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The process of mentoring in the career development of female managers.

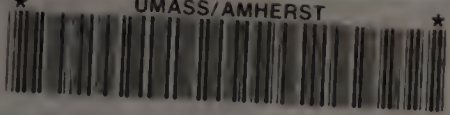Agnes K. Missirian
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THE PROCESS OF MENTORING IN THE CAREER

DEVELOPMENT OF FEMALE MANAGERS

A Dissertation Presented

By

AGNES K. MISSIRIAN

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

September 1980

School of Business Administration

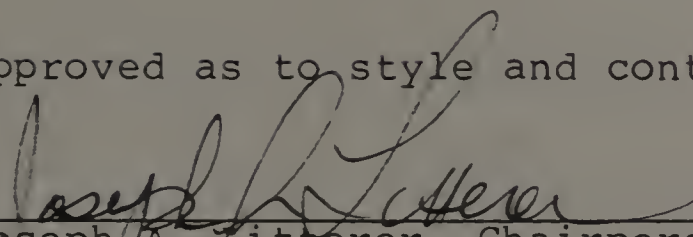THE PROCESS OF MENTORING IN THE CAREER

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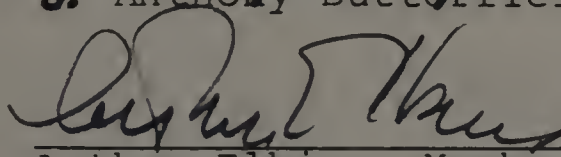A Dissertation Presented

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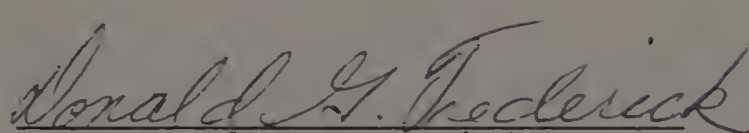
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The Process of Mentoring in the Career

Development of Female Managers

(September 1980)

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M.B.A., Boston University,

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Directed by: Professor Joseph A. Litterer

Because of the growing number of women entering the
management ranks today, there is a vital need to examine the
policies and practices instrumental in developing women into
effective and successful managers.

Review of the literature indicates that the mentor/
protege relationship is a key element in the career patterns
of successful male managers. The literature is silent about
the prevalence or effect of mentoring upon female managers.

This study examines the prevalence and the process
of mentoring of a select group of woman managers. A sample
was drawn from women at the top of the organizational
hierarchy--women who are active, practicing managers; women
who are neither entrepreneurs nor heiresses; women who made
their way to the top through the corporate hierarchy.

The investigation was exploratory in nature consist-

ing of a survey of the 100 top businesswomen in the country

together with 15 in-depth interviews. The general

hypothesis--mentoring has been a significant part of the

career development of successful female managers--was con-

firmed.

The following research questions were also explored:

Is the mentor/protege relationship as described by
Daniel J. Levinson and Harry Levinson different as it
applies to female managers?

Are there stages of socialization or patterns of
behavior which can be clearly identified within the
mentor/protege relationship?

Do mentors and their proteges have shared, values,
attitudes and goals?

Are mentors former proteges?

Is the issue of voluntary association important?
The issue of initiation?

Is sexuality addressed in the mentor/protege
relationship?

For each question an affirmative answer is supported by the

data.

The principal outcome of this research is the

description of the mentoring process. Three broad phases,

Initiation, Development and Termination, are described in

detail. A set of mentor behaviors is specified together

with correlative sets of perceptions and feelings

experienced by proteges during each phase of the mentoring

process. Data analysis reveals that while it is the mentor

who initiates the process, it is the protege who signals the

shift from one stage to the next.

   This research also reveals three characteristic elements
which distinguish mentoring relationships (the highest point
on a continuum of supportive relationships) from other less
influential relationships: the degree of power the mentor
commands in terms of access to resources both material
and personal; the level of identification with the mentor;
and the intensity of emotional involvement with the mentor.

   While mentoring relationships are unique, complex and
relatively rare in the organizational context, this study
presents evidence to support the view that this powerful
ideal can be approximated if not fully reached at all levels
of the organization. Recommendations for future research
are suggested.

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MENTOR/PROTEGE RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction

There are growing numbers of young women aspiring
to executive positions. Many are being brought into the
entry levels of management under the pressure of equal
opportunity legislation and regulations. As a conse-
quence, there is a vital need to examine the policies and
practices instrumental in developing women into effective
and successful managers.

Considerable literature is available that iden-
tifies the mentor/protege relationship as a key element in
the career patterns of successful male managers. However,
no such literature exists as yet for female managers.
While references to the importance of a mentor in the
career strategies of some female executives have been
made, no systematic investigation of a "process" of men-
toring for female managers has yet been undertaken.

The implications of this deficiency are many and
serious. In view of the fact that women (and minorities)
are not members of the informal corporate network that
fosters the mentor relationship, they are effectively cut

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off from one of the most powerful avenues to career devel-
opment. Given the level of educational preparation and
the greater expectations that feminism and affirmative
action have stimulated in women, personal frustration and
organizational dysfunction are predictable.

While corporations, feeling the pressure of class-
action suits, have scrambled to conform to EEOC guide-
lines, their efforts have been hampered by the existing
organizational structures and socialization processes
which mitigate against the integration of women into the
decision-making mainstream of corporate life. Dual
hierarchies and sex-segregated job pools are but two
examples of the foregoing which still characterize firms
today.

The pejorative expression, "Who wants a girl on
their team?" gets at the heart of the problem and of the
sentiments that make interactions especially strained for
women moving into managerial ranks. Because the female
manager is perceived as "other" than the norm, interac-
tion with her is limited. The possibilities for positive
sentiments to develop, both with peers and superiors, are
thus minimized; attitude changes are consequently
retarded; and sexual biases persist despite the growing
number of women moving into middle management positions.
In effect, the female manager becomes a member "of" the

management group, but is not "in" the group. Isolation and lack of professional as well as personal rapport with colleagues severely limits the female manager's opportunities for professional growth and promotion. The concomitant consequences to the organization are the significant loss of human potential, the possible subversive effects of blocked opportunities, litigation initiated by such blocked employees, sanctions from government regulatory agencies, and of course, the possible economic consequences associated with all of these factors.

Firms must begin to face the impact of legislative and societal pressure in the recruitment, hiring, training and promotion of female managers with policies which are proactive rather than reactive.

By focusing on the mentoring process-acknowledged by many as one of the critical developmental factors in the career patterns of successful male managers--this research can provide a key functional link between affirmative action as a policy and practices which engender effective female managers.

It is our hope that this study of a unique sample of women at the highest level of management will generate data which will contribute to the existing body of knowledge about these powerful and complex relationships; moreover, that these findings will prove useful to other

researchers exploring mentoring relationships across the total spectrum of organizational life--both for women and men.

A Review and Critique of the Literature

Access to the upper echelons of many of the traditional professions--law, medicine, theology, higher education, and more recently management--is commonly gained through the protege and/or colleague system. Both operate to identify, train and groom the neophytes who will become the future leaders of the profession. The interplay between the formal and informal relationships of the practitioners in these professions is a significant part of the socialization and developmental process.

The close rapport which results from working together, dining together, playing together, relaxing together makes it possible for the developing young person to acquire not only expertise in the technical and functional aspects of the work itself, but also to internalize those values and to develop those work habits, interpersonal skills and mannerisms which distinguish the members of the profession. Ultimately, these carefully cultivated characteristics will identify the neophyte as sufficiently competent and personally "worthy" to be admitted into the inner circle of the professional community.

Becker and Strauss (1956) observe that one has to be regarded as "in" even to learn the job itself; and that "until the newcomer is accepted, he will not be taught crucial trade secrets," much less advance in the field. Stressing the subtleties of the informal relationships, Goffman (1963) points out that "more is involved than norms regarding somewhat static status attributes . . . that failure to sustain the many minor norms important in the etiquette of face-to-face communications can have a very pervasive effect upon the defaulter's acceptability in social situations." The work of Hall (1948) illustrates these same points for the medical profession; and the work of Egerton (cited in Bernard, 1964) for the sciences.

In the specific case of management, Zaleznik (1977) goes a step further and draws a distinction between managers as professionals and leaders of the profession. He suggests that while managers are socialized by the organizational norms, the most promising young managers-- those destined to become the leaders of the profession-- are socialized on a one-to-one basis by a mentor or a sponsor.

Some business firms have recognized the importance of mentoring in developing managers. Jewel Companies has had an institutionalized form of mentoring for junior ex-

ecutives for some time based on former chairman Frank Lunding's belief in its effectiveness as a developmental strategy. In his book, Sharing a Business, he calls it the "first assistant" philosophy. Each of the last four presidents of Jewel was the mentor of his successor. Two other firms, AT&T and RCA, have started experimenting with peer-group mentoring programs designed for women entering the management ranks.

Given the appropriate educational background, professional expertise and the requisite motivation, then, it appears that one of the critical developmental factors in the socialization of the most successful managers is the degree of sophistication and acceptance gained through personal rapport with a member or members of the professional elite. Indeed, the notion that an aspiring young manager needs a sponsor or a mentor to advance to the highest levels of the corporate hierarchy has such a degree of face validity, that very little empirical research existed regarding this phenomenon until recently.

Research on the mentoring of men. A survey conducted by Heidrick & Struggles, Inc., published in the Harvard Business Review (January/February, 1979) reports that top managers not only have had mentors, but apparently derive greater satisfaction from their career and work than those who have not had mentors. Nearly two-thirds of the

respondents reported having had a mentor or a sponsor, and one-third of them have had two or more mentors. (It is noteworthy that of the 1250 respondents, less than one percent were women.) The survey suggests further that executives who have had a mentor earn more money at a younger age, are better educated, and more likely to follow a career plan, and sponsor more proteges than executives who have not had a mentor.

Some writers in the management literature, notably, Berlew and Hall, Etzioni, Livingston, Schein, Zaleznik et al., have reported on the corporate socialization process and tangentially upon elements of the mentor/protege relationship. The most extensive investigation of mentoring to date is that of Daniel J. Levinson (1978), that of Harry Levinson (1968) and Shapiro, Haseltine and Rowe (1978).

In his study of adult male development, Daniel J. Levinson cites the role of mentor as critical in the fulfillment of a young man's "dream" (ego ideal) both in terms of professional and emotional development. He points out that the absence of a mentor is associated with "various kinds of developmental impairment and problems of individuation in mid-life." He reported on the life cycle of 40 men: 10 blue and white collar workers in industry; 10 academicians; 10 biologists and novelists; and 10 busi-

ness executives.

The following is a summary of Levinson's description of the mentor and the formation of mentoring relationships:

A good mentor is an admixture of good father and good friend. (A bad mentor, of which there are many, combines the worst features of father and friend.) A "good enough" mentor is a transitional figure who invites and welcomes a young man into the adult world. He serves as guide, teacher and sponsor. He represents skill, knowledge, virtue, accomplishment--the superior qualities a young man hopes someday to acquire. He gives his blessing to the novice and his dream. And yet, with all this superiority, he conveys the promise that in time, they will be peers. The protege has the hope that soon he will be able to join or even surpass his mentor in the work they both value.
A mentor can be of great practical help to a young man as he seeks to find his way and gain new skills. But a good mentor is helpful in a more basic, developmental sense. The relationship enables the recipient to identify with a person who exemplifies many of the qualities he seeks. It enables him to form an internal figure who offers love, admiration and encouragement in his struggles. He acquires a sense of belonging to the generation of promising young men. He reaps the varied benefits to be gained from a serious, mutual non-sexual loving relationship with a somewhat older man or woman. (There are other elements, which bring various advantages and disadvantages when the relationship is sexual and when the mentor is much older or the same age.)
Like all love relationships, the course of a mentor relationship is rarely smooth and its ending is often painful. Such relations have favorable developmental functions, but they have negative aspects as well. There is plenty of room for exploitation, undercutting, envy, smothering and oppressive control on the part of the mentor, and for greedy demanding clinging admiration, self-denying gratitude and arrogant ingratitude on the part of the recipient. It is not always clear who is doing what for whom.

> After the relationship has been terminated, both
> parties are susceptible to the most intense
> feeling of admiration and contempt, appreciation
> and resentment, grief, rage, bitterness, and relief--
> just as in the wake of any significant love
> relationship.

Daniel J. Levinson concludes that most adults give and receive very little mentoring; that despite the frequent emphasis on teamwork and loyalty in business organizations, mentoring relationships are more the exception than the rule for both workers and managers.

The foregoing description of the mentor appears in an earlier theoretical and psychological conception by Harry Levinson, entitled <u>The Exceptional Executive</u>. He describes the mentoring relationship in terms of meeting the ministration, maturation and mastery needs of subordinates and/or proteges. He also emphasizes the importance of "giving one's blessing" to the protege's aspirations in the ministration stage and "letting go" in the mastery stage. In return, the younger man feels appreciation, admiration, respect, gratitude, love and identification. In some respects the main value of the relationship is created after it ends, says Levinson. "The protege's personality is enriched as he makes the valued qualities of the mentor more fully a part of himself." The process of identification is complete.

Shapiro, Haseltine and Rowe describe a range of advisory/guiding persons, often called "mentors," who

facilitate access to positions of leadership, authority or power for their respective proteges. Such people, they say, form a continuum with "mentors" and "peer pals" as end points. They perceive the "mentor" as the most intense and paternalistic of the type of patrons described by the continuum. These are the so-called "godfathers" and "rabbis" to which Kanter, Sheehey and other writers have referred. "Sponsors" serve as a two-thirds point on the continuum. While strong supporters, they are less powerful than mentors in promoting and shaping the careers of their proteges. The one-third point, or "guide" role is filled by those who are less able than mentors and sponsors to fulfill the roles of benefactor, protector or champion to their proteges. However, they can be invaluable in explaining the system, pointing out pitfalls to be avoided and shortcuts to be pursued. And finally, they identify "peer pals" who clearly cannot be godfathers to one another, but who can share information and advice and act as sounding boards for one another.

Shapiro et al. suggest further that those patron relationships that fall toward the "mentor" side of the continuum tend to be more hierarchical and parental, more intense and exclusionary, and therefore, more elitist. Those relationships which fall toward the "peer pal" side of the continuum tend to be more egalitarian, less intense

and exclusionary.

Research on the mentoring of women. If we assume, then, that the "mentor"--however defined--is a critical developmental figure in the life cycle of men, and if we assume further that membership in the professional elite is best mediated by a mentor, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that the mentor can also be a critical developmental figure in the life cycle of women and similarly in the professional development of female managers.

Various authors, Cussler (1958), Epstein (1969), Hennig (1971), Sheehey (1976), and Kanter (1977) have made reference to the importance of a mentor, trusted counselor, sponsor, coach, guide, etc., in the career patterns of women. However, the mentor/protege relationship was not the primary focus of their research, nor was there any consistency in their definition of a professional, an executive or a managerial woman.

Cussler (1958), in her pioneering effort, The Woman Executive, defines a female executive as one who earns $4,000 annually ($8,720 as adjusted by CPI in 1978 dollars) and supervises four or more people. The validity of these criteria for defining an executive is questionable even for 1958, but is totally invalid today. Epstein (1969) observes that, because their sex status is defined within the culture of the traditional professions as

inappropriate, women find that institutionalized channels of recruitment and advancement such as the protege system are not available to them. While this is an enlightening conclusion, it would be unwise to extrapolate from the traditional professions directly into the organizational context. The organizational structure in which the traditional professionals operate is significantly different from most corporate structures in which managers operate.

Hennig (1971) identified a sponsor as a significant figure in the career development of the women executives she interviewed; but the principal sponsor in most cases was the woman's father who provided access into the organizational hierarchy and selected the supervisor who would be charged with her development. While this finding is psychologically intriguing, it would be hard to generalize to the larger population of organization women today, whose fathers may be neither business executives nor professionals with clout.

