Welcome back to the second issue of Mentoring & Coaching Monthly, dedicated to bringing you the latest mentoring news and information on upcoming events and deadlines. In this issue we talked to Chad Littlefield, co-founder and CEO of the company We!, about how to ask powerful, engaging questions, which he says are crucial to developing a strong mentoring relationship. Chad will be leading a workshop and a plenary session at our next mentoring conference—be sure to catch him!

We also discussed the Mentoring Excellence Pocket Toolkit series by Lois J. Zachary and Lory A. Fischler, which act as quick and easy references to some of the most critical aspects of mentoring relationships. Lastly, we updated some of the registration dates and deadlines for our mentoring conference in October—please make note of them. Thanks, and have a great April everybody!
Welcome back to Mentoring & Coaching Monthly!

Earth Day is coming up next week! In its honor, we would like to encourage our mentors to talk with their mentees about what they can do to protect the environment and how they can reduce waste at school, at home, or in the workplace.

In this issue of Mentoring & Coaching Monthly we will be looking at the different types of questions mentors can ask their mentees to encourage deep thinking and reflection. These questions, as explained by Chad Littlefield later in the issue, are paramount to developing a motivational and open-minded mentoring relationship that effectively fosters growth.

Are you considering becoming a mentor? You should! Through mentoring it’s possible to make a positive impact in someone else’s life in only a few months. By volunteering a little bit of your time to a student, friend, or new employee, you can make a real difference in their life by helping them attain their goals and develop the skills and self-confidence they need to succeed.

Not only does mentoring benefit the mentee by giving them the chance to grow personally, academically, and professionally, it also offers reciprocal benefits to the mentor. By mentoring others, mentors learn how to communicate more effectively and become active listeners. They can put their experience and knowledge to use by passing it along to others, which can increase job satisfaction and sense of self-worth, and distinguish them as leaders and problem-solvers. Overall, mentoring is a great way to help both parties discover their talents and become the best they can be.

To those who are reading this month’s issue, we urge you to help us show others the value of mentoring relationships, and encourage them to initiate their own. Together we can help strengthen the interpersonal relationships in our community through mentoring.

Lastly, we are always looking for more content, so please email our editor, Brenna Kelley, at mentor@unm.edu if you are interested in sharing your professional and personal experiences in mentoring. With your permission, we would love to share your stories, research, and photos in the upcoming issues of our newsletter.

We thank you for showing an interest in mentoring, and for your continued support of the UNM Mentoring Institute.
Why should people take the social risk of asking strangers unique and open-ended questions?

One of my favorite quotes is: “Everyone you will ever meet knows something you don’t.” - Bill Nye (the Science Guy). If you don’t ask questions to strangers, coworkers, and friends alike, there is a 100% chance you won’t learn anything from them. On the other hand, I asked a new acquaintance the other day “what has been a moment that has shaped your perspective of the world?” She responded by telling me that she was the 1st account for Ben and Jerry as they were starting their (now world renowned) ice cream company. I wouldn’t have learned the backstory to such a household name if I didn’t ask.

More altruistically, our curiosity and deep listening has the ability to make people feel cared for. And even give them a place to belong. Just ask, wait, and listen to understand and what comes next may just surprise you.

For anyone who might’ve missed your plenary session at our 2016 mentoring conference, can you please explain your tips for asking creative and intentional introductory questions?

A more full answer can be found here on my blog about 4 Characteristics of Powerful Questions. The most simple and impactful tip on how to ask better questions to people: follow your natural, genuine curiosity and ask about something in the present environment (i.e., something they are wearing, carrying, or sharing). Tip #2: ask open questions that begin with either “how” or “what” and not “why.”

What kinds of questions do you recommend asking a person you’ve just begun to mentor, and what do you believe is the most effective way to earn their trust?

