10 Introductions (Ashley Bailey)

- Thanks for coming
- Allow everyone to introduce their selves
- Introduce Dr. Ferrer

1:10 to 1:20 Welcome and value of Mentoring (Dr. Millie Ferrer, Interim Associate Dean for Extension)

1:20 to 2:05 Effective Communication (Dr. Shannon Washburn)

- He has been with us about two years
- Faculty Member in Ag Ed & Communication
- Background in Ag Ed

2:05 to 2:40 Coaching Techniques & Tips (Dr. Nick Place)

2:40 to 3:00 Wrap-up; general questions on Mentoring

- We are interested in determining the effectiveness of the mentoring program. Looking mainly at the major aspects of this program that we have covered so far such as the selection of the mentor, the pairing of the mentors and protégés, the training sessions and the initiation period between the protégés and you guys.

APPENDIX E
RECOMMENDED CONTACT LEVELS

Recommended Contact Levels

Here are some suggested guidelines, unless you have agreed to a different level of support.

Face-to-Face

Schedule at least three face-to-face meetings. Use the “Protégé Assessment and Meeting Protégé Needs” to guide your discussions. Allow plenty of time for questions and discussion.

Phone/E-mail

Try to touch base at least every other week. Set a regular time to interact such as a phone call to find out how your protégé is doing. If you can’t connect that frequently, send an email stating when you will contact him/her.

Informal Contacts

Remember to invite one another as often as possible to see each other in action such as an advisory committee meeting, or a ride to a committee meeting and/or a regional event.

APPENDIX F
IRB APPROVAL OF PROTOCOL MEMORANDUM

UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

Institutional Review Board

98A Psychology Bldg.
PO Box 112250
Gainesville, FL 32611-2250
Phone: (352) 392-0433
Fax: (352) 392-9234
E-mail: irb2@ufl.edu
http://rgp.ufl.edu/irb/irb02

DATE: August 23, 2004

TO: Ashley Bailey
PO Box 110540
Campus

FROM: Ira S. Fischler, Ph.D., Chair
University of Florida
Institutional Review Board 02

SUBJECT: **Approval of Protocol #2004-U-636**

TITLE: *Perceptions and Impact of the UF/IFAS Mentoring Program*

SPONSOR: None

I am pleased to advise you that the University of Florida Institutional Review Board has recommended approval of this protocol. Based on its review, the UFIRB determined that this research presents no more than minimal risk to participants. Given your protocol, it is essential that you obtain signed documentation of informed consent from each participant. Enclosed is the dated, IRB-approved informed consent to be used when recruiting participants for the research.

> It is essential that each of your participants sign a copy of your approved informed consent that bears the IRB stamp and expiration date.

If you wish to make any changes to this protocol, including **the need to increase the number of participants authorized**, you must disclose your plans before you implement them so that the Board can assess their impact on your protocol. In addition, you must report to the Board any unexpected complications that affect your participants.

If you have not completed this protocol by August 20, 2005, please telephone our office (392-0433), and we will discuss the renewal process with you. It is important that you keep your Department Chair informed about the status of this research protocol.

IF:dl

APPENDIX G
SELECTION AND PAIRING SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DEDS

Characteristics of an Effective Mentor:

- Exhibits a positive attitude and a sense of humor
- Respected by peers and shows respect for others
- Listens and communicates effectively
- Recognizes and encourages excellence
- Trustworthy
- Demonstrates ethical, professional behavior
- Self-confident
- Patient
- Appreciates and encourages diversity
- Flexible / adaptable -- receptive to new ideas (Kentucky Program)

When selecting staff to serve as mentors, administrative representatives should select mentors who possess the following personal characteristics: (a) knowledge of the extension organization; (b) empathy towards new staff; (c) program knowledge in their respective fields, and (d) a friendly personality and a positive attitude (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998)(article 4).

Organizational Knowledge

Having a mentor who is knowledgeable about extension surfaced as an important factor in an effective mentoring relationship. With the changing nature of extension work and the need to keep current in their jobs, protégés felt having a mentor who was knowledgeable about the extension organization was important. Roche (1979) also identified organizational knowledge as an important characteristic for a mentor to posses. His respondents rated knowledge of the organization and the people in it, and a willingness to share knowledge and understanding as two of the most important characteristics for a mentor to possess (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998)(Article 4).

Mentor Attitudes

Poor mentor attitudes about extension were perceived by the protégés as an inhibiting factor in their relationships. Although a positive attitude was not defined in the mentoring literature (Roche, 1978; Knox and McGovern, 1988) as a trait of a successful mentor, sharing and counseling traits were identified. Assuming that successful counselors are positive in their interactions with those whom they counsel, the concept of mentors possessing a positive attitude is supported (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998)(Article 4).