Using an historical perspective, Sheehey (1977) examines the sometimes notorious lives of celebrated women in the arts who were the proteges of famous men. In each case the mentor was either husband or lover. Again, Sheehey's sample can hardly be considered representative. Moreover, she readily acknowledges that her analysis of the mentor relationship is drawn directly from Daniel J.

Levinson's research.

The most recent study on mentoring for female managers is a dissertation by Linda Lee Phillips titled, Mentors and Protegees: A Study of the Career Development of Women Managers and Executives in Business and Industry, UCLA, School of Education, 1977. A total of 331 women participated in the national survey, and 50 women were interviewed.

While exploring the totality of the stages in womens' careers, the study focused upon "the concept of 'career mentoring'--the help given by someone (mentor) to an individual (protege) in order to help the protege define or reach his or her life goals." Sixty-one per cent of the women stated that they had one or more career mentors during their lifetimes. Phillips identified "primary" and "secondary" mentors. Primary mentors, according to Phillips, are those who "go out on a limb" for their proteges and really care. While secondary mentors, though also helpful are essentially out to bene- fit themselves rather than the protege. "The difference between primary and secondary mentors," she concludes, "depends entirely upon the perception of the protege, not the perceptions of the mentors or outside observers." She also concludes that most mentor/protege relationships go through a series of phases, which she calls Initiation,

Sparkle, Development, Dissolusionment, Parting and Transformation.

She outlines three dimensions which contribute to the success or failure of the mentoring experience: "the mentoring relationship (the participant's attitudes toward themselves, each other and the experience, their needs and personal characteristics, the length of the relationship, and the participants' reasons for and control over participating), the mentoring help (appropriateness and potential impact), and the timing of the experience (when it occurs within each participant's career stages and within the external environment.)" Each of these must be present, she says for the effect of the relationship to be a positive one for both mentor and protege.

The sample was drawn from Standard and Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors, and Executives and Who's Who in Finance & Industry plus the 100 women named by BUSINESS WEEK as the "100 Top Corporate Women."

While the study adds to our understanding of mentoring in general, it deals with an essentially heterogeneous sample. Many of the women included in the Standard and Poor's Directory and Who's Who in Finance are not functioning managers but corporate directors who may not have a business or corporate orientation at all. They may be economists, attorneys, Ph.D.'s or the wives or daughters

of majority shareholders—though not necessarily managers.

A host of other authors (see Supplementary Bibliography) writing in both professional and popular journals have emphasized: (1) the importance of a sponsor or mentor as a means of "getting to the top" or advancing professionally; (2) the dearth of female mentors to serve as counselors and role models for female managers; (3) the sexual overtone surrounding male/female mentor/protege relationships; and (4) speculation as to how these factors may influence the advancement of women in organizations. However, these articles are not empirically based for the most part and appear to be infinite variations or distortions of the research findings cited here.

In summary, then, a search of the literature reveals that most successful male managers and many successful "businesswomen" have had some sort of mentor or sponsor and that, in general, this is regarded as a positive phenomenon. Very little is known, however, about the "process of mentoring" for either group from which one could generalize. And to obfuscate what little is known, the term "mentoring" has been used to describe a wide range of behaviors characterized by varying degrees of emotional involvement and intensity.

The Research Problem

In view of this dearth of empirical research con-

cerning the process of mentoring, it is our intent to exa-
mine the prevalence and the process of mentoring in a
homogeneous and select group of women at the very top of
the organizational hierarchy--women who are active, prac-
ticing managers; women who are neither entrepreneurs nor
heiressess; women who made their way to the top through
the corporate maze. We shall investigate and examine the
extent to which such developmental relationships exist;
the conditions under which they are likely to occur; the
characteristics and dynamics of such relationships; and
the positive and/or negative consequences to the indivi-
duals themselves and to the organizations of which they
are a part.

CHAPTER II
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Design

Because so little is known about the phenomenon of mentoring for female managers, this research is exploratory in nature following the form prescribed by Jahoda, Cook and Deutch, and Festinger and Katz: namely, a review of the literature (as provided in Chapter I), a survey of experienced and prominent practitioners (Chapter III), and an in-depth analysis of "insight provoking" cases (Chapters IV, V, and VI).

This open-ended approach does not lend itself to a carefully worded hypothesis with operationally defined terms. Rather, the main hypothesis will be presented in general terms, and it will be followed by a series of research questions. Our investigation of these research questions is intended to enhance our understanding of the process of mentoring for female managers and to provide the fulcrum from which specific testable hypotheses can be fashioned for subsequent research.

General Hypothesis. Mentoring has been a significant part

of the career development of successful female managers.*

Research questions.

Is the mentor/protege relationship as described by
Daniel J. Levinson and Harry Levinson cited in
Chapter I different as it applies to female
managers?

Are there stages of socialization or patterns of
behavior which can be clearly identified within
the mentor/protege relationship?

Do mentors and their proteges have shared values,
attitudes and goals?

Are mentors former proteges?

Is the issue of voluntary association important?
The issue of initiation?

Is sexuality addressed in the mentor/protege rela-
tionship?

Research subjects. The subjects of this study are the

people identified by BUSINESS WEEK as the "top 100 cor-

porate women" in the country in 1976. The criteria used

in this exhaustive national survey was that the women be:

(1) one of the highest ranking female managers in the

company; (2) a recognized professional in the respective

industry; and (3) one whose annual salary exceeds $30,000.

The same subject criteria were used for this study with

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*The terms "mentor" and "mentoring" are used here
in the broadest sense to include all of the diads in the
continuum described by Shapiro, Haseltine and Rowe, refer-
enced in Chapter I. The adjective "successful" is spe-
cified in the criteria used to identify the research
subjects in the following section.

one discriminating exception.

There are a number of women in the BUSINESS WEEK survey group, such as Mary Roebling, Katherine Graham and Mary Wells, who are not corporate women in the sense intended for this research. While they are well-educated and extraordinarily competent women, they did not climb any corporate ladder. In the case of Mary Roebling and Katherine Graham, both inherited the Chief Executive Officer's (CEO's) position from their respective husbands. Mary Wells, blocked in her advance to the top, took the entrepreneurial route.

For purposes of this study, then widows of CEO's, heiresses and entrepreneurs are exempt. Corporate women are defined as those women whose career development took place within the organizational context and were there-fore subject to the constraints of an organizational hierarchy. Since 1976, the number of corporate women who met the criteria noted may have changed and therefore, the population of experienced practitioners may be somewhat more or less than 100.

Methodology

Survey. It was intended that a mail survey of all the subjects would serve as a simple screening device to distinguish those who have had mentors from those who have not. In addition, the biographical data would provide the

basis for demographic comparisons to see if there were any significant differences between those who said they have had mentors from those who said they have not.

Useful questions to explore are: Are there educational differences in the level and type of preparation for management, i.e., MBA, JD, or Engineering degrees vs. Liberal Arts degrees? Are there strategic advancemernt differences, i.e., staff vs. line progression? Does age appear to be a factor? How?

Daniel J. Levinson says that men map out their career strategies (the dream) in their early 20's and further concludes that men do not have mentors after age 40. On the other hand, Hennig says that most business-women defer serious commitment to career goals until their mid-30's. These alternative time frames suggest some interesting outcomes and their possible implications. Clearly, if women start their career strategies later, one possible outcome is that they may never attract a mentor, since it has been observed that men will not risk involve-ment with a protege unless there is strong evidence that the achievements of the protege will bring credit to the mentor. Less time on the track may be perceived as a serious handicap for a female protege. Still another possible outcome is that women may have mentors well into their 40's because of the 10-year lag in their commitment

decision.

Age differences between mentor and protege also suggest some interesting comparisons. While for men the mentor is reported to be some 5 to 15 years older than the protege, it might well be that for women the age gap is much smaller or is reversed. Given that one of the attractions in this relationship is presumed to be the status and power of the mentor, it is conceivable that a woman may be the protege of a man who is her contemporary or is even younger than she.

These are but a few of the dimensions which were explored from the comparisons obtained from the demographics requested in the survey. The remainder of the survey consisted of open-ended questions which were designed to lay the foundation for the subsequent in-depth interviews. A draft of the survey instrument was pre-tested in a management womens' support group at Digital, Inc. Our main concerns were that the wording of the questions be clearly understood and that the completion of the survey instrument take no longer than fifteen minutes. Appropriate modifications were made; and a copy of the final instrument appears in Appendix I.

From those women who identified a sponsor or a mentor as a significant developmental figure, 10 women were to be chosen for subsequent personal interviews. In addition, recognizing the possibility that some of the

women may feel pressure to deny that they had a mentor or may choose to "forget" the relationship, five women from the non-mentor group were also to be selected for interviewing.

While our purpose here was not specifically to compare successful women who have had mentors with successful women who have not had mentors, the interviews with the non-mentor group served as a control and contributed to the richness of our analysis and our understanding of the mentoring process. For example: If indeed these women had no mentors, how were their needs for support, direction, reinforcement, identification, etc., met?

Survey responses. From the list of 100 women identified in BUSINESS WEEK, 13 women were eliminated because they were known to be entrepreneurs or heiresses. The survey was mailed to the remaining 87 women. During the several months this investigation was underway, three prominent appointments were announced in the press. The names of these women were added to the list, making the total of top management women surveyed 90.

On first pass, 21 completed surveys were returned. After three weeks another mailing and follow-up telephone calls elicited another four responses. The total number of completed and useable survey responses either by mail, phone or in person was 35. Note the summary of survey

responses in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1

Survey Responses

Total Mailing		90
Completed by mail	25	
Completed by person	10	
Total Completed & Useable Surveys		35
Returned marked "Unknown"	10	
Returned with "Regrets"	3	
Completed but not used (an entrepreneur)	1	
Total Survey Response		49

Ten of the surveys were returned marked "unknown" or "no longer employed." For each of these returns, a letter was sent to the company personnel director asking for a forwarding address. In only one case was this information provided. It was for Esther Peterson, Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs. All other personnel offices responded indicating "no knowledge."

Three women wrote letters of acknowledgement saying that while they appreciated the importance of the project, the demands on their time would not permit their

participation. One of the completed surveys was not used because it was from an entrepreneur who was not identified before the mailing.

Interviews. The format of the 15 interviews was informal, open-ended and relatively unstructured. The underlying purpose, of course, was to encourage the subjects to explore their memories and to explain in as great detail as possible the nature, depth and unique qualities of the relationships which they identified as significant in their career development.

The interviews were tape recorded and usually lasted about two hours--some lasted about an hour and forty-five minutes, others lasted almost three hours. Most of the interviews were conducted at corporate head-quarters in the woman's office. One was conducted in the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. Another was conductd on the Babson College campus in Wellesley because the woman was in town to attend a trustees' meeting. Two interviews with members of the non-mentor group were con-ducted over the phone.

While flexibility of approach was maintained throughout the interviews, we were guided in our inquiry by our specific purpose: (1) to identify specific activi-ties and/or behaviors, perceptions and feelings recalled by the subjects as their own and those of their mentor;

and (2) to note changes in the relationship over time.

The following specific questions--some of which appear at the end of the survey and for which we had at least a superficial response--served as "lead-in's" for deeper investigation.

"Is there some one person (or perhaps more than one person) who stands out in your mind as the one who most influenced your career development at a critical juncture?"

"In what ways was this person influential or instrumental in your career progress and development?"

The first question served to identify a key figure not labeled a "mentor" or a "sponsor," because often the subject may not have consciously thought about this significant person in their lives in those terms. The second question attempted to focus the subject's attention upon the details of a process of influence. What we were looking for here were specific activities (public behaviors) engaged in by the mentor that were perceived by the protege as beneficial, as well as the behaviors and feelings of the protege in response.

"How did you happen to meet? On the job? Socially? At school? By chance?"

"Did you seek this person out subsequently? Did they seek you out? Were subsequent meetings situational?"

"Was this person a member of the same organization? Are they now? Was this person related to you in any way? Are they now?"

These questions opened up the issue of initiation
into the mentor/protege relationship. We could then begin
to discuss the perceptions, behaviors and feelings
recalled from the first meeting and subsequently.

"Is there something that particularly attracted
you to this person?"

"How would you describe this person?"

The key word here is attraction. After noting
from the survey whether the subject answered these
questions in terms of personality traits, professional
skills or feelings, they were asked to describe the person
in the alternative terms. Some of the follow-up questions
were:

"How do you think you were perceived by this per-
son initially? Now?"

"Were you ever consciously aware that this person
was preparing you for 'bigger and better' things?
How?"

"Did you have a specific goal? Did you both share
this goal?"

"Would you say you and this person were alike?
Different? In what ways?"

"Is there a difference in your ages? How much?
Do you think this influenced the relationship in
any way? How?"

"How long did the relationship last? Are you
still in touch?"

"What was the most satisfying or rewarding aspect
of this relationship for you? What do you think
was the most satisfying or rewarding aspect of
this relationship for this person?"

"How do you know? Did you ever discuss this with
one another?"

"What were some of the negative, trying or disap-
pointing aspects of this relationship for you?
For this person?"

"How do you know? Did you ever discuss these
issues with one another?"

"What advice would you give to young women coming
up through the corporate ranks today regarding
their involvement in mentor/protege relation-
ships?"

Needless to say, any one of the foregoing ques-
tions might have been followed up or not depending upon
the response. Sometimes they were posed differently later
on in the interview or dropped altogether if that seemed
appropriate. If the issue was critical, as it was in one
or two cases, the subject was broached again by telephone
sometime later. In one instance, the subject wrote a
letter following the interview responding to the question
which was never asked explicitly.

In view of the fact that the mentor/protege rela-
tionship can best be described as a "love relationship"
(D. Levinson, 1978), which often leaves in its wake ambi-
valent feelings, the interviewer's skill, credibility and
discretion were important facilitators in the establish-
ment of the requisite rapport.

Interview strategy and responses. Rather than waiting for
all of the surveys to dribble in before separating out the

mentor and non-mentor groups, a potential list of inter-
viewees was chosen from leading companies representing a
broad cross-section of American industry. They were
employed by firms engaged in: advertising, banking, broad-
casting, electrical and electronics, finance and invest-
ments, food, manufacturing, publishing, retailing, ser-
vices, and utilities. From a geographic perspective,
organizations were chosen with corporate headquarters
located on both the east and west coasts as well as in the
midwest.

The 15 women selected for possible interview were
contacted directly by phone. It was our assumption that
there would be a 50/50 chance that the person called would
have a mentor and would be willing to be interviewed.
Presumably, then, we could schedule at least 10 interviews
without depending upon survey returns. More importantly,
it was our sense that at the top management level, a
proactive approach would be most effective in securing the
interviews. Indeed, calling "cold"--without introduction
or survey response from the prospective interviewees--
proved to be a most advantageous strategy.

The women expressed genuine interest in the
research subject, but only a few recalled having received
the survey. They indicated, however, that they receive
many such inquiries, and generally do not commit the time

to respond. There was a certain expression of regret
about dismissing these inquiries indiscriminately.

It was at this point that the researcher took the
initiative to repeat in a personal way what was stated
formally in the cover letter:

> "A critical part of the research involves a
> survey of experienced and prominent practitioners
> to be followed by a selected sample of personal
> interviews. You are one of the 100 top business-
> women in the country. As such, your career
> history and personal insights can contribute what
> no one else can to our understanding of the career
> development of women in top management. I appre-
> ciate the fact that since there are so few women
> at the highest levels, this does put a burden on
> those who have achieved distinction--but a proud
> one I think." (See Appendix II.)

None of the women contacted personally refused to
participate in the study. Only one woman eventually
withdrew and that appeared to be a corporate policy deci-
sion and not a personal one. At the time her company was
engaged in a precedent setting class-action suit with the
Federal Government.

The biggest problem encountered in setting up the
interviews was scheduling. Each interview required
blocking off a two-hour segment of uninterrupted time.
Appointments were scheduled, and often canceled at the
last minute and rescheduled. Since most of the interviews
required plane travel, resolving the scheduling problem
tested the flexibility and goodwill of both the researcher
and the interviewee.