I have my own personal “Top 10” questions that I like to ask new mentees or coaching clients all the way from CEOs to college students. First on the list: what brings you joy? This accesses passion in a way that no other question I’ve tried can. I also tell my mentees up front that part of my role is to ask challenging questions that push their own thinking forward and I ask permission to “ask powerfully.” An example of a tougher first meeting question might include: “how do you know that you are trustworthy?” or “what is a time when you learned something from a failure?”

The most effective way to build trust, hmm, this is a fantastic question. First, sharing your intention can be immensely powerful. Next, people notice when you ask questions from a position of genuine curiosity.

How do you explain the difference between your terms listening to win and listening to understand? How can this concept be applied to a mentoring relationship?

Listening to win tends to be our default mindset where we are hearing what is in it for us. A subcategory of this is the ever present “listening to talk” where we are just waiting until the other person is done so we can share our brilliance. A more powerful and impactful way to listen in a mentoring relationship is: listening to understand. This involves listening for more than just the facts. What is the music behind the words? The emotions behind the ideas? The whole story.

What is the primary goal of We!, your company?

Our mission (and passion) is to create conversations that matter.

How can your We! Connect Cards be used as a tool to help facilitate conversation and trust in a mentoring relationship?
There are 10+ activities and exercises that utilize We! Connect Cards to facilitate conversations that matter and build trust in a mentoring relationship. One of the simplest that I’ve seen mentors use is to just keep a deck on their desk and each time somebody comes in, start the conversation off by having the mentee choose a question from the deck. This fosters “connection before content” and builds that trust in a subtle, yet powerful, way.

**How did your design team come up with the questions on your We! Connect Cards? Was it easier to think of questions after creating specific categories to put them in?**

We actually published an academic paper on the design of We! Connect Cards. The team and I went through a rigorous process utilizing Stanford’s d.school model of design thinking and several pilot test groups that voted and selected the best and most effective questions. There is not a single question in the deck that doesn’t help foster some connection and build a relationship of trust with both the person asking and answering.

The categories to the questions did help us narrow down the options for potential questions and allowed us to choose the best in each category. Purple cards in particular which invite people into self-reflection was a category intended to carve out space for introverts in the room to have meaningful conversations with less intensity and speed required as many “ice breakers” do. In fact, the categories give people choice in the types of conversations and connections they make so an “ice breaker” doesn’t end up becoming an “ice maker.”

**Are you planning on expanding your brand in any way?**

Yes, we are rolling out a major initiative over the coming months and years bringing the “We! Leadership Lab™” to campuses and companies around the nation. This initiative will be ongoing leadership development for leaders from all areas of an organization.

**What message do you hope people will come away with after using your cards?**

In short: ask great questions, get great conversations.

In long: the barrier between trust and connection vs. isolation and separation is very thin. And the perceived risk of asking powerful questions is almost always much higher than the actual risk. Try it. Ask 5 “big questions” to 5 friends, coworkers, mentees, or strangers and see what happens. I can assure you that you’ll learn at least 5 new things you never could have Googled.

More about Chad Littlefield

Chad Littlefield, M.Ed., is the co-founder and CEO of We!™ (www.weand.me). He designs fun, challenging, and engaging experiences and tools that break down communication barriers. He is has spoken at TEDx and is the author of the Pocket Guide to Facilitating Human Connections. Chad also led the design team that created We! Connect Cards™, which are now being used to create conversations that matter within companies in over 50 countries and on 6 of the 7 continents. He has worked as an instructor at Penn State University teaching the art and science of dialogue facilitation and team development. Chad has the privilege of consulting, coaching, and facilitating within organizations like JetBlue, Starbucks, Penn State, Typeform, United Way, Goodwill, and dozens more.