Suggestions on matching mentors and protégés:

Similar Programmatic Responsibilities

Assigning mentors who shared the same major programmatic responsibility as their protégés was considered a facilitative factor that contributed to the success of the relationship by all of the mentors (100 percent) and the protégés (100 percent). Having both mentors and protégés who are responsible for conducting similar types of programs provided opportunities for more interaction related to the extension program planning process, more opportunities to meet and interact during professional development activities as well as sharing a common interest in programming. The importance of mentors and protégés sharing similar programmatic responsibilities suggests that mentors fulfilled a career development mentoring function and less of a psycho-social mentoring function (Levinson, 1979; Kram, 1983).

Geographic proximity

Geographic proximity of mentors and protégés was identified as a facilitative factor. All of the mentors and protégés interviewed indicated that mentors should be assigned to protégés from the same extension region and with geographic proximity. Supporting this concept is research conducted by Burke, McKeen, and McKenna (1993) who found that more frequent interaction and greater success in mentoring relationships occurred in situations where the mentor and the protégé had closer offices (Mincemoyer & Thomson, 1998)(Article 4).

Matching Strengths and Weaknesses

Match mentors with protégés that complement their strengths and weaknesses. The question that needs to be asked is what mentor will be able to most effectively meet the needs of the new faculty.

APPENDIX H
MENTORING HANDBOOK

Mentoring Hand Book

Mentor/Protégé Biographical Sketch
Mentor and protégé should share with each other before the first meeting or contact if possible.

Purpose: To provide basic information to facilitate the development of a positive relationship.

Check one:
Mentor _____

Protégé _____

Name ____

Address ____

Position ____________________________ County or Counties ______________________

Phone _____________________________
FAX___________________________________

E-Mail
____

Educational Background

Undergraduate Institution
____

Major ____ Year Graduated ____________

Graduate Institution ____

Major _____________________________________ Year Graduated __________

Additional Certification or Professional Development:
____

____

Program Experience

Years in FL Extension ________________Years in Current Position ______________

Previous Work Experience
____

____

Major area of interest/expertise/program focus
____

____

____

My most valuable strengths are:
____

____

Protégés Only

Topics I would like to discuss with my mentor include:

____

____

____

____

Optional Information

My hobbies/leisure interests include:

About my family:

Community activities:

The reason I am excited about a career in extension is:

The level of support:
What level of mentoring support do you foresee needing? (Check one, can be modified as you and your mentor agree upon)

High: Weekly/ bi-weekly contact (e-mail, phone, etc.); monthly face-to-face meetings.
Medium: Bi-weekly/monthly contact (email, phone, etc.) Face-to-face meeting every other month

Low: Monthly/every other month contact (e-mail, phone, etc.); face-to-face meetings only as needed

Other: Please describe

Protégé's Self Evaluation

Complete and send with your biographical information to your mentor before your first meeting. This is a discussion tool only not an assessment to be used for evaluation purposes.

Communication Skills
Rank from 1=greater need to discuss to 7= low priority topic to cover

Writing
Interacting with the media
Presentation skills
Dealing with conflict
Teamwork skills
Radio/TV presentation skills
e-mail

Program Development
Rank from 1=greater need to discuss to 11= low priority topic to cover

Action plan development
Program ideas
Marketing programs
Collaborating with other agents
Understanding the POW process
Web-based planning & reporting system
Program evaluation
Working with advisory committees
Regional calendar of events
Available specialist support
Needs assessment

Personal Development
Rank from 1=greater need to discuss to 4= low priority topic to cover

Time management
Balancing work/family
Maintaining a schedule
Protocol

Career Guidance/Professional Development
Rank from 1=greater need to discuss to 4= low priority topic to cover

Professional associations
In-service and other professional opportunities
Support at University of Florida
Professional awards

Organizational Structure and culture
Rank from 1=greater need to discuss to 2= low priority topic to cover

Organization of Extension-regional/state/national
Extension jargon

Affirmative Action and Civil Rights Compliance
Rank from 1=greater need to discuss to 3= low priority topic to cover

Affirmative action policy
Desk audit
All reasonable efforts

What are the most important things you would like to get from this relationship?

Preferred methods of learning (i.e. listening, hands-on, shadowing/observing, etc.):

Mentoring Program Agreement

Let's agree to agree.
To accomplish the mission and vision for the University of Florida Extension Mentoring Program, we all must fully participate and fulfill the expectations of the agreement.

As County extension director or district director I agree to:

- Match mentors with protégés to achieve best fit.
- Provide support for the mentoring relationship.
- Support the "no-fault" clause of the program: the relationship can be ended by either party at no fault.