When an interview finally took place, the problem became one of establishing intimate rapport quickly. Since some of these prominent women had been interviewed by journalists many times before, it was conceivable that they might be defensive or contrived. How to establish a rapport based on mutual respect and trust? The researcher chose to take time at the outset of each interview to summarize her own business background and her motivation for undertaking this research. During this personal exchange, the researcher attempted to reinforce the impression that she conveyed over the phone, i.e., that she was intimately acquainted with the subtleties of corporate life and that they shared much in common. The perception that the researcher was an "insider" made it possible for the women to reveal much more of themselves and their organizational lives than they might have felt free to do otherwise. It was upon this foundation of mutual respect and trust that the interviews were conducted.

A number of women expressed a sense of personal revelation and pleasure at the conclusion of the interviews. For a few the revelation was more pain than pleasure. As one woman put it, "I never imagined myself talking to anyone about these feelings."

These reactions are noted here because interviewing is an interactive process, and therefore, the

interviewer is as much a factor in the substance and content of the interview as is the person being interviewed.

Interview Analysis. The interviews were analyzed using a scheme which, in retrospect, is somewhat similar to the Homans' model of small group interaction, although it was developed quite apart from his work. We chose to consider behaviors, perceptions and feelings because it was our sense that together these three aspects could provide a reasonably coherent picture of the dynamics of a relationship.

For example: As we examine the behaviors of the mentor, we find that we are looking at an activity component, task-relevant public behaviors. When we examine the perceptions of the protege, we are looking at an activity component, an individual's unique perception of the world. And when we examine the feelings of the protege, we are looking at an emotional component, a person's visceral response to what is being experienced externally and internally.

The view is a single perspective to be sure, but nonetheless a totality. Quite arbitrarily we chose to segment the time frame into three broad stages, Initiation, Development and Termination.

The data collected in the interviews was first arranged as a series of 15 case transcripts. A data

matrix like the one appearing in Appendix III was constructed to report the data from each interview.

Initially, each interview transcript was read in its entirety to gain a sense of the whole before attempting to break it down into the components of the matrix. A short paragraph summarizing the researcher's overall impressions were noted. Then, using a highliter, each transcript was scanned and content analyzed using the following interview scanning schema.

Interview Scanning Schema

Identification and differentiation of behaviors, feelings and perceptions reported by the interviewees were cued by specific parts of speech as follows:

Behaviors, which are generally expressed as specific actions taken toward, for or on behalf of an individual, were identified by action verbs and their objects with the exception of the verb to be.

Feelings, which are most often expressed as descriptions of emotion, were identified by adjectives, predicate adjectives or adverbs as the particular sentence was constructed.

Perceptions, which are usually explanations following verb phrases such as; I think, it seems to me, it appears, I have a sense that and the like, were iden-

tified by the clause immediately following such verbs.

For example:

Question: Was there a particular quality or
characteristic of this person that
stands out in your mind?

Answer: He always made me feel important.

Clearly, a <u>feeling</u> has been expressed and iden-
tified by the adj/adv <u>important</u>.

If the interviewer follows this disclosure with
the question: "How?" the following statements--"He always
introduced me to other executives; he sent me the latest
literature relating to my area of interest; he recommended
me for advanced management training--all represent speci-
fic <u>behaviors</u> identified by the action verbs <u>introduced</u>,
<u>sent</u> and <u>recommended</u>.

Now, if the subject were to conclude with: "In
retrospect, I suppose he wanted me to have the broadest
possible exposure," this statement is a <u>perception</u> iden-
tified by the verb <u>suppose</u>, which is a synonym for think,
followed by the clause, <u>he wanted me to have the broadest</u>
<u>possible exposure</u>.

The reliability of this schema was verified by
asking a panel of three--the dissertation chairman, the
researcher and a fellow researcher--to scan the same
transcript. They all arrived at essentially the same
breakdown of behaviors, perceptions and feelings.

Each highlighted section of a transcript was coded in the margin: B for Behavior, P for Perception and F for Feelings; as well as by the numbers one, two and three to identify the respective time frames.

Then, each coded transcript was quite literally cut up according to category and pasted to 5 x 8 cards; blue for Behaviors, yellow for Perceptions, and pink for Feelings. This procedure, though tedious, made it possible to have a complete profile of behaviors, perceptions and feelings of each subject's relationship with her mentor color coded and categorized by stage to facilitate data analysis and comparison. A sample card appears in Appendix IV.

The data thus differentiated was then analyzed across cases to determine if there were any common threads, patterns or diochotomies which emerged from the simple parameters imposed.

These commonalities between subjects and categories were first recorded then tallied. When a particular behavior, perception or feeling was expressed by a simple majority of the interviewees, it was considered a dominant pattern. Eventually, a clear pattern of dominant behaviors, perceptions and feelings emerged keyed to particular stages in the development of the mentoring relationship.

<u>Reporting of Results</u>. The results of the survey analysis and some demographic comparisons are reported in Chapter III which follows. Our analysis of the ten interviews with the mentor group appears in Chapter IV. Some of the critical aspects of the mentoring process which were reported in Chapter IV are discussed in greater depth in Chapter V in light of relevant organizational and behavioral theory. The analysis of the interviews with the non-mentor group is discussed in Chapter VI and some comparisons are made. And finally, a summary of our findings is presented along with our conclusions and a discussion of them in Chapter VII.

C H A P T E R   I I I

PRESENTATION AND DESCRIPTION

OR SURVEY RESULTS

The women who comprise the population of this study--the "100 top businesswomen" in the country--is a small yet elegant group. Some are very prominent and visible women, and as such, have received considerable press. Others, though equally prominent in their fields, are relatively unknown. So before we proceed to analyze the transcripts of our interview sample, it might be enlightening to know something about the background characteristics of the population from which our sample is drawn. What can be said about these top management women as a group in terms of their educational preparation for management, their organizational experience, their titles, salaries, ages and so on? How do they compare with their male counterparts?

Moving on to the specific topic of this study: Do these women have mentors? And if so, what are some of the general characteristics of these relationships? How do these characteristics compare with the data available regarding the mentoring relationships of top management men?

This chapter, then, will report the results of the general survey with regard to these questions in both tabu-

lar and descriptive form in the first section. The general

hypothesis and associated questions will be addressed in the

second section. And a summary of the findings together with

a comparison of this survey with comparable surveys will be

provided in the last section. For purposes of simplicity

and clarity, the terms "mentor" and "non-mentor" groups will

be used to distinguish those who say they have had a signi-

ficant supportive relationship in their business career,

from those who say they have not. First a look at this

unique population from which our sample is drawn.

Demographic Characteristics of the Survey Group

The general profile of the participants in this

survey is in effect the composite profile of the top busi-

nesswomen in the country, presented in Table 3.1

Marital status. Contrary to the pejorative stereotype of

the "old maid" executive, 45.7 percent of the survey group

are currently married and that percentage jumps to 57.1

percent if you include those who have been divorced. On

the other hand, if the number of divorced is added to

those who never married, the currently single percentage

jumps to 55.3 percent. Of those who are now or who have

been married, 65 percent have children.

Education. As a group, the women are college educated;

though by no means is a degree an entrance requirement for this group. Four women (11.4%) reported no college degree.

As undergraduates by far the largest percentage (72.4%) chose liberal arts majors, which is consistent with the national averages for all college women.

TABLE 3.1

PROFILE OF TOP BUSINESSWOMEN

	Frequency	% Frequency
Personal		
Education		
No College	4	11.4
BA or BS	11	31.4
MA or MS	9	25.8
MBA	6	17.1
LLB or JD	3	8.6
Ph.D.	2	5.7
Marital Status		
Never Married	15	42.9
Married	16	45.7
Divorced	4	11.4
Average Age		47.8 years
Organizational		
Title		
President	3	8.6
Vice President	26	74.3
Other	6	17.1
Salary		
31,000-40,000	6	17.1
41,000-50,000	4	11.4
Over 50,000	25	71.4
Average Number of Years with Same Employer		15 years

However, the remaining 27.6 percent chose majors such as, Economics (2), Business Administration (3), Physics (3), Chemistry (1), Mathematics (1) and Meteorology (1).

Fifty-seven per cent (57.1%) have graduate degrees. Twenty-five per cent (25.8%) have an MS or an MA degree; seventeen per cent (17.1%) hold an MBA degree; eight per cent (8.6%) and LLB or JD degree; and five per cent (5.7%) a Ph.D.

More than half of the women (55.9%) participated in continuing education programs which were job-related. Some were company sponsored management development programs; others were university or institute courses designed to develop a specific skill.

Organizational experience. In general these women have spent the better part of their working lives in one company. The average number of years with their present employer is 15 years. There is a very broad range, however, from a low of one year to a high of 35 years.

Their average age is 47.8 years old; and the average salary (71.4%) is over 50,000 dollars.

How did they make their way through the organizational ranks? The majority of women came up through staff positions. Though many of them are now vice presidents, they are vice presidents in a staff function, which is the top of that functional hierarchy. Most do not have the

diversity of experience to gangplank to the line. Note
Table 3.2.

        Nine of the respondents reported having a "mixed"
career path; that is, they have held positions at various

TABLE 3.2

CAREER PROGRESSION

	Frequency	% Frequency
Staff	22	62.9
Line	2	5.7
Mixed	9	25.7
Other	2	5.7
Total:	35	100.0

times which were strictly speaking line functions.
However, a review of these cases indicates that these
digressions to the line were brief. The brevity of the
experience is not so important as the experience itself.
For some, it was an early introductory working experience
that--for whatever reason--was not followed through. For
others, it was a significant departure. It gave them the
breadth of experience needed at an appropriate time in
their careers so that later they could be seriously con-
sidered a top management candidate. The two cases labeled
"other" had no prior corporate experience before becoming
corporate vice presidents. They had previously made their
mark in the legal and non-profit sector, respectively.

Is Affirmative Action a Positive Force? The respondents appear to be split on the importance of affirmative action legislation on their career progress as Table 3.3 indicates.

TABLE 3.3

IMPACT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

	Frequency	% Frequency
None	12	34.3
Minimal	7	20.0
Some	11	31.4
Substantial	4	11.4
Greatest	1	2.9
Total:	35	100.0

The group (54.3%) who says that affirmative action had little or no impact on their career progress is comprised of an interesting mixture. There are those who are over 50 years old. These women say the impact was "minimal" or "none" because their careers were "well underway before affirmative action was even thought of," as one woman explains. This seems justified.

On the other hand, there are those few women who are in their 30's who claim it had little or no impact. This seems curious in view of the fact that their entire working experience has occurred during the post Civil Rights period from 1964 to date. It may just be that they

may not have been aware of significant changes in the business environment because they had no other time frame with which to compare the period of their working experience.

Last but not least, several of these women who say affirmative action had little or no significance in their career progress are those who also reported having had no supportive professional relationships. (The non-mentor group is discussed in detail in Chapter VI.)

While the survey respondents in general and the interviewees in particular were clear in acknowledging their own expertise and their ability to handle the positions they now hold, they felt that the tangible rewards, i.e., title and commensurate salary would not have been forthcoming had it not been for affirmative action. Forty-five percent (45.7%) indicated that affirmative action had at least some impact on their career progress.

The interviewees, in defense of their company's management, hasten to add that this lack of recognition and promotion was not through any overt or conscious withholding of rewards on the part of their superiors, but simply "the way it was" at the time. Let us now look at the prevalence of mentoring relationships in this group.

General Hypothesis and Associated Questions

The mail survey of all research subjects was intended to serve two purposes: first, as a simple screening device to distinguish a mentor group from a non-mentor group from which to select our interview subjects; and secondly, to provide the basis for some demographic comparisons.

Now that we have a sense of what the general profile of the top management woman is, what can be said about the general hypothesis?

> Mentoring has been a significant part of the development of successful female managers.

Better than 85 percent (85.7%) of the respondents reported having had a relationship which most influenced their career development. Therefore, the general hypothesis is confirmed. Significantly, 82.9 percent (82.9%) of these women are at least vice presidents. Three are presidents of substantial subsidiaries of major companies. Note Table 3.4.

TABLE 3.4

PREVALENCE OF SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

	Frequency	% Frequency
Mentor	30	85.7
Non-Mentor	5	14.3
Total:	35	100.0

The survey respondents appear to have had between two and three (2.6) supportive relationships which may be described as mentoring and/or sponsoring in nature. The relationships were, on average, of 11 to 12 years duration. The shortest was two years duration; the longest relationship reported was 49 years. It is worth noting that those reporting relationships of longer than 15 years were either familial relationships or relationships which are still on-going, though no longer mentoring relationships per se. Adjusting for these disparities in the data, the average number of years duration appears to be about ten.

Over 83 percent (83.3%) of these supportive relationships were with men. The foregoing data is summarized in Table 3.5:

TABLE 3.5

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Average Number	2.6
Average Duration	10 years
Gender of Mentor of Sponsor	83.3% Male

For the most part (80%) the participants in these supportive relationships met on the job. The remaining 20 percent (20%) met socially, at school, or by chance. Note frequencies in Table 3.6:

TABLE 3.6

INITIATING ENCOUNTERS

	Frequency	% Frequency
On the job	24	80.0
Socially	1	3.3
At School	1	3.3
By Chance	1	3.3
Other	3	10.0
Total:	32	100.0

Of the three cases labeled "other," two of the mentoring relationships were with a parent--one a mother, one a father. In the third case, the protege was for many years the owner of a service business where her mentor, a woman, was a client.

Do Former Proteges Become Mentors? In answer to the question, "Have you ever been a mentor?" eighty percent (80%) answered "yes." The surveyed women appear to be supportive of both promising men and women. There seems to be no gender preference. Sixty-four percent (64.3%) reported having mentored both men and women; twenty-one percent (21.3%) reported mentoring women only; and fourteen per cent (14.3%) men only.

Comparison with Survey of Male Executives

How do these findings compare with the findings of

Heidrick & Struggles who surveyed the nation's leading business executives? There are some striking parallels and some equally striking differences.

Of the 1250 executives in the Heidrick & Struggles sample less than one per cent, or something less than 12, were women. The exact number was unspecified. (Significantly, all of these women reported having mentors.) So for all intents and purposes we shall view this study as a survey of male executives.

Heidrick & Struggles found that mentor/protege relationships are fairly extensive among the male elite of the business world. Sixty-three per cent (63.5%) reported having had a significant professional relationship; whereas eighty-five per cent of our sample of top management women reported significant professional relationships. It may be that mentoring relationships among women who choose to scale the corporate heights are more prevalent than they are among men with similar aspirations.

There are a number of interesting parallels, however, with respect to: how many mentoring relationships a single career can accommodate; how long such a relationship usually lasts; where mentors and proteges are most likely to encounter one another; and how old is a "successful" executive likely to be.

Both men and women average between two and three

mentors in their lives; and for the most part, the mentors are men. The relationships generally last at least 10 years. Though a mentor may be thought of as an organizational "teacher," there appear to be surprisingly few teachers reported as mentors in either study. The place to meet a mentor is definitely "on the job." Moreover, to become a successful executive either male or female, it takes a good many years "on the job" before one reaches the top. The average age of both men and women who have reached the top management ranks is between 47 and 49 years.

Now let us consider some interesting differences. On average, the female executives are better educated yet lower paid than male executives. Almost sixty per cent of the women in this study have advanced degrees; almost fifty per cent of the men hold advanced degrees. While 71 per cent of the female executives earn over 50,000 annually, 96 per cent of the male executives earn over 50,000 dollars annually.

With a little healthy cynicism one might conclude that women are always paid less--even women executives. However, one ought not to overlook the fact that this substantial gap in salary may also be a reflection of staff salaries vis a vis line salaries. Traditionally, salaries in dollars are higher for line officers than for staff officers; so too are the perquisites.