Relationships are the foundation of a good mentoring program. Chad offers key insights to foster meaningful connection both on the individual level and at scale across your campus or company.
Mentoring Excellence Pocket Toolkits
By Lois J. Zachary and Lory A. Fischler

Book Review by Brenna Kelley,
UNM Mentoring Institute

In 2012, Jossey-Bass published a series of Mentoring Excellence Pocket Toolkits written by Lois J. Zachary and Lory A. Fischler. These pocket toolkits cover five crucial topics that are vital to the success of a mentoring relationship:

#1: Strategies and Checklists for Mentors—provides mentors with general strategies and tools they can use throughout the entire mentoring process to facilitate conversations, determine roles and clarify responsibilities, set boundaries and limitations, create an appropriate schedule, etc.

#2: Feedback and Facilitation for Mentors—explains the different types of questions mentors can use to facilitate a successful mentorship discussion, and how to give positive, but honest feedback.

#3: Strategies for Mentees—discusses the four phases of a mentoring relationship (preparing, negotiating, enabling growth, and coming to a closure), what mentees can expect during each phase, and what they can do to contribute.

#4: Accountability Strategies and Checklists—explains how to set well-defined goals that direct the course of the mentorship, and what each person is accountable for in the drive to attain these goals.

#5: Mentoring Across Generations—discusses strategies for mentoring people from different generations and how to help people of all ages get the most out of their mentoring relationship.

Meant to be used as quick reference tools, these toolkits are perfect for those who want to refresh their knowledge of mentoring techniques, prepare for meetings with their partner, remind themselves of their past mentoring training, or simply learn more about the mentoring process. The toolkits present readers with key ideas and tips in a concise, straightforward, and easy-to-read format that is easily understandable, especially to those who are unfamiliar with mentoring. For people new to mentoring, the toolkits are the perfect resource to use to get to know the basics of mentoring and what steps to take in initiating and maintaining a healthy mentoring relationship.

Included in the toolkits are a number of checklists and bullet points that readers can use as guidelines to ensure that their mentoring relationship is on track and is achieving its goals. An example of such a checklist, which I found to be particularly applicable, is called the “Mentoring Partnership Checklist,” from the last page of Mentoring Excellence Pocket Toolkit #4: Accountability Strategies and Checklists. This checklist allows mentees and mentors to periodically assess the progress they’ve made in their relationship on things like scheduling and communication, therefore propagating honest discussions based on trust. From there, authors Zachary and Fischler suggest that the partners share their answers and decide together what they can do to improve their relationship. This approach is effective because it equips both the mentee and mentor with a basic understanding on how to evaluate their relationship and determine if anything needs improvement. Miscommunications could arise, someone could feel like their voice isn’t being heard, or the relationship could potentially fail if check-ups like this one aren’t routinely conducted. The toolkits prevent such things from happening by ensuring that all parties know how to communicate openly, trust each other, set attainable goals, and, arguably most importantly, become active listeners.

The portability of these toolkits means they can be utilized as practical daily resources—their 4 ½ x 5 ½ inch size allows them to fit easily into any purse or bag for quick review on-the-go. The toolkits are also great aids in understanding and applying practices found in larger, denser research-based texts, such as the newly-released SAGE Handbook of Mentoring. Overall, the toolkits successfully compile, summarize, and explain mentoring techniques used world-wide into simpler, more comprehensible terms and ideas that even new mentors can use.

Please see the “Mentoring Tips” section below for an excerpt of Mentoring Excellence Pocket Toolkit #4: Accountability Strategies and Checklists.

Source:
**Upcoming Events:**

- **Mentoring in the 21st Century Institute**
  
  April 25-27, 2017
  
  Washington DC
  
  Just ASK Publications & Professional Development - Paula Rutherford
  
  This institute/workshop series will focus on best practice in mentoring roles and responsibilities in induction programs, stages of new teacher development, working with adult learners, information processing styles, generational differences, peer observation and feedback options, and best practices in standards-based teaching and learning.

- **International Mentoring Association’s Annual Mentoring Conference**
  
  April 26-28, 2017
  
  Wilmington, North Carolina
  
  Judy Girard (Keynote), Dawn Chandler & Richard Walsh (Plenary)
  
  Join the IMA for their 29th Annual Mentoring Conference in Wilmington, North Carolina, to learn about the latest research and best practices around professional mentoring.