As a mentor I agree to:

- Initiate contact with the new educator within the first two weeks on the job and maintain contact throughout the designated mentoring relationship of one year.
- Accept and act upon new educator's assessed level of mentoring identified on the biographical sketch form.
- Be available as a resource to the new educator, as well as assist in locating other needed resources.
- Communicate with District Directors or County Directors on how the relationship is going; seek help when needed.
- Encourage the new educator to participate and contribute to meetings, professional development, and other learning opportunities as they present themselves.
- Create and maintain a mentoring file.

As a protégé I agree to:

- Be the owner of my mentoring relationship.
- Identify and communicate my assessed level of mentoring.
- Maintain contact throughout the mentoring relationship; seek help when needed.

- Participate and contribute to meetings, professional development, and other learning opportunities as they present themselves.
- Create and maintain a mentoring file.

As staff development we agree to:

- Continually seek the best programmatic process improvements and provide the appropriate program tools for administrators, mentors, and protégés to use.

Frequency of Contact

Here are some suggested guidelines, unless you have agreed to a different level of support.

Face-to-Face
Schedule at least three face-to-face meetings. Use the "Protégé Assessment and Meeting Protégé Needs" to guide your discussions. Allow plenty of time for questions and discussion.

Phone/E-mail

Try to touch base at least every other week. Set a regular time to interact such as a phone call. If you can't connect that frequently, send an email stating that you will contact them soon.

Informal Contacts

Remember to invite one another as often as possible to see each other in action such as to an advisory committee meeting, or a ride to a committee meeting and/or a regional event.

Meeting Protégé Needs

Based on your assessment and discussion with your protégé, the following are suggestions on how to address the needs of your protégé. You may want to plan to address some of these at your initial meeting.

Communication Skills

- Share newsletters with protégé
- Share news articles you prepared

- Share a radio/TV. tape or invite to next taping
- Invite your protégé to see you conduct a program
- Share your perspectives on office communications, teamwork, conflict, etc.
- Share letters sent to program advisory committee members or the board group
- Share sample meeting agendas and minutes

Program Development

- Invite to advisory committee meeting
- Invite to attend a volunteer meeting
- Invite to a program of protégé's interest
- Share success and failures in programming
- Share program announcements with protégé
- Share key contacts and resource persons
- Support creativity and energy of protégé particularly as they relate to programming
- Share programming resources
- Invite to planning meetings
- Share affirmative action efforts and documentation strategies
- Share various programming delivery methods
- Share needs assessment and evaluation tools

Personal Development

- Discuss protocol/informal rules in extension
- Discuss support services at University of Florida
- Share your time management techniques
- Share your perspective on maintaining balance with work/family
- Share a copy of your action plan

Professional Development

- Invite to upcoming in-services
- Identify professional associations/upcoming dates and invite to join/attend
- Encourage protégé to apply for awards (i.e. rookie, communications, etc.)
- Discuss degree work

Mentors are Good Listeners

Tips for Being a Good Listener

] Stop talking to others and to yourself. Learn to still the voice within. You can't listen if you are talking.

] Imagine the other person's viewpoint. Picture yourself in his/her position, doing his/her work, facing his/her problems, having his/her values, etc.

] Look, act, and be interested. Don't read your mail, doodle, shuffle or tap papers while others are talking.

] Observe nonverbal behavior to glean information beyond what is said to you.

] Don't interrupt. Sit still past your tolerance level.

] Listen between the lines for implicit meanings as well as explicit ones. Look for omissions-things left unsaid or unexplained and ask about them. Listen for understanding. That's different than listening for agreement.

] Speak only affirmatively while listening. Resist the temptation to jump in with an evaluative or critical comment or a story of your own at the moment a remark is uttered. Confine yourself to constructive replies until the context has shifted and criticism can be offered without blame. Put down phrases discourage sharing. People tend to react negatively when someone implies a judgment or criticism, especially at the beginning of the relationship.

] To ensure understanding, rephrase what the other person has just told you at key points in the conversation.

] Stop talking. This is first and last, because all other techniques of listening depend on it.

Adapted from: <u>Mentoring: Investing in our Future</u>, Mentoring Sub-Committee of the New Personnel Orientation ADHOC Committee, Ohio State University.

Roles of the Mentor

Mentors provide two basic functions; a career function and a psychosocial function. The career function focuses on helping the protégé achieve technical competence and be successful operating within the organization. The psychosocial function involves helping the protégé adapt and adjust to a new organization, balance work and family, improve his/her outlook, etc. In the extension organization, mentors function in all three of these mentor roles at different times.