One of the interesting findings of the Heidrick & Struggles survey is that most male proteges still have a good relationship with their mentors. This outcome is consistent with our findings for the women whom we interviewed who had mentors. "Nearly 6 in 10 describe their current relationship as 'friendly'," say Heidrick & Struggles, "and more than 3 in 10 describe it as 'close'." These findings seem to differ with Daniel Levinson's observation that "an intense mentor relationship ends with conflict and bad feelings on both sides." More on this point in the coming chapters.

Comparison with Phillips' Survey of Women Executives.

It is difficult to make detailed or extensive comparisons with the Phillips' survey data of "women managers and executives" given that the samples are so different. Forty-seven per cent of the women in the Phillips' survey group do not meet the salary criterion used in this study; i.e., the women must earn an annual salary of at least 30,000 dollars. Twenty-four per cent of the Phillips' survey group are in the "owner, partner, chairperson, board director, president" category, and therefore, do not meet a second criterion of our study; i.e., entrepreneurs and heiresses are excluded. And last but not least, the Phillips' study includes both full- and part-time corporate employees. Our study involves only full-time, practicing managers.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the background data of the women in the two studies is very different. The average age of the women in the Phillips' sample is 57 years old as opposed to 47 in our study. The average level of education in the Phillips' study is two years of college as opposed to an advanced degree in our study. And the majority of women in the Phillips' study earn less than 30,000 annually as opposed to over 50,000 dollars annually in our sample.

The only similarity, in very general terms, is that 61.5% of the Phillips' survey respondents reported they had experienced a mentoring relationship as opposed to 85% in our sample.

The implications here are unclear; but one might hazard a guess. It might be inferred that the population of our study, practicing female managers in top management is a subset of the population used in the Phillips' study. And if one were inclined to take a leap of faith, one might conclude that the higher up the corporate hierarchy one goes, the greater the likelihood one has, or has had, a mentor.

Summary of Findings and Possible Implications

In general, then, it can be said that women who reach the top management ranks have had a "mentoring" rela-

tionship of one kind or another. Moreover, they are following in their mentors' footsteps by becoming mentors themselves.

The fact that the vast majority of these relationships occurs on the job suggests that the initiating situation is task-related. The proximity and frequency of interaction supports the growth of positive sentiments between the participants.

For the most part, the mentor is a man, which suggests that one of the attractions may be the power of the senior member. Senior here refers to status in the organizational hierarchy, not chronological age. This "power" is all-inclusive, i.e., personal power in terms of charisma, expertise and status; as well as access to resources, such as time, money and information. In view of the fact that women in positions of power are so few, this outcome was predictable.

The fact that 13 per cent of the mentors or sponsors reported by the survey group were women was not predictable. This outcome suggests some interesting opportunities for future research. It may be that women in positions of power are more inclined than men to offer support to another woman, a conclusion which flies in the face of the Queen Bee theory. On the other hand, women may have a different set of values against which to measure power than men do. Or perhaps, the pivotal factor may simply be situational.

One of the most significant findings, however, is that the channel for advancement for men and women is different. Men who reach top management make their career climb up the line--where power is inherent in the chain of command and is clearly defined. In contrast, women who reach the top management ranks made their career advances through the staff--where power by definition is advisory, and therefore, is a function of personal influence--a very tenuous kind of power at best.

This outcome suggests a number of interesting implications. It may be that the staff is the more easily accessible channel of advancement. Because these staff positions are regarded as secondary power positions in organizations, it may be that they are perceived as more "suitable" for women; therefore, fewer barriers, real and psychological, exist. On the other hand, this outcome could simply suggest that educationally, the majority of these women were better prepared for staff positions (72.4% liberal arts majors) than they were for line positions (27.6% math, science or business majors).

In order to gain insight into what constitutes a "mentoring" relationship in top management, Chapter IV will analyze the results of in-depth interviews with ten of the distinguished women in this survey group who reported having had a significant professional relationship. The process of mentoring in which they were engaged will be described in detail.

C H A P T E R   I V

ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS WITH TEN WOMEN

WHO HAVE HAD MENTORS

The purpose of this chapter is to present all of
the common threads, themes and patterns of behavior exhib-
ited by mentors and proteges in the organizational con-
text.

The chapter is divided into five sections. Pre-
sented in the first section is a general profile of the 10
distinguished female managers who were interviewed, fol-
lowed by a brief comparison with the profile of their male
counterparts, the top managers of the FORTUNE 500. The
second section describes the phases in the mentor/protege
relationship which emerged as a consequence of this analy-
sis. The third section is a perceptual profile of the
mentors as seen by the proteges which serves as a backdrop
for the dynamics of the interactions in the process.
Section four describes each of three phases in the
process--Initiation, Development and Termination--and
develops in detail each of the repeated themes in the
behavior of the mentors, the perceptions of the proteges
and the feelings generated by these interactions. Each
phase is followed by a discussion and a summary. Finally,

section five presents the process of mentoring for female managers in its entirety.

The Proteges

The 10 women interviewed were chosen from an industrial and geographic cross-section of American business. They are among the 100 top businesswomen in the country, and they are managers in some of the nation's leading corporations: American Telephone & Telegraph Co., Chase Manhattan Bank, GAF Corp., General Electric, Jewel Companies, John Hancock Insurance Co., Lockheed, Ogilvy-Mather, Inc., Pacific Gas & Electric, RCA Corp., TIME, Inc., and others.

TABLE 4.1

GENERAL PROFILE: 10 SUCCESSFUL FEMALE
MANAGERS WITH MENTORS

Title	At least Vice President	100%
Career Progression	Staff	90%
Education	Graduate Degree	60%
Avg. No. Yrs. with Co.	22	
Salary	Over 50,000	80%
Age	50's	50%
Marital Status	Married	40%

All of the women interviewed have reached at least the vice presidential level. Three have become the president or chief executive officer of a significant subsidiary of the parent company. All ten women, with one exception, reached the vice presidential level through a series of staff positions. One or two hopscotched a little, but the overall pattern is clearly staff.

Of course, in companies as large as some of those in which these women made their careers, even the vice president of a staff function becomes a line manager in effect.

There is only one woman of the ten who progressed through the line. Moreover, she is the only one who was a business/marketing major as an undergraduate, and one of the three who are now chief executive officers.

All are college graduates, and six of them have attended graduate school. Significantly, all of the graduate degrees are in work-related fields. With one exception, those who went on to graduate school were the ones who pursued non-stereotypic undergraduate majors, i.e., Chemistry, Physics, Meteorology, Economics and Mathematics. The one exception has a Political Science undergraduate degree, but her masters degree is also in a work-related field.

Despite this apparent educational and organiza-

tional fit, nine of the ten women started their careers as low level functionaries, secretaries, clerks and the like. Only one, the youngest, started as a management trainee fresh out of graduate school with an MBA. The specific entry level positions are noted below in Table 4.2 coupled with the level of educational preparation brought to the respective positions.

TABLE 4.2

ENTRY LEVEL POSITIONS

Position	Educational Preparation
Budget Clerk, Adv. Dept.	English BA, MBA 4 yrs. later
Management Trainee, Credit Dept.	MBA, Finance
Accounting Clerk	BS Business Administration
Asst. to Staff Meteorologist	BA in Meteorology, MS in process
Engineering Asst.	AB & MS in Physics
Statistical Clerk	BS, Education
Technical Librarian	BS & MS in Chemistry
Copywriter	BA, English
Secretary	AB, English
Public Relations Asst.	BA in Political Science, MA, English

It is important to point out that the positions listed above are not necessarily the first job ever held,

rather they are the first job held in the firm in which the interviewees worked the major portion of their careers to date.

As a group they remained with their respective organizations an average of 22 years--a low of 9 and a high of 36 years.

Six of the women--including those with and those without graduate degrees--participated in company sponsored management development programs at various times in their respective careers. Some of those named were: Menninger, Reddin, Levinson et al., as well as some specific skills programs and institutes.

Eight of the women now earn a salary in excess of $50,000. The lowest paid earns between $31,000 and $40,000. She is also the youngest in age and time in the organization. The highest paid earns well over $200,000.

Half of the women are in their 50's today; two are in their 30's, two in the 40's and one in the 60's. Of the ten women, eight were in their early 20's when they joined their respective companies. Five out of the ten women are married; three of the five have children.

(The foregoing details were not incorporated into Table 4.2 to preserve the anonymity of the interviewees.)

With respect to supportive relationships they experienced, the following data are revealing:

TABLE 4.3

SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

		Male	Female
General			
Total	26	23	3
Average	2-3		
Most Significant			
Total	10	9	1
Avg. No. of Yrs.	10-12		
Avg. Age of Mentor	15-18 yrs. senior		

The women reported having had between two and three relationships which they regarded as significant in their career development. The most anyone reported was four; the least, one. In view of the fact that most of these women spent an average of 22 years in the same company, the number of such supportive relationships experienced seems relatively few (consistent with D. Levinson finding).

In the case of the "most significant" relationship among these, the one around which the interview analysis revolves, nine out of ten was with a man; one was with a woman. The relationships generally lasted from 10-12 years. This is not to suggest that the relationshps are no longer viable. On the contrary, they are on-going in

every case. Only the content of the dialogue has changed. (More on this point in the next chapter.)

On average, the mentor is 15 to 18 years older than the protege. However, in one case the protege is older by some six years and in another case--where the mentor is a woman--they are contemporaries.

In summary, then, there are a number of observations which might be made about the foregoing similarities. First of all, these are exceptional women; most of them had already differentiated themselves from the general population of women when they first entered college. They selected non-stereotypic or typically male majors as undergraduates. Secondly, by going on to graduate school in a work-related field, it is apparent that these women had made an investment in their professional development and were well-prepared for their professional careers. Thirdly, they maintained not only a demanding career, but half were married and some had children as well.

Last but not least, the profile of these successful female managers bears a striking resemblance to the profile of their counterparts--successful male managers. A comparison of their profile with that of the chief executive officers of the FORTUNE "500" companies is revealing. Note Table 4.4.

TABLE 4.4

COMPARISON OF SUCCESSFUL MALE MANAGERS
AND SUCCESSFUL FEMALE MANAGERS

	Males	Females
College	95%	100%
Graduate Degree	58%	60%
Career Progression: Line	80%	10%
Career Progression: Staff	20%	90%
Average No. of Yrs. with Co.	25	22
Salaries in excess of $50,000	96%	80%
Age	50	50

Source: The male statistics were extrapolated from Charles
G. Burch, "A Group Profile of the FORTUNE 500 Chief
Executive," FORTUNE, Vol. 92, No. 5 May 1976.

There are two significant differences between suc-
cessful male managers and successful female managers: (1)
Traditionally, men make their way to the top of the manage-
ment hierarchy through the line. Indeed, 80 per cent of the
men in the FORTUNE group came through the financing,
marketing, engineering, and production ranks. In contrast,
90 per cent of these women progressed through the staff
ranks, often as "assistant to" or trailing close behind
their mentors. Only at the very top were two of them able
to gangplank to the line by stepping into the shoes of their
boss.

And (2), most men with such credentials i.e., gra-
duate degrees in work-related fields, are placed on the
"fast track" from day one. They rarely start out as clerks,
secretaries or librarians; and seldom serve such long tenure
at the lower levels of the organization.

While there also appears to be a disparity in the
salaries noted in Table 4.4, it is our sense that at this
juncture in their respective careers it is not a male/female
difference, but rather a reflection of the traditionally
lower salaries paid to staff officers as opposed to line
officers. Some of the possible reasons for these differen-
ces were discussed in Chapter III and will become apparent
as the organizational and societal context in which these
relationships developed are described by the proteges
themselves.

As a group, then, the proteges are well-educated,
achievement oriented women who came into their respective
organizations with a strong concept of self, though not
necessarily with any great expectations.

Phases in Mentor/Protege Relationships

The pattern of interactions in which the proteges
and mentors engaged proceeds through a series of three
phases which have been labeled Initiation, Development and
Termination.

Essentially, the Initiation Phase deals with the questions: Who found whom? How? Was there some attraction? If so, what was it? etc. In other words, what precipitated the relationship and what were the subsequent interactions about, i.e., what is happening when we look at the behaviors of the mentor, the proteges' perceptions of those behaviors, and the feelings engendered by their interaction?

Once established, the relationship progresses into a Development Phase. During this stage, all of the growth-facilitating behaviors and the concomitant perceptions and feelings of the previous stage are reinforced and some new ones are introduced. The bulk of the interactions take place during this stage. This is a period of tremendous professional growth for the protege, and for the mentor too. It is a period of ambivalent feelings fraught with emotional complexity.

The Termination Phase is in reality a period of transition. The relationship as it was developed and maintained over a period of time begins to change. The functional aspects of the relationship give way to what are largely personal exchanges. The participants move from a mentor/protege relationship toward a compeer relationship. Such a change must take place if the relationship is to continue to grow.

While these general phases in the mentoring process

can be differentiated, the boundaries of each are flexible
and clearly, there are transitional phases. (As noted in
Chapter I, the Phillips' study identifies six phases.)

These phases, Initiation, Development and
Termination, are not so precise that in a particular
instance a specific behavior may not occur in the next or
the preceeding phase. The behaviors, perceptions and
feelings of one phase are sometimes overlapping another
phase, and the difference may only be a matter of degree.

Our sense is that there is no specific timetable to
this progression. The time spent in one phase or another is
influenced by a host of personal and situational variables.
While for this sample of women the process of mentoring as
a dynamic function from Initiation through Termination
lasted on average between 10 to 12 years, it is entirely
possible for the process to run its course in a much shorter
period of time--or for that matter, a much longer period of
time.

Each of these phases--Initiation, Development and
Termination--will be described in detail in the following
section, showing exactly what Behaviors, Perceptions and
Feelings are dominant during the particular phase and how
they relate to one another.

<u>The Mentors</u>

Before describing and discussing the behaviors

that the mentors engaged in, it might be enlightening to have a sense of what kind of people they were--or more to the point--how they were perceived by their proteges in the organizational context.

As noted earlier, the women in this study are extraordinary in their own right. But their mentors were perceived to be bigger-than-life. They were seen as brilliant, charismatic, physically attractive, boundlessly energetic, innovative, totally inspiring human beings. They expected only as much as they themselves were willing and capable of giving; and this posed a problem for some because their abilities were formidable. They appeared to be so far ahead of everyone around them that the people who had the good fortune to work for them considered it a distinct privilege. As one woman puts it: "He is a phe-nomenon." It is through this perceptual prism that the proteges viewed their mentors' behavior.

<div align="center">Initiation: Phase I</div>

Repeated themes in the behavior of mentors. Each of the ten mentor/protege relationships identified was initiated by the mentor and for the most part was developed within a single organization (however, some of these organizations were of a size to be considered worlds in themselves). Most of the mentors (9 out of 10) became at some point the direct supervisor of the protege, but not initially. The

proteges came into the respective organizations in a variety of ways, for the most part unobtrusively and un-distinguished.

So what was it that precipitated this relation-ship?

	Frequency
* Recognized protege's ability/talent	(10)
* Sets especially high standards of performance	(10)
* Extremely demanding	(10)
* Encouraging (seldom verbally)	(9)

Figure 1. Repeated themes in the behavior of mentors: Initiation, Phase I.

In every single case the relationship was precipi-tated by an awareness on the part of the mentor that here, in the protege, was a person of ability, someone who per-formed above average and had potential. While the nature of their potential may have been obscure at this point, the behaviors of the mentors suggest that they perceived someone worth bothering about, someone whose ability was worth cultivating. There was no apparent altruism in-volved. The mentor simply recognized the protege's abi-lity or talent and acted upon it.

According to the women themselves:[*]

"He just happened to see my work and took the trouble to find out who had done it and where I could be located. While I wasn't directly hired by him, he (the founder and CEO) was the one who spotted my talent and saw to it that I was recruited for his company. It was a tremendous step up for someone as young and inexperienced as I was at the time. It was the turning point of my life."

"Without a doubt the fact that he (then a department head, later president) appreciated what I could do and liked me was crucial to my development. . . . Verbalization is one of my skills and none of the Ph.D. chemists were capable of writing a report that could be understood by the non-technical management we had then. I could. You have to understand—incredible as it seems today—at that time technically-trained women were only used as librarians."

"He was quick to perceive that I worked without too much direction, and I followed through. Even when I didn't know what I was doing, I learned how to do it without supervision to any great extent."

At the time these "recognitions" took place, the proteges were generally many levels of management below the mentor and did not work directly for him. The mentor may or may not have yet become the CEO, but he was already a recognized organizational "star." The following specific description of one of the mentors fits most of them as a group. One need only substitute the appropriate alma mater.

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[*]Excerpts quoted throughout the chapter were selected on the basis of clarity of thought and succinctness of expression. As a consequence, while all of the women are quoted, some are quoted oftener than others.

"He was extremely intelligent, a brilliant person
with a wide variety of interests. He was articu-
late, persuasive and had just the right combina-
tion of background: Yale undergrad and Harvard
MBA. It was clear from the moment he came through
the door that he was going to be a sometime
president of the company."

Time and time again the proteges stressed the tre-

mendous demands of time, energy and intellect to which

they were subjected in their association with the mentor

and those who worked with him. In addition, standards of

performance were set which tested and stretched the prote-

ges in ways which were totally unanticipated and for which

they were often unprepared.

"He just poured it on: budgeting, copy writing,
meeting with other people in his place, dealing
with salespeople, dealing with service people to
save his time. And trusting me. Knowing that I
could do it without causing any trouble. . . . He
assumed a lot: that I could deliver; and he saw to
it that I did."

"He expected a lot, not just of me, but of every-
body who worked for him. . . . A very, very
demanding man."

"He was not a man who relished sloppy thinking,
poor work, excuses instead of results or any of
the other things, so it made for very firm working
conditions; but I learned a lot. I was held to
standards which were the highest that I've ever
had in my life. My academic life, my first job
certainly didn't put a strain on me that I
couldn't cope with. This was the first time I had
to work for someone who really made me sweat."

"He was tremendously encouraging because his stan-
dards were always so high and there was no per-
siflage or covering up of his true rreaction to
anything you did. He did not mince words. You
wouldn't expect this kind of standard to be held
up for a young and inexperienced person."

The proteges were seldom verbally or explicitly encouraged. In fact, the better they performed, the more they got to do. So why did they continue to work so hard? What was there about the mentors' behaviors at this stage that could be construed as motivating? Why didn't they see their mentors as slave drivers or insatiable workaholics rather than supermen?

Repeated themes in the proteges' perception of mentors' behavior. As explained earlier, behaviors in and of themselves tell us very little. They merely describe a happening. They offer only a clue as to the meaning of what is happening in terms of the dynamics of a relationship. It is the proteges' perception of those behaviors that gives the behaviors their special meaning.

A look at some of the dominant themes in the proteges' perceptions of the mentors' behaviors will serve to underscore the point: It is not just the behaviors of the mentor that are crucial in developing the relationship; rather it is the meaning attributed to those behaviors by the protege that is the key to their interaction.

	Frequencies
* A sense of being molded or created by the mentor (Pygmalion Syndrome).	(5)
* The pursuit of excellence as a shared value and an intrinsic reward.	(9)
* An atmosphere of expectation where demands are seen as opportunities.	(8)
* Self-concept confirmed by association with the mentor.	(9)

Figure 2. Proteges' perception of mentors' behavior: Initiation, Phase I.

Each protege's perception of her mentor's behavior is a very personal one; yet there is great unanimity on one point: their mentor created the opportunity for them to operate outside of the societal norms of the time. They were allowed to participate fully in the "wonderful world of man's work," with all of the dignity that the phrase implies. The symbolism of creation is powerful; but the reality is more powerful still. These were well-educated, intelligent achievement-oriented women who already possessed a strong sense of self, but who had no real expectations of fulfillment in the sense of actualizing their potential. Is it any wonder, then, that the person who offered the opportunity of fulfillment was perceived as a superman, a miracle worker? Is it any wonder that their achievements under his tutelage came to them as something of a surprise?

While each protege describes her mentor's behavior from her own unique perspective, their answers suggest something of a Pygmalion syndrome:

> "He had sort of a proprietary interest in the precocious little girl he'd discovered. After all, he had invented me. It was very much in his self-interest to prove himself right."

> "He was one, two, three, four layers above me. He just simply reached down (gesture) and said, 'All right. You start this and see what you can do with it.' He really brought me into management. It is true. I would never have had the opportunity, if it had not been for him."

> "It was his opportunity to take me out of the secretarial mold and put me into another category. If it's not a mold, it's a category. In fact, I was quite surprised to discover my affinity, my seemingly innate ability for marketing. I responded so well to his teaching that it (the latent ability) came as a complete surprise to me."

A stimulating atmosphere of expectation prevailed which opened up options and possibilities for personal fulfillment which were far beyond the limited expectations of these women. The "opportunity" provided by the mentor was to be given meaningful work to do.

Because the mentor was so demanding and exacting in his standards, simply being able to meet his expectations had intrinsic value for these achievement oriented women. Thus the work itself became its own reward. Each time the proteges were given more to do, they were encouraged (reinforced) because their sense of self was being confirmed, i.e., "Yes, indeed, I am a person of intellect,

initiative and responsibility, because he believes I am. And he proves it by trusting me to do work that will live up to his standards and his expectations." Did they resent this apparent overload, this tremendous pressure to perform?

"I sure as hell didn't resent it," says one of the proteges. Some others explain why:

"It (demands and standards) was a rewarding experience, terribly rewarding, because I was using myself in ways I would never have dreamed of. I was being asked to do and bring standards of excellence which certainly nothing in my training had made me ready for. So it was a very satisfactory experience to be doing so many things so meaningfully and so successfully."

"It was always, 'Well, all right. Now we need a performance appraisal system and we need it Monday.' He just always expected that it would be done. So, you know, you live up to expectations."

"He treated me no differently than any of them (management men). You have to know how unusual that was. It was miraculous. There wasn't another man in the place at that time who would have had the self-confidence."

It seems clear from the foregoing that the proteges concluded that outstanding performance in difficult and challening situations leads to opportunities to be given more difficult and still more challenging work to do. This pattern of expectation and reward was established early and maintained throughout their careers. Moreover, the work itself was not only of intrinsic value, but it was a symbol of status, power and respect as well.

It was an affirmation.

Repeated themes in the feelings expressed by the proteges.
The full impact of the proteges' perceptions of the
mentors' behaviors can more accurately be assessed when
the emotional components of these interactions are exam-
ined. What were the feelings experienced by these women
in the initiation stage of this relationship?

	Frequencies
* Gratitude, admiration and respect	(10)
* Excitation by the association with power and its implications	(8)
* A feeling of being somehow "special," worthy of attention, valued	(8)

Figure 3. Repeated themes in the feelings of pro-
teges: Initiation, Phase I.

The feelings of gratitude, admiration and respect
for the mentor have been clearly enunciated by the prote-
ges and documented in many of the foregoing excerpts and
do not need to be repeated. Let us say simply that
feelings of gratitude, admiration and respect are on-going
and persist throughout every stage of the relationship--
feelings which deepen as the relationship progresses.
(More on this point in the following chapter.)

The predominant feeling expressed by the women
during this initial phase, however, was a tremendous sense

of being somehow "special," worthy of attention and valued. To test the reality of that feeling all they needed to do was to look around them. There wasn't another comparable woman in sight. While these women were not distinguished by their salaries, for the most part, they were distinguished by the work they were given to do, and the respect it brought them.

The following excerpts should serve to underscore their feelings of distinction:

"I felt that he saw something more in me than in some of the other people, and that maybe we understood each other a little bit better."

"There was this feeling of having to live up to being terrific."

"At a very early age I was the only woman in the department. As a matter of fact, for the first 10 to 15 years of my life here, I was the only woman at an executive meeting. . . . I was the only woman doing work not regarded as woman's work."

In evaluating the importance and force of these feelings, one has to appreciate just how unusual it was to have a woman in the management ranks 25 years ago when most of these women were in the initiation phase. (Notable exceptions of course are those women who were entrepreneurs or whose husbands or fathers owned the business. As noted in Chapter II such women were excluded from this study.)

Even the youngest of those interviewed--one whose

career in the organization started as a trainee in 1970--couldn't help but feel "special." She was the first of the female MBA's brought into the organization flagged for the "fast track"--up to that time reserved exclusively for men. (The implications of the precipitating societal changes will be discussed in the following chapter.)

Heightening this sense of being "special" was the special status these women acquired by their association with the powerful. Indeed, if their mentors were regarded as organizational stars, it was not unreasonable for the protege to conclude that this association gave her "satellite status." Most of the proteges described the experience as "heady."

> "For someone who at that time was on the second
> level of management, it was sort of a heady
> experience to have the president saying, 'Draw up
> a chair, sit down, and let's talk about what's
> happening.'"

> "That (accompanying the mentor to important client
> meetings) was a heady experience for a young
> girl."

> "It was just very exciting. Once you've been at
> the site of power (corporate headquarters) . . .
> it's heady stuff."

We can only guess at the effect this close association with the powerful had on others with whom these women came in contact in the conduct of their work and in general. In the organizational context at least, it seems reasonable to conclude that they enjoyed all of the bene-

fits of a "halo effect" as well as some of the detriments of such exclusivity. That is to say, the proteges stood in the reflected glow of their mentors. They were perceived to be women outside the norm. They were regarded as intelligent, competent, innovative, etc.--people who possessed many of the positive attributes of the superior person, the mentor. Moreover, the behavior of the mentor towards them was a clear signal to others that they were to be treated differently from the general population of women. They were "special."

The concomitant to this special treatment, of course, was the inevitable isolation that these women experienced in the social structure of the organization. (Described in greater detail in Phase II.)

The foregoing behaviors, perceptions and feelings evoked during the Initiation Phase can be viewed as essentially growth-facilitating interactions--ones in which the participants in the interactions, mentor and protege, are gaining more accurate knowledge about one another and skill in dealing with one another.

The key in these growth-facilitating interactions, however, is that challenge is paired with ability, i.e., the proteges are stretched by their mentors, but not beyond their ability to perform successfully at this stage.

In summary, then, an initial identification takes hold; rapport is established; a pattern of behavior and response is set in an atmosphere of mutual admiration and respect. Thus, the Initiation Phase sets the stage for the next round of interactions in the Development Phase.

Development: Phase II

Repeated themes in the behavior of mentors. The development stage, or Phase II of the mentor/protege relationship is just that: a period of development during which the patterns of behavior and response established in the initiation phase are built up, expanded and further reinforced. New behaviors are introduced as well.

The principal mentor behaviors reported by the proteges as occurring during this developmental phase are:

	Frequencies
* Teaches protege the "tricks" of the trade.	(9)
* Gives protege all the responsibility she can handle (professional as well as personal).	(8)
* Thrusts protege into areas for which she has no apparent experience or expertise.	(7)
* Directs and shapes through critical questioning.	(8)
* Publicizes protege's achievements.	(7)
* Promotes steadily and often (or suggests that this be done, usually from above.	(7)
* Protects.	(6)

Figure 4. Repeated themes in the behavior of mentors: Development, Phase II.

The following descriptions are representative of the first cluster of mentor behavior noted in Figure 4, i.e., an expansion of behaviors begun in the Initiation Phase. They are expressed in such a way that they often reveal some of the perceptions and feelings of the protege as well.

"I learned what advertising is all about. There were a lot of little tricks about making sentences interesting and paragraphs readable. One of the most important things I learned was that when you're writing an advertisement, you're talking to somebody and that advertising should be written the way people talk--simply and as clearly as people talk to each other--unpretentiously avoiding all jargon of advertising, being emotional and warm, the way I would be when I'm talking to a friend."

"He didn't limit my work. I was a secretary, but he didn't limit my work to shorthand and

typing. That's the important thing. He gave me
all I could handle, not just business things, but
personal things as well. I'd help him look after
his stock portfolio, for example. It was just
another evidence of trust."

"He was constantly moving me into new and
untried situations. He started me talking to con-
temporaries. I can remember it talking to a
University class. And then I moved on from there
to other groups. If he could take a speaking
engagement, I went in his place, which was not a
natural thing for me. It was marvelous experience
because I was doing things that women weren't
doing at that time."

"If we were doing a report on something, we
might do it seven times through as he went through
it piecemeal and said, 'No, that's wrong. Change
that. What does this mean?, etc. Go out and do
some more work on it.' So in the end when we got
it done, it was perfect--as perfect as we knew how
to make it. There was no question that it was
perfect, because he turned it in. I should
explain: he was then a man who knew everything
that was happening in his department and contrib-
uted. I didn't say interfered; I said contributed
to everybody's work in the whole department. So
we all worked with him for whatever project we had
underway. It was a team effort."

Teaching "tricks" of the trade, the expansion of

responsibilities, creating opportunities for the acquisi-

tion of new skills, together with critical feedback serve

to underscore the patterns of behavior begun in the ini-

tiation phase with regard to the work itself.

The following excerpts highlight the mentor's new

behaviors and provide some clues as to his feelings toward

his protege:

"He almost always publicized my achievements and
almost always gave me credit for them. And this
was incredible."

"There is a regular program of exchange between
the operating companies and the parent company.
What happens is that the so-called "fast-trackers"
or the ones with high potential are either
requested or supplied by the home company or sub-
sidiary to headquarters. What's called a rota-
tional assignment. When he originally requested
that I go down, I didn't want to. I fought the
idea. But he convinced me it was right. And it
was.

"I wanted to join (the top management group of a
subsidiary). I felt it was a good opportunity for
me. I was very disappointed that a young man was
chosen out of here to go when I thought I should
get that opportunity. He said, 'It isn't the
right thing for you right now. They'll chew you up
down there.' I said, 'I don't care. I'm the most
qualified person, and I want it.' He said, 'I
know you are, but I don't think that in the long
run it's the best thing for the company or for
you.' I was bitterly disappointed. As it turned
out, it was a good thing. I came out much better.
He was right."

"I can remember a mistake I made, an absolute
disaster that I could still be horrified at right
now. There was a voice on the phone screaming,
'And who are you exactly to allocate expenses for
my department?' He was a ferocious man, very
large, very important in the scheme of things and
very important to the president. I realized in a
blinding flash I had no business doing this. But
it was a great lesson and well-learned. He went
storming into my boss's office looking for my head
but my boss wasn't the slightest bit perturbed. I
never made such a mistake again."

In this stage there appears to be a willingness on

the part of the mentor to publicize not only the work of

the protege, but also his association with her. Her

achievements are now rewarded with the more commonly iden-

tified forms of reinforcement, promotion, recognition,

etc. The most important new development in this stage,

however, is the mentor's apparent willingness to shield the protege from unreasonable or unwarranted attack by other supervisors and/or coworkers, even at the risk of incurring their displeasure. He is willing also to risk her anger and a possible schism in their relationship to protect her from a perceived threat to her ultimate well-being.

The critical issue here appears to be not so much the potential damage to her career progression--though that is an important consideration--but rather the potential damage to her ego that appears to be the main concern.

Some tentative conclusions can be drawn from these behaviors about the mentor's feelings toward his protege at this juncture--feelings of pride certainly as well as caring. For the sake of argument, one might view pride in a subordinate's accomplishments as purely self-enhancing and self-serving behavior. On the other hand, when the mentor's pride in the protege's accomplishments is paired with a desire to shield and protect her, even at risk to himself, it seems reasonable to assume a depth of genuine feeling, a sense of caring beyond self-interest.

In summary, then, the behaviors of the mentor in the developmental stage fall into two categories: old behaviors that continue to excpand on standards of perfor-

mance, strengthen existing skills, and precipitate and encourage participation in a broader base of interests and experience. Then there are the new behaviors, publicizing, promoting and protecting, which seem to have less to do with the functional aspects of the job and more to do with a deepening emotional commitment and maintenance of the relationship. This dichotomy of behaviors--old and new, functional and emotional--will be reflected in the protege's perceptions which follow.

Repeated themes in the proteges' perception of mentors' behavior. As the proteges grow in experience and stature, they are aware of the mentors' efforts to expand their horizons and areas of expertise, though his motivations for doing so remain obscure. Most of the women said that they personally had no career goals that they were aware of, and that they didn't believe that their mentor had any "grand design" for them, either. Yet, they are very clear and articulate about the effect of the mentors' behaviors on their career development and its impact on their professional self-image at this stage.

	Frequencies
* Opportunities to gain broader experience or to improve in a particular dimension.	(10)
* Challenged to think more clearly and creatively.	(8)
* Opinions and points of view heard and valued even when they differ significantly from the mentors.	(10)
* Free to make mistakes without fear.	(7)
* Progress based on professional performance.	(10)

Figure 5. Proteges' perceptions of mentors' behavior: Development, Phase II.

Once again, as in the initiation phase, demands are seen as opportunities, and forays into the unknown are termed "wonderful" and "challenging." Their own accounts illustrate these points best:

"He had another great quality which I think was wonderfully helpful. He would talk things over with me--the problems he was facing in his own job and say, 'Would you like to put some thoughts together on such and such,' or 'What are we to do about this?' These might be things totally unrelated to my area of responsibility. For example, a special assignment. You know, he'd say, 'Just drop everything and go to work on a plan to subcontract our engines to Chrysler.' Things like that, which were totally outside of my experience."

It is worth noting that it was outstanding performance during just such "special assignments" that gave a number of the women, as well as this one, the diversity of experience needed to make them realistic candidates for the vice presidential posts they now hold. Moreover, they

were encouraged by their mentors to look beyond the specific to capture the "big picture" or to consider the strategic implications of what they were doing. This was accomplished in a variety of ways not altogether clear:

> "I think he challenged me to think more clearly and creatively. It was the sort of thing that, you know, he would just say a few words. Then, I'd say, 'Yes, perhaps if I look at it from that point of view it might work better.' They were not directives, they were just--he just dropped little seeds, you know, things that began to germinate. You'd think about them and come back with another alternative. Maybe he would suggest something else that would make you think about it a little more deeply still."

> "If I came to see him on an official visit, he would often use that opportunity to say, 'Take a few minutes if you're not in a hurry. Tell me about what you're doing now. What are some of your thoughts about what is going on? What are your perceptions of what's happening within the company?' I had the sense that he must in some way value my opinion or he wouldn't be asking."

> "I made some spectacular errors, which I can remember very well; but he was not the kind of man who would ever say, 'My God, that's wrong. Out!' So I was able to make mistakes."

How did the proteges know when they had gained stature? Certainly no bell tolled to mark the occasion, nor was there necessarily a prestigious appointment or a substantial increase in salary. The transition, though unheralded, was nonetheless distinct. They knew that they had "arrived" when they could express their own opinions freely and challenge their mentors' point of view without fear.

One protege describes just that point in the relationship vividly:

> "The more I learned the braver I got. The
> fact that most of what I learned, I learned from
> him didn't prevent disagreements from happening.
> Yes, we had big arguments. I wish there was some
> easy way to categorize them. They nearly always
> had to do with risk and always short-term risk.
> We never disagreed about anything long term or
> what you might call the "big idea," but in how to
> execute things in the short term. Yes, indeed,
> big disagreements (smiling all the while). They
> were never really unpleasant and I rarely won.
> Once in a while, yes, once in a while I would pre-
> vail. He would let me make the mistake, or even
> be right."

Further confirmation of their stature and professional competence came as they began to climb the corporate ladder and compare themselves with organizational peers. (Peers here is used as a relative term because they had no peers strictly speaking.)

> "I was promoted on a fairly frequent, and for
> this company, rapid basis. I moved ahead at the
> same pace as males. There were a number of us who
> came in at the same time, in the same year, and I
> either moved at the same pace or sometimes a
> little ahead of them. So I never had any sense
> that I wasn't being rewarded for what I was doing.
> . . . He was, for whatever reason, ahead of his
> time in his willingness to advance women."

Taken as a gestalt, then, the foregoing excerpts of the proteges' perceptions of the mentors' behaviors during this development stage, and the behaviors themselves, create an environment in which the proteges continue to be stretched and challenged with what seem at times unreasonable demands. Yet, the significant point

here is that they were not simultaneously unreasonably

constrained by their mentors. It is this relative lack of

constraints that gives balance to the relationship and

makes for growth.

This sense of balance in the relationiship at this

stage--plus and minus--is reflected also in the feelings

engendered during this period of growth.

Repeated themes in the feelings expressed by proteges. As

the relationship between mentor and protege grows more

complex, feelings become more complicated too. Emotions

are mixed. Positive sentiments continue to grow, while at

the same time negative feelings begin to assert them-

selves. The emotional themes repeated most are:

	Frequencies
* Feelings aroused in Phase I reinforced.	(10)
* Feeling secure and/or supported.	(8)
* Feelings of isolation.	(8)
* Feelings of resentment.	(6)

Figure 6. Repeated themes in the feelings of
proteges: Development, Phase II.

The feelings of gratitude, admiration and respect

engendered in the Initiation Phase deepen and become much

more personal, as the following comments suggest:

"It (the relationship) has been one of the

greatest pleasures of my life. We can talk about anything and everything. We understand each other without going into a whole bunch of background. And we trust each other implicitly."

"I've always felt very close to him as an individual, as a person. That's been one of the most rewarding things for me. I have a great deal of respect for him."

It is clear from the foregoing that the relation-ship with the mentor has taken on a unique character for these proteges. The relationship has become a reward in itself. The closeness, the caring, the implicit trust all suggest the development of a love relationship. (The reference here is to an asexual love relationship.)

Important also is the senses of security and sup-port the proteges feel. One protege describes the sense of freedom such support provides:

"He is the kind of person that I feel I could talk to about anything. I could say how I truly felt. I wouldn't have to worry that I was overstepping in any way whatsoever. He is the only one I can really say that about honestly. I always felt I could say what I wanted to say without feeling that I was going to suffer as a consequence. And I was always very vocal."

As idyllic as the relationship appears to be from this preponderance of positive sentiments expressed, feelings of isolation, resentment and frustration are also experienced as this stage.

"They (associates) didn't like me too well. I think to some extent it was warranted. I fought very hard for what I wanted to do and what I thought was right to do. Sometimes I maybe hurt others a little bit, but I did it anyway. There

was a little jealousy involved too because I did get a great deal of support from him. I was able to accomplish the things that I felt were important. He sponsored the things I wanted to do. Sometimes they were not popular with the others, and I sensed that they felt I was getting support I didn't deserve, but I thought I did deserve it. I gave up something in the way of friendships along the way, but the satisfaction I felt and the support I got from him made it all worthwhile."

The social isolation experienced by many of the women was not just inside the organization, but extended beyond working hours. As a group they did not socialize with colleagues--even the mentor at this stage. They did not frequent the squash or tennis courts or the after-hours watering holes; nor were they likely to be invited to dinner parties at the homes of their corporate colleagues. All of their communications, therefore, all of their interorganizational relationship building was confined narrowly to task-relevant interactions. This is a tremendously limiting factor in professional development per se and in the development of an organizational power base in particular. (More on this point later.)

As for resentment and frustration, nothing grated more than the fact that for a long time they were doing a "man's job" for a "woman's wage."

"I used to be furious about it. I understood it intellectually, but emotionally, it still grates. I was never well-paid. He had a very interesting rationale for this. Unfortunately, more truth than poetry. He said, 'If I tell them at headquarters that I have a job opening at this level, they will instantly send out four

candidates--any of whom, on paper, will look
better than you. So instead, I'll put you in this
low level, and they'll say, 'Oh, well, nobody will
want that job. Let her have it.'' And that's
what he did. And it is true. They would have
sent out candidates from headquarters, and I would
not have gotten the job because on paper I didn't
appear to have the qualifications. I would have
missed the opportunity. There were a lot of years
though when I was very hungry, and very angry. At
this point, I've caught up."

In almost every case the "catch-up" period

referred to here came after Affirmative Action legislation

forced employers to reassess what they meant by "quali-

fied." (More on this point later.)

The foregoing Behaviors, Perceptions and Feelings

described as dominant in the Development Stage reinforce

many of the patterns of behavior established in the Ini-

tiation Phase. The significant changes are emotional in

character and reflect the sensitivity on the part of both

mentor and protege of the delicate balance on which the

relationship turns. While the multiplicity of demands

persists, there are increasingly fewer constraints. Where

in the initiation stage the work itself was its own

reward, at this stage the reward has become the relation-

ship itself. Each is willing to risk and sacrifice for

the other. The closeness, the caring, the implicit trust

all suggest the developmernt of a love relationship. (The

issue of sexuality in a love relationship will be dis-

cussed separately in the next chapter.)

Termination: Phase III

Repeated themes in the behavior of mentors. The

mentor/protege relationship during this phase progresses

of its own momentum, without the impetus of many new or

specific behaviors. The development is subtle and the

changes are situationally induced.

The most pronounced themes of mentors' behavior

which emerge during this stage are:

	Frequencies
* Provides opportunities to learn by osmosis, observation, and association.	(10)
* Recommends protege to top management (usually to the parent company or to the board of directors).	(9)
* Lets go.	(10)

Figure 7. Repeated themes in the behavior of
mentors: Termination, Phase III.

The proteges' comments, in retrospect, suggest

that the knowledge acquired from the mentor, even by osmo-

sis, had the effect of focusing and strengthening their

own inclinations and shaping their behavior.

The following excerpts underscore this point:

"I think one of the main things that I learned
from him was to set extremely high standards for
myself, to never hesitate to go deeper into a
project, and to trust my own intuition. Now this
is something you won't hear from him because he
has made a name as being somebody who tests

everything--researches everthing. But, boy, I
think that 9/10ths of what he has contributed were
purely great leaps of intuition. I couldn't watch
this and not learn that if a person were gifted
with any intuition at all, that you had to rely on
it. And I think that what has helped me more than
anything else is a belief in what I intuitively
feel is the correct answer and to be able to
recognize it. So that when it's there, I don't
think things through to the point where you make
mincemeat of it or mash it up."

"I worked very closely with him and he had,
when something really went sour, he had the abil-
ity to be optimistic. To say, 'Well, there are
other fish to fry. There are other ways of
solving this problem. There are other accounts
out there.' He didn't stew in his own misery
which I think many people, including me, have a
tendency to do."

"He had this down to a fine point. He never
lost his cool, never. I never saw him. He was
never impolite. The control that man exerted over
himself was unbelievable. People might say things
that were outrageous or he'd feel that his rights
were being invaded. And he would say, 'Gentlemen,
I really need your counsel, you're creating a
terrible problem for me.' Then he would go on and
say, 'You are proposing to do thus and so, and of
course, our charter is this, and you're really
giving away free what I was charged for. Now, how
would you suggest I handle that?' Then all of a
sudden all the steam would go out of the
steamroller. He just was super at it."

Many of the attitudes and values, as well as the

professional style of the mentor, are internalized by the

termination stage. Mentor behaviors, in the developmental

sense, are no longer overt, and the protege's response

(learning) is not necessarily conscious at the time.

Change in the relationship, at this stage, is

largely a function of organizational change:

"When it was established that he was going to replace the corporate president, it was clear he could no longer handle being president of the subsidiary as well. He asked me to take it over."

"When he became president and chief executive officer, I became his assistant and later vice president."

This same scenario--where the protege steps into the mentor's shoes or becomes his vice presidential assistant--is repeated in a number of cases, but not without some difficulty. As the women themselves pointed out, without the impetus of Affirmative Action legislation, it seems unlikely that many of their appointments to presidential and vice presidential posts would have been confirmed, however competent the women. In one instance, the board refused to accept the mentor's recommendation that his protege replace him. The company went through two male replacements before they finally appointed her-- his handpicked and trained protege--to the responsible and prestigious position. She has since built upon her mentor's performance and surpassed it. The fact that they, mentor and former protege, remain devoted friends says something powerful and beautiful about the relationship and the stature of the individuals.

It is the acknowledgment that they are peers and the mentor's effectively "letting go" that signal the termination of the mentor/protege relationship and the possible commencement of a compeer relationship.

One of the mentors verbalized the psychological act of letting go when his protege took on the presidency of a major subsidiary. Said he:

"Now you are on your own. You are it!"

Of course, the actual letting go was much more gradual and the need to be in touch very real as this excerpt makes clear:

> "What I do and what he does are no longer directly interrelated, but we stay very much in touch. We have long luncheons together now. Usually, mostly I listen. I don't talk that much I just listen to him. We talk as friends, long-time acquaintances. We talk about business in general, about what's going on in the world. I have a lot of international business and certainly he can provide a financial perspective--but not the day to day operational perspective that I have in those countries. He is a very exciting man, even today; and he's past 60."

The mentor now becomes a resource person, a trusted friend and counselor with whom you might clear your thinking, sound out the validity of an important decision. He is a person whom you trust to have your best interests at heart, someone who would risk telling you what you need to know even though it might be painful to you. He is someone whose perspective and judgment you value and trust implicitly.

The changing nature of the relationship during the termination phase is reflected in the proteges' perceptions and feelings as well.

<u>Repeated themes in the proteges' perceptions of mentors'</u>

<u>behavior</u>. At this advanced stage of the relationship, the

proteges' image of herself vis a vis her mentor comes into

sharp focus and more closely resembles the current real-

ity.

The dominant themes in the proteges' perceptions

of the mentors' behaviors reflect this perceptual adjust-

ment:

	Frequencies
* Awareness of one's own special strengths and contributions to the relationship.	(7)
* Fallibility of the mentor recognized.	(7)

Figure 8. Repeated themes in the proteges' per-
ception of mentors' behavior: Termination, Phase III.

While the proteges are very much aware of their

own special strengths, they are also very protective of

their mentors' image. They continue to refer to him with

a certain deference. However, it is clear, at least in

the minds of the proteges, that the relationship has been

redefined as the following excerpts illustrate:

"I knew it had ended when--there are certain
areas in which he is much better than I am and
always will be. There will never be anybody who
understands print advertising as well as he does.
He is good in television, but I don't think his
instincts are as good about it as mine are. It is
a different discipline. It's not a discipline the
way that print is, and I suppose it ended at the
point where I was able to contribute, I think,

different things to our work because of the medium in which I was working than he was able to. . . . He wouldn't agree with this incidentally. I'm sure he'd hate me saying this. But I think deep down he might acknowledge it's truth."

"Our relationship has changed because he is a little bit weaker (emotionally) than he appeared to be before. He has become more human--less all-knowing--more a personal friend and less a professional sponsor."

Though disappointed and often frustrated for want of legitimate power and recognition during the development stage, the proteges in this termination stage seem incredibly sensitive to and understanding of the tremendous personal and societal pressures by which their mentors were constrained.

On being passed over for the top slot several times:

"He made some moves which I think even he would admit today were not good moves. He put some people in charge who were more expedient than right; and so I . . . he just was not ready at the time to support a woman to the exclusion of all else."

"He has a great many hangups about women in business. There were points at which he couldn't overcome these hangups. Let's just say there were problems along the route. I'm not saying that this was a totally open man to a woman in business. But he did the best he could given his background, and I think he overcame a lot of emotional hesitation in order to do these things. He certainly did a lot more than most men in similar positions were doing at the time so I can't fault him for not being perfect."

It seems reasonable to ask: Had the proteges been men, would their resentment have been greater? Different

perhaps, along oedipal lines? Would it have resulted in bitter feelings and confrontation? Would the relationship have been terminated?

In considering these questions it might be helpful to bear in mind the societal context within which these relationships developed and the realities of organizational life at the time. (More on this in the next chapter.) While their achievements were acknowledged in their respective organizations, unlike their male peers in top management, their competence was not perceived as "transferable" to other organizational contexts at the same level. In other words, they had no viable alternative.

Though not "perfect," the world created by their mentor was the best of worlds available to them and the proteges knew it. The relative position of these women vis a vis their male counterparts and their relative status in the business community as a whole may account for much of the stability characteristic of these mentor/protege relationships. The feelings expressed by the proteges in the next section will support this notion.

Repeated themes in the proteges' emotional response. The feelings expressed by the proteges as the functional aspects of the relationship wind down reveal women who have come of age--not just professionally, but emotionally

as well.

The most dominant feelings expressed by the proteges during the termination stage are:

	Frequency
* Pride in achievement.	(10)
* Infinite closeness.	(9)

Figure 9. Repeated themes in proteges' emotional response: Termination, Phase III.

The proteges during this stage feel independent, self-confident and exhibit a real sense of pride in their achievements:

"It was my burning ambition to become a vice president of the parent company because no woman had ever been. I was the first woman to accomplish that and I am still the only one." (She is the highest ranking woman in the industry.)

"I'm here to tell you I have direct line responsibility for a company with 300 million in assets, and the bottom line--black or red--makes a big difference."

"He (the mentor) is the president of a company, and I'm not; but probably in general peer terms, we have been on a level for several years. But I probably make more money than he does now, and I have a job, well . . ." (in this case as well, she is the highest ranking woman in the respective industry).

Significantly, in assessing their accomplishments, these women are neither arrogant nor self-effacing. But they are careful to differentiate themselves from women

who have recently been named to vice presidential posi-
tions titled consumer affairs, equal opportunity and the
like. Not that they regard these as unimportant func-
tions, but simply that they are not analogous to their
function, i.e., they are not top management jobs; they are
not decision-making functions. As one woman put it:
"Those are just dress-up titles."

So, while it is clear from the feelings expressed
by the proteges that they are self-sufficient now, in
every case they still maintain close and affectionate ties
with the mentor. Feelings of infinite closeness are
expressed:

> "While the relationship has changed in nature,
> it still retains its richness."

> "We became friends during the time he was my
> boss, and we will be friends until one of us
> dies."

The depth of emotion characteristic of the true
mentor/protege relationship is summed up beautifully by
one of the women. After reciting a litany of her mentor's
singular abilities and accomplishments, the protege was
asked what her feelings for her mentor were now, some ten
years later. She replied simply:

> "Just short of adoring!"

Perhaps it is a misnomer, then, to call this phase
of the relationship the termination phase, because in
truth, it never really ends. The relationship changes

during this phase in the sense that there is no longer
direct task relevant interaction and direct influence be-
tween mentor and protege. The values, the attitudes, the
skills, the professional style of the mentor have been
selectively internalized by the protege. She has become a
success in her own right. She has outgrown the need for
his tutelage. However, the need for the relationship per
se continues. The need for contact with the mentor, the
need to share experiences--even the need for approval--
persist. The feelings of love endure.

Recapitulation

Each of the phases in the mentor/protege relation-
ship--Initiation, Development and Termination--which
emerged as a result of the analysis of the transcripts
were described in the foregoing sections. The behaviors,
perceptions and feelings which were dominant during the
particular phase were discussed individually and in rela-
tion to one another. At the end of each phase the signi-
ficant threads were summarized. Some peripheral issues
were earmarked for further discussion or consideration in
the following chapters.

The overall analysis of the data has resulted in a
process of mentoring which appears in its entirety in
Figure 10. A discussion of the important features of the

model and the significant or critical elements at each stage will be further developed in Chapter V.

<u>Repeated Themes in the Behavior of Mentors</u>

Phase I
| Recognized protege's ability/talent.

Set especially high standards of performance.

Extremely demanding.

Encouraged (seldom verbally).

Phase II
| Teaches protege the "tricks" of the trade.

Gives protege all the responsibility she can handle (professional as well as personal).

Thrusts protege into areas for which she has no apparent expertise or experience.

Directs and shapes through critical questioning.

Publicizes protege's achievements.

Promotes steadily and often (or suggests that this be done usually from above).

Protects.

Phase III
| Provides opportunities to learn by osmosis, observation and association.

Recommends protege to top management (usually of the parent company or to the board of directors).

Lets go.

Figure 10. The Process of Mentoring: Phase I, Initiation; Phase II, Development; Phase III, Termination.

Repeated Themes in the Proteges' Perception of Mentors' Behavior

Phase I

A sense of being molded or created by the mentor (Pygmalion Syndrome).

The pursuit of excellence as a shared value and an intrinsic reward.
An atmosphere of expectation where demands are seen as opportunities.

Self-concept confirmed by association with the mentor.

Phase II

Opportunities to gain broader experience or to improve in a particular dimension.

Challenged to think more clearly and creatively.

Opinions and points of view heard and valued, even when they differ significantly from the mentor's.

Free to make mistakes without fear.

Progress based upon professional performance.

Phase III

Awareness of one's own special strengths and contributions to the relationship.

Fallibility of the mentor recognized.

Figure 10 (Continued).

Repeated Themes in the Proteges' Emotional
Response (Feelings)

Phase I

Gratitude, admiration and respect.

Excitation by the association with power and its implications.

A feeling of being somehow "special," worthy of attention, valued.

Phase II

Feelings aroused in Phase I reinforced.

Feelings of security and/or support.

Feelings of isolation.

Feelings of resentment.

Phase III

Pride in achievement.

Infinite closeness.

Figure 10 (Continued).

C H A P T E R   V

CRITICAL FEATURES OF THE MENTORING PROCESS

The critical features of each phase of the mentoring process which were identified in Chapter IV will be reviewed in this chapter and discussed in the light of supporting organizational and behavioral theory. Section (1) deals with relative degrees of challenge; section (2) addresses the issue of balance between demands and constraints; and section (3) discusses the importance of the overall quality of the relationship. Each of these features deals with an essential balance, a pivotal point upon which the success of the relationship turns.

Challenge Paired With Ability

In the previous chapter the behaviors, perceptions and feelings evoked during the initial phase were identified as growth-facilitating interactions--ones in which the participants in the interaction, mentor and protege, gain a more accurate knowledge of one another and skill in dealing with one another.

The key element in these growth-facilitating interactions, however, is that challenge is paired with ability. The proteges are stretched by their mentors, but not beyond

their ability to perform successfully at this stage. The importance of this balance should not be underestimated. Challenge that is just beyond one's grasp but within one's reach is essential, as early success is a fundamental building block of motivation and the expectation for future success.

Too much responsibility too soon can frustrate and discourage a budding protege. Too little responsibility can have precisely the same dysfunctional effect, leaving one's competence in question and one's self-esteem bruised.

Let us review for a moment some of the descriptions of the mentors' behaviors in the Initiation Phase as well as the proteges' responses to those behaviors:

He <u>assumed</u> a lot:..that I could deliver.

He <u>expected</u> a lot.

He was tremendously <u>encouraging</u> (because of his high standards).

He didn't <u>mince words</u>.

There was this feeling of <u>having to live up to being terrific</u>.

The assumption of competence, the encouragement, the feedback, the sense of being "terrific" all underscore the influence of one person's expectations on another's behavior--in this case the mentor's expectations on the protege's behavior.

<u>Expectations and performance</u>. Much of the complex interaction which took place between mentor and protege is explain-

able by existing behavioral theory. More than half a
century ago, Albert Moll (cited in Rosenthal, 1968) con-
cluded from his clinical experience that subjects behaved as
they believed they were expected to. "The prophecy causes
its own fulfillment," he observed. Similarly, in a series
of scientific experiments, Rosenthal (1968) demonstrated
that a "teacher's expectation for her pupils' intellectual
competence can come to serve as an educational self-
fulfilling prophecy." It should not be surprising, then,
that a manager, too, has the potential to shape not only the
expectations and productivity of subordinates, but also to
influence their attitudes toward their jobs and themselves.
This is precisely what Berlew and Hall (1966) discovered.

In examining the career progress of 49 college grad-
uates who were managerial employees of AT&T over a period
of five years, they discovered that the new managers' rela-
tive success, as measured by salary increases and the
company's estimate of each man's performance and potential,
depended largely on the company's expectations of them.

Berlew and Hall summarized the process as follows:

> Something important is happening in the first
> year. . . . Meeting high company expectations in
> the critical first year leads to the internaliza-
> tion of positive job attitudes and high standards;
> these attitudes and standards, in turn, would
> first lead to and be reinforced by strong perfor-
> mance and success in later years. It should also
> follow that a new manager who meets the challenge
> of one highly demanding job will be given sub-
> sequently a more demanding job and his level of

contribution will rise as he responds to the
company's growing expectations of him. The
key...is the concept of the first year as <u>a criti-
cal period for learning,</u> a time when the trainee
is uniquely ready to develop or change in the
direction of the company's expectations.

They concluded that this pattern of increasingly

challenging assignments followed by reinforcement was a

key element in the development of successful managers par-

ticularly during their first year when the organizational

norms and expectations are set.

It seems clear that the initiating behaviors of

the mentor--the demands, the challenges, the high expec-

tations and the confidence in the protege--are precisely

those behaviors which Moll, Rosenthal, Berlew and Hall

have identified as critical in enhancing the probability

of a person achieving their potential.

It might further be inferred that underlying the

mentors' initiating behavior is a certain consciousness of

the fact that if such a person as the prospective protege--

one he recognizes as an intelligent, well-educated,

achievement-oriented person is not "used" effectively, he

or she will be literally and figuratively "wasted."

Whether or not this concern is initially motivated

by altruism, intelligent self-interest, or organizational

interests is irrelevant. The point is the mentor acts on

an intuitive evaluation and understanding of the person's

needs. He provides a challenge which is sufficient to

stimulate the motivation of the protege, yet a challenge which is within the present ability of the protege to accomplish successfully.

Motivation. Earlier we asked the question: Why didn't these women perceive their mentors as oppressive tyrants or insatiable workaholics? Why were their sometimes unreasonable demands seen as challenging and motivating?

If we look back at the proteges' answers (Chapter IV, p. 67-69), we see that being given meaningful work to do--work generally regarded as "man's work"--was a prime motivating force. The proteges viewed each successive level of challenge as an opportunity to further demonstrate their competence and to fulfill the expectations of their mentor. The instrinsic value of the work itself was enhanced by the implication of status and power associated with it and with the mentor. For these women, being given meaningful work to do by the professionally superior and powerful mentor was in and of itself motivation and reward. It was a recognition of them as valuable organizational contributors and a reinforcement of their own sense of personal worth.

As noted earlier, if the mentor was perceived as an organizational "star," it is not difficult to see how the proteges may have envisioned themselves as "satellites" by association and identification.

McClelland's (1961) research on achievement moti-vation supports the proteges' interpretations of the mentors' behaviors and their responses to it. When achievement motivation is operating, he says, good performance becomes very attractive, as it was for these women. Moreover, this attractiveness is heightened by the process of identification--in this case the proteges' identification with the mentor.

McClelland also points out that achievement-oriented patterns of behavior are generally initiated very early in a person's life and are culturally based. Depending upon childrearing practices, he says, children coming from families where expectations for performance and independence are high, where parents evaluate accomplishments favorably and where they are rewarded liberally, tend to develop into adults with strong achievement motivation and high self-esteem.

While gathering background data on the subjects' families was not part of this study, the interviews did reveal that most of the women came from families where expectations were high and achievement valued. We might infer from this that the proteges were simply following pre-conditioned, well-established modes of behavior.

If we substitute the organizational environment for the biological family environment, then the mentor

assumes the role of parent in the organizational context. If the analogy is followed through, the outcome predicted by McClelland--development of managers with strong achievement motivation and high self-esteem--is predictable. Unquestionably, specific research on this point would be enlightening.

Demands Counterbalanced by Freedom

It is clear from the behaviors, perceptions and feelings identified in both the Initiation and Development Phases that the mentor creates an environment in which the protege continues to be stretched and challenged with what seem at times unreasonable demands upon time, energy, and capabilities. Yet it is not the demands by themselves which are important. The significant point is that these demands are made in the context of considerable personal freedom. It is this relative lack of constraints that gives balance to the relationship and contributes to growth. In addition, the development of trust supports this freedom of action.

The protege is free to try new things, to be creative. They are free to voice their opinions, to disagree. They have access to people and information far beyond their level in the organizational hierarchy. They are free to operate to a great extent outside the organizational norms for people at their level of management.

Organizational socialization. Perhaps a review of the

general process of organizational socialization will help

to illustrate the ways in which the socialization of these

women parallels the general model, and more particularly,

the influence of the mentor on the outcome.

The process of organizational socialization

described by Schein (1965) includes learning and inter-

nalizing the value system, the norms and the required pat-

terns of behavior prescribed by the particular

organization. The process of change a manager undergoes

to assimilate these norms and values generally follows the

classic change procedure originally formulated by Kurt

Lewin. It involves three phases: unfreezing--preparation

to learn the new values and norms; freezing--learning the

new values and norms; and finally, refreezing--essentially

internalizing the new values and norms.

The unfreezing phase serves the function of

detaching the person from his or her former values.

Schein (1965) says "He must redefine himself in terms of

the new role which is to be granted." The role conflict

Schein refers to here is inherent in the process of orga-

nizational socialization for any individual; but it is

complicated by societal role conflict when the manager

being socialized is female. Given that the managerial

model is male, an aspiring young woman may find herself in

a double bind.

Those aggressive, independent, task-oriented behaviors which are associated with the male managerial model are likely to be regarded as aberrant behavior by other females in the organization. On the other hand, male colleagues, constrained by stereotypic expectations, may be alternately offended or intimidated by her. With either group, the outcome is likely to be the same: She is rejected by females because of her aberrant behavior, and she is rejected by males because of her sex. Thus, she finds herself isolated and unloved as it were.

The isolation reported by the women in this study made some of their experiences in the unfreezing phase of the socialization process particularly trying. Some of the upending experiences of Sloane Fellows which Schein describes are matched by the experiences of these women: the tremendous overload of work assigned; the responsibility for projects for which they had little or no previous experience; the lack of rapport with colleagues who did not regard them as peers. All of these experiences were tremendously anxiety-provoking situations involving risk of failure, frustration, diminution of self-esteem and possible humiliation. One might well ask: How were these women able to sustain themselves through this difficult period? And what prompted them to persevere?

A popular defense to help initiates endure the often unpleasant organizational pressures during the unfreezing process is to form peer groups of novices to provide support and sustain motivation. For the women in this study, however, there were no real peers, either among the women or among the men. There was only the mentor.

It is important to note here that though peer groups whose norms support organizational norms facilitate the socialization process, most organizational theorists would agree that the example provided by key members of management are by far the most potent influences. So while it was the mentor who created many of these upending and anxiety-provoking experiences, significantly, it was also the mentor who provided the support, the encouragement and the managerial success model with whom the proteges identified. It was the mentors' professional values, attitudes and behaviors that the proteges emulated and eventually internalized. Moreover, it was the mentors' blessing that mediated their acceptance into the management ranks and subsequently their advancement.

But what motivated these women? We said earlier that they were achievement-oriented. But is that alone sufficient explanation for why they persevered in the face of the isolation and rejection they suffered?

Schein explains that the success of such uncomfortable socialization experiences depends upon two factors: (1) the initial motivation of the person upon entering the organization; and (2) the degree to which a new member can be held captive during the socialization period. If motivation is high, he says, a person will tolerate an inordinate amount of pain to prove himself or herself worthy.

Just consider what it was the mentor offered to these women: He offered the opportunity to be regarded as someone "special"--intelligent, competent, valuable-- someone respected as he was. It is hard to imagine today how unlikely such an opportunity was for a young woman in an organization only 25 short years ago.

As for being held captive during the socialization process, these women were literally held captive throughout most of their careers. Where else would they have gone? Even with the educational credentials they had, their real options for growth and advancement were few. Unlike the management skills of men, the management skills of women were not regarded as transferable from one organization to another. It was not until affirmative action legislation of the early 70's that serious evaluation of female managers made organizational mobility a viable option.

Therefore, while these women suffered the pains of isolation and rejection for want of a peer group, they

gained immeasurably from their close association with the mentor. The proteges' intuitive appreciation for the personal cost as well as the personal value of this trade-off may well account for the intensity of feeling which developed in these relationships between mentor and pro-tege.

Let us now look at what Schein describes as the basic responses to the dilemmas and conflicts of the organizational socialization process and see how they compare with the experience of the women in this study.

Basic Responses to Socialization

Type 1 - Rebellion	Rejection of all values and norms
Type 2 - Creative Individualism	Acceptance of only pivotal values and norms; rejection of all others
Type 3 - Conformity	Acceptance of all values and norms

Both Types 1 and 3 can be viewed as organizational failures, he says. Aspiring young men and women who persist in a belligerent and rebellious attitude toward organizational norms are likely to be expelled. Similarly, overly conforming men and women are likely to suppress their creativity, thus reducing their potential utility to the organization.

According to Schein's schema, those who really

"succeed" in the process of organizational socialization
to become viable candidates for top management are Type
2's. Clearly, the women in this study fit in this cate-
gory. They represent those creative individuals who some-
how manage to maintain their own integrity throughout the
process, accepting only those organizational norms and
values which are pivotal to the specific requirements of
the job, and rejecting all others which are inconsistent
with their personal and professional values.

Remaining creatively individualistic in an organi-
zation through various levels of management can be very
difficult for both men and women as resocialization takes
place at each level. But it was particularly difficult
for the women in this study for the reasons noted earlier.
With each move, they had to start all over again--not only
being the new person in the group, but once more being the
only woman in the group.

Throughout the process of organizational sociali-
zation, the one consistent, stabilizing and guiding
influence was the influence of the mentor. It seems unli-
kely that these women would have been able to resist the
overwhelming forces toward conformity and instead become
the "creative individuals" they did without the tutelage,
reinforcement and protection of their mentors.

Functional Proximity Becomes
Infinite Closeness

During all three stages of the mentoring process, a richness of rapport, a caring, a trust develops between mentor and protege which can be described as a love relationship. Let us examine once more what is happening from the proteges' perspective and see what that tells us about the relationship.

Feelings of gratitude, admiration and enhanced self-image in the early stage of the relationship deepen as the relationship develops. The respect, trust and love which grows between the pair in the Development Phase is an outgrowth of many, many interactions, trials and tests which were described in detail in Chapter IV.

However, it is important to appreciate the fact that the relationship is not conflict free. Feelings of isolation and resentment on the part of the protege are alternately confronted, resolved or rationalized. Similarly, sexual tensions (to be discussed in the next section) are finessed, rationalized or denied. It is the ability of mentor and protege to confront one another on issues and yet maintain their respect and affection for one another that test the real strength of the rela-tionship and the participants. Ultimately, the protege is no longer dependent upon the mentor's tutelage; but their

respective needs for contact, approval and love continue.

The feelings shared by mentor and protege, then, are not merely feelings of respect and admiration for a person's professional competence, rather they are an expression of complete confidence in the essential "goodness" of the person as a human being. There is complete trust. Mentor and protege are willing to render themselves vulnerable to one another.

Clearly, there is tremendous risk in such a relationship. As Daniel Levinson points out: "There is plenty of room for exploitation, undercutting, envy, smothering, and oppressive control on the part of the mentor, and for greedy demanding, clinging admiration, self-denying gratitude, and arrogant ingratitude on the part of the recipient."

But there is also a tremendous opportunity for professional and emotional growth--for both mentor and protege. To quote Carl Rogers (1958): "The degree to which I can create relationships which facilitate the growth of others as separate persons is a measure of the growth I have achieved myself."

In his analysis of constructive relationships, Rogers emphasizes the quality of the relationship as a whole, not just the short-run tactics of "human relations." He suggests that the most important messages

in a relationship are communicated not by words but by a multitude of subliminal signals that convey the speaker's true attitudes. These subliminal signals are the substance of the proteges' perceptions of the mentors' behavior and vice versa.

What seems to be important to the influencee, says Rogers, is whether the influencer accepts him as a person and is engaging in a genuine relationship. He avoids engaging in what may appear to be manipulative strategies. In other words, both parties need to feel that there is an accurate matching of their experience, awareness and communications with one another. In Roger's terms, they are experiencing "congruence" in their relationship. This, says Rogers, is of central importance in the development of growth-facilitating relations.

The degree of honesty and emotional maturity required to maintain such an intimate relationship poses serious problems for many. As Rogers explains, the participants in such a relationship are frequently faced with the existential choice:

> Do I dare to communicate the full degree of congruence which I feel? Do I dare match my experience, and awareness of that experience, with my communication? Do I dare to communicate myself as I am or must my communication be somewhat less than or different from this? The sharpness of this issue lies in the often vividly foreseen possibility of threat or rejection. To communicate one's full awareness of the relevant experience is a risk in interpersonal rela-

tionships. It seems to me that <u>it is the taking</u>
<u>or not taking of this risk which determines</u>
<u>whether a given relationship becomes more and more</u>
<u>mutually therapeutic or whether it leads in a</u>
<u>disintegrative direction</u>. (emphasis added)

<u>Letting go</u>. There comes a time in mentoring relation-

ships, too, as it does in other constructive rela-

tionships, such as those between teacher and student,

supervisor and subordinate, parent and child, when mentor

and protege must quite literally "let go" of one another

if the relationship is to continue to grow. This sounds

incongruous, but it is not. Without overdramatizing the

importance of disengagement in a mentoring relationship,

consider the following analogy.

When a child is ready to be born, it must leave

the safety of the mother's womb or both parent and child

will surely perish. They may die or suffer serious

impairment in the process of birth, but the probability of

survival and growth for both is infinitely greater. The

longer the separation is delayed, the greater the risk of

death. There is an appropriate time for disengagement in

a mentoring relationship, and both mentor and protege know

it intuitively. However, mentor and protege often become

so dependent upon one another--either real or imagined--

that the prospect of change in the relationship is viewed

as a threat. They resist facing the inevitable. As a

consequence, the longer the inevitable is delayed, the

greater the risk of dissolution and/or disenchantment.

In summary then, the degree to which mentor and protege are prepared to take risks with one another--beyond their professional role expectations--will determine the constructive or destructive direction of the relationship.

Sexual tensions. One of the many complexities of the mentoring process is the sexual tension that develops between two people in such an intimate relationship, particularly when the two people are of the opposite sex.

When one works closely, as these women did, with men who are as brilliant, dynamic and often physically attractive as these mentors were perceived to be by their proteges, it would be extraordinary if sexual tension did not exist between the two. However, one needs to differentiate between pressure exerted to gain sexual favors (on the part of either man or woman) and the strong emotional involvement that develops between mentor and protege where sexual attraction may be one of many attractions the pair shares.

Since we are all sexual human beings, the question then becomes: How is sexual tension dealt with in such an intimate relationship? This is not a question which lends itself to a generalized answer. The sexual tensions experienced by the women in this study were dealt with in

ways which were tolerable and constructive for them--and the ways varied.

One protege saw her mentor as the father she had lost in early childhood through divorce. She revealed the transference of her love in this way:

> "He (the mentor) is a person I idealize and love. If I could have had a father. . . . (voice trails off, eyes closed and speaking almost in a whisper). . . and he is younger than I am. I don't know many other men I feel that way about."

They are both married. And while they do not socialize outside the office, they share their very special joys and sorrows with one another.

Conversely, a mentor felt it necessary to relate to his protege as a daughter in order to maintain the appropriate psychological distance. (She was by far the most physically attractive woman interviewed.) This strategy worked well for both of them initially, but it became particularly frustrating for the protege when she gave up thinking of him as a father figure. Her subsequent marriage buttressed the mentor's psychological barrier.

Another protege after describing her mentor in the most adoring terms and manner, dismissed the issue of sexual attraction between them in this way:

> "You don't have time. You just don't have time. There are a lot of attractive people around, very attractive people. And some of them are very exciting, inspiring people for a long time, and some of them are very exciting, inspiring people for a half an hour. If you're an adult, you can

deal with that. I think it is a pretty crummy cop out for men and women who think it can't be dealt with, that it can't be walked away from. It's just about as hard as not eating a pastry if you really want to lose weight."

This flip and somewhat detached response belies the intensity of emotion exhibited by the protege in answering the question. From the moment the issue of sexuality in the relationship was broached, the protege became nervous and agitated and avoided the eyes of the interviewer as she spoke.

One possible conclusion is that the sexual tension between her and her former mentor--even now--is much more difficult to deal with than passing up an eclair.

Though they no longer work together in the same organization, they continue to see each other as close friends.

Then there are those situations in which there is love on both sides, but only one party is sexually aroused. One mentor comforted his protege through the rocky first years of her marriage. Later, she comforted him through his divorce. While she cared deeply for him, she was totally unprepared to risk a now stable marriage to fill the void in her mentor's life. It was a painful transition, but their ability to communicate openly with one another about their feelings made it possible to talk it through and salvage a meaningful relationship. She and

her husband hosted the reception when the now former mentor subsequently married.

Another variation of the foregoing situation is when one or both of the participants in a mentoring relationship is homosexual.

While the means used to deal with sexual tensions in the relationship seem varied, the basic strategy employed is the same: To distance one's self either psychologically or physically from the other person. Those who cast mentor or protege in the role of father or daughter protected themselves from their desire by the taboos associated with incestuous relationships. Those who are still uncomfortable with their sexual feelings deny any serious stirrings of the flesh and sublimate their desires by focusing all of their energies on professional achievement. And still others may have married just to escape their strong attraction for the mentor and thus resolve their conflict in a personally and socially constructive way.

One might presume that sexual intimacy between mentor and protege might further enhance and strengthen an already rich relationship, but there was no evidence to support such a notion. All of the women who acknowledged having had a mentor felt that sexual intimacy with the mentor would have threatened the existing relationship, and they were not prepared to take that risk.

Summary

While all of the mentor/protege relationships
acknowledged in this study are still ongoing, it is rea-
sonable to assume that if the participants had engaged in
what were perceived as manipulative and/or exploitive
behaviors, the relationships would have been aborted or
truncated at some point along the way. In fact, some of
the "denied" relationships of the non-mentor group (Chapter
VI) may be examples of just such dysfunctional behavior
and its consequences.

In the ideal, the mentor/protege relationship is
built upon a mutuality of trust and eventually uncon-
ditional love. While often frustrated and disappointed,
the participants look to the overall quality of the rela-
tionship on balance. At every stage, the quality of the
relationship must outweigh the sum of its shortcomings in
the minds of the participants. In the end, the rela-
tionship is maintained not because of what one member can
do for the other, but because mentor and protege truly
care for one another. The relationship has intrinsic
value in and of itself.

C H A P T E R   V I

ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS WITH FIVE WOMEN

WITHOUT MENTORS

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the inter-
views of five women who claimed not to have had any signifi-
cant supportive relationships in their careers. First, to
determine if there was any significant difference in their
profiles, i.e,. title, career progression, education,
average number of years with the company, salary, age and
marital status; and secondly, if indeed they had no suppor-
tive relationships, how were they able to meet their needs
for support, direction and identification?

The Non-Mentor Group

Profile. Of the survey sample of 35 women, only five
reported having had no significant professional rela-
tionship. All five of the women were interviewed; three in
person and two by telephone.

In very general terms, their profiles are not unlike
the profiles of the women in the mentor group. They are
well-educated, achievement-oriented and successful business-
women. The differences are subtle and pose some interesting

questions. Let us look first at a comparison of the profiles of the mentor and non-mentor group which appears in Table 6.1.

TABLE 6.1

COMPARISON OF MENTOR AND NON-MENTOR GROUP

	Mentor	Non-Mentor
Title: At least vice president	100%	60%
Career Progression: Staff	90%	100%
Education: Graduate Degree	60%	60%
Avg. No. Yrs. with Co.	22 yrs.	8.5 yrs.
Salary: over 50,000 dollars	80%	20%
Average Age	50 yrs.	38 yrs.
Married	40%	20%

Only three or 60 percent of the non-mentor group have as yet reached the vice presidential level; and only one earns more than $50,000 a year, although educationally they are as well-prepared for their careers as are the women in the mentor group.

The average age of the non-mentor group, however, is 38 years old as opposed to 50 years old for the mentor group. So we might conclude that given another ten years the profiles of the mentor and non-mentor group will match with respect to title and salary as it does now in terms of education and career progression. But there is another

important factor to consider that is not immediately apparent after a glance at Table 6.1. The difference in the average number of years with the company is not so much a function of differences in the ages of the women in the mentor and non-mentor groups as it is a function of differing career patterns. The women in the non-mentor group, with one exception, have had more company moves than the women in the mentor group. In addition, each expressed varying degrees of dissatisfaction with their progress and/or experiences in these companies.

It is interesting that the profile of the non-mentor sample of women in this study--however small--bears a striking resemblance to the non-mentor group of men in the Heinrick & Struggles survey discussed in Chapters I and III; that is, in general, the non-mentor groups in both studies earned less, moved more, and were less satisfied with their lot.

The most significant difference from our point of view, however, is that the women in the non-mentor group <u>did</u> in fact have mentors or sponsors whom they did not recognize or chose to deny.

<u>Unrecognized and unacknowledged mentors</u>. During one interview, the woman described three intimate supportive relationships with top executives, but she discounted them because they were outside her own organization. She had read some of the popular literature about "corporate

Godfathers," and jumped to the conclusion that supportive relationships outside the organization didn't count. So, she reported "none" in answer to the survey question: "Is there some one person (or perhaps more than one person) who stands out in your mind as the one who most influenced your career development at a critical juncture (perhaps a boss, a senior staff person, a teacher, a consultant who helped you to acquire the professional skill and sophistication required to advance to higher corporate levels)?" It is worth noting that the wording of the question does not limit the answer to people inside the organization.

The subsequent interview revealed, however, that it was the close interaction with these three corporate executives whom she referred to as her "Dutch Uncles," who provided her with much of the cultural know-how and decision-making perspective that she used to her advantage in advancing her career in her own organization. In fact, one of the relationships with a CEO developed along much the same lines as the mentor/protege relationships outlined in Chapter IV. The major difference is that in this case the mentor was not the one who promoted the protege within the organization, though he contributed significantly to her promotability.

Moreover, their emotional involvement developed along sexual lines. Perhaps because the mentor was outside the organization and because mentor and protege were

both free, they did not have to deal with the sexual ten-
sions experienced by those mentor/protege relationships
constrained by prior commitments and organizational norms.

For example, in a case where both mentor and pro-
tege were top managers in the same company and their rela-
tionship developed along sexual lines as well, this aspect
of the relationship became a detriment to their career
development. Both mentor and protege were forced to resign
their positions. The organizational norms would not support
such an alliance, even though each of the participants
divorced their respective spouses and married one another.
One might argue that the affair was a red herring and there
were organizational forces afoot to discredit either one or
both of the participants. Even if that were true (and the
researcher has a sense that it is true), the validity of the
argument doesn't change the predictability of the outcome.

However much we may think that societal views on
intimate sexual relationships have changed, human nature has
not changed. When one has moved to the top of the organiza-
tional hierarchy--particularly if the assent was swift--
there are bound to be those who are resentful or at the very
least envious. Where they would be reluctant to discredit
an outstanding performer, even in their own minds, they can
quite righteously condemn an indiscretion by a corporate
officer in the name of organizational image.

Since this interview took place shortly after this

traumatic experience, it is not surprising that this women

denied having had help from anyone <u>ever</u>.

In yet another case, husband and wife both entered

the organization together. She advanced much more rapidly

than he and eventually became his boss. She is now the

top ranking woman in the company. They are divorced. Both

continue to work in the same company.

"Far and away," she says, "It has been the most

challenging managerial problem I have ever had."

This woman described in detail the man who

"discovered her," gave her a job, sponsored her with a scho-

larship to go to college and provided her with career

direction. Yet, she did not perceive this supportive