- **EMCC 7th Annual International Mentoring and Coaching Research Conference**
  
  June 14-15, 2017
  
  Greenwich University, London, U.K.
  
  View session speakers [here](#)
  
  EMCC’s 7th Research Conference will continue to bridge the gap between research and practice with their conference theme: Putting research at the heart of practice. The keynote speakers, a panel of experts and over 20 session speakers will all be contributing to the theme.

- **2017 Summer Institute on Youth Mentoring**
  
  July 17-20, 2017
  
  Renaissance Washington, DC Downtown
  
  Portland State University and MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership are proud to announce the 2017 Summer Institute on Youth Mentoring. The theme of the 2017 Summer Institute, Mentoring in the Civic Space, emphasizes intersections between mentoring and youth empowerment, sociopolitical development, civic engagement, social action, and community development.

- **UNM Mentoring Institute’s 10th Annual Mentoring Conference**
  
  October 23-27, 2017
  
  Albuquerque, New Mexico
  
  Ann Betz, Lisa Fain, Chad Littlefield, Maggie Werner-Washburne, Lois Zachary, Brad Johnson, David Clutterbuck, Tammy Allen, Lillian T. Eby, Fran Kochan, and Robert Garvey (Plenary)
  
  This conference will feature over 300 concurrent presentations from a diverse variety of academic disciplines and industries.

- **The 2018 National Mentoring Summit**
  
  January 24-26, 2018
  
  Renaissance Washington, DC Downtown
  
  The National Mentoring Summit is the only national convening of youth mentoring professionals, researchers, philanthropic investors and government and civic leaders aimed at collectively strengthening and expanding quality mentoring relationships for young people across the country.

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**In the News:**

This month’s selection of mentoring-related news

*Forbes: Redefining Mentoring for the Digital Age*

By Diana Tsai

*The Huffington Post: Can You Learn Something from These 5 Great Mentoring Relationships?*

By Allan Smith

*Forbes: The Five Don’ts That Destroy Coaching And Mentoring*

By David Naylor

*Essence: L’Oreal and Coalition of 100 Black Women Host Mentoring Program*

By Alexis Webb
Mentoring Tips:

“Successful mentoring partners engage in a collaborative, robust goal-setting process and then create a game plan for how to achieve those goals.”

“Talk about the Mentee’s learning needs, career aspirations, and gaps in current skill sets.”

“Learning goals need to be focused, relevant, and challenging enough to warrant the time and attention of both Mentor and Mentee.”

“Convert starter goals into SMART goals (goals that are specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and timely).”

“Mentoring partners need to clarify mutual expectations, define roles and responsibilities, establish working agreements, monitor progress, and measure results.”

“Without accountability, even the best partnership can be upended. Small stumbling blocks can undermine trust and erode confidence.”

“Establish a regular pattern of formal and informal contact.”

Source:

Important Dates & Deadlines:

UNM Mentoring Institute’s 2017 Mentoring Conference—Updated List

Registration Deadlines:

Early Registration Deadline
June 15, 2017

Last Date to Register as a Presenter
June 15, 2017

Last Date to Register as a Peer-Reviewer
June 15, 2017

Last Day to Register as a Volunteer
September 30, 2017

Standard Registration Deadline
October 7, 2017

Important Dates:

Abstract Proposal Submission Deadline
May 15, 2017

Accepted Proposal Notification
May 30, 2017

Paper Submission Due (First Draft)
June 30, 2017

Peer-Review Process
July 1-30, 2017

Peer-reviewed Papers Returned
August 1, 2017

Final Paper Submission Due
August 30, 2017

We need news!

We are always looking for new content and articles to add to our upcoming newsletters. Please email us at mentor@unm.edu if you would like to submit something. Thank you!