The Role Model (Inspirer)
The role model demonstrates appropriate attitudes, behaviors, protocols, and responses and explains why these are appropriate. The role model models effective behavior in his or her daily life within the organization. A role model mentor inspires the protégé to meet and possibly exceed his or her chosen goals. In a supportive environment, the role model mentor continually encourages protégé learning and constructive development.

The Career Counselor (Investor)
The career counselor mentor acts as a sounding board as the protégé sorts through and reacts to the dilemmas of developing career choices. Insights are provided into the organization's markets, environment, culture, and values, as well as to evolving changes in any of these areas. This type of mentoring relationship provides access to career information for the protégé and the mentor acts as a reference guide for paths the protégé may choose.

In this type of mentoring, the mentor shares personal or business contacts to help the protégé gain realistic information about options. This role of the mentor supports the mentor providing tactics and strategies for accomplishing work objectives.

A career counselor mentor provides support when the protégé is experiencing stress and uncertainty. He/she offers ideas and information on career development materials, resource contacts, and paths to explore in advancing the career of the protégé.

The Leadership/Coach (Supporter)
The supporter offers more philosophical instruction in the form of stories, biographical incidents, and legends about leadership and its responsibilities. The mentor in the leadership/coach role counsels the whole person about values, integrity and ethical conduct. He/she explores issues and discusses where certain paths of conduct will ultimately lead. The leadership/coach type of mentor helps the protégé recognize the outcomes of his or her actions and plans.

A mentor is
trusted adviser
teacher
friend
peer

Positive Mentoring Behaviors

Envision Outcomes

Help your protégé shift his or her mental context. Help them envision goals and move towards fulfilling them. Ask the question, "What would happen if. . ."

Example: If you get involved in this community coalition, what would be extension's role?

Active/Respectful Listening

Provide a listening ear without taking on the protégé problem or joining him/her in the "ain't it awful" game. Respectful listening is said to be the most powerful mentoring behavior. "Respectful listening is the ability to become absorbed in what the other person is saying about the problem, treating the protégé's words as confidential communication while not injecting your own opinions or suggestions. Insight is gained by the protégé, just by articulating the problem." *Shea, 1994.* When a protégé shares situations- listen – do not try to solve problems- rather help the protégé by coaching and guiding.

Example: A protégé says to you, "This is the type of program I can really sink my teeth into. I get so wrapped up in it, I can forget when to go home. Sometimes I lie awake at night thinking about it." The *feelings* that this protégé may be sending *could* include:

-I'm very excited and enthusiastic
-I need help in balancing work and home
-I'm very nervous about the success of this project

Productive Confrontation

Sometimes you will have to confront an attitude, behavior or plan of the protégé. Try not to criticize threaten or pressure the protégé. This could be ineffective, generate resistance and hurt the relationship. Send "I" messages.

"I" message confrontation may be the most effective way to bring about helpful change in the protégé. Also try to use "gap" terms when discussing problems. "Gap" terms are specific and measurable, suggesting a way to solve the problem. It is the gap between what is needed and what is being produced.

Three parts of an I message:

1. Neutral description of what you perceive the protégé intends.
   (This is what I think you said--repeat back the problem)
2. A statement of the possible negative effects on the protégé or other people
   (Consequences of the problem.)
3. The feelings or emotions you are having about the protégé’s plan
   (I feel, I think. . .)

"I" Message Example:

You protégé is busy preparing for a full fall programming schedule. She says she wants to take a 4- credit course as well. You are concerned that the overload could lead to failure and, consequently, discouragement. Send an "I" message to approach the topic:
"I'm concerned about you taking on too much. You may become burned-out. How can I help you realistically schedule your time for the fall?"

"Gap" Terms Example:

Instead of looking at your protégé’s action plan and saying that it isn’t very good, positively state the problem and describe it in neutral, non-evaluative terms.
"*Let's try to look at each objective and make it measurable for evaluation.”*

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BIOGRAPHIAL SKETCH

John Ashley Bailey grew up in Jacksonville, Florida, where he spent most of his childhood outdoors either playing or working with his brothers and cousins on his grandparents' farm. Those early years helped him develop a strong passion for agriculture.

He graduated from Baldwin Senior High in Jacksonville, Florida in June of 1999. During his years of participating in 4-H, he got the idea to pursue a degree in animal science in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Florida. He achieved this goal in May of 2003. Then his love for agriculture led him to get a masters degree in extension education in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Florida. He wanted to develop his skills as a communicator and gain a better understanding of the US Cooperative Extension System. He will graduate in August of 2005.

Ashley recently married Lindsey DeMoisey and upon his graduation they plan on moving to Okeechobee, Florida, where he will work as a dairy farm manager. He plans to develop his knowledge and skills in business and dairy farming in order to pursue his dream of owning and operating his own dairy farm one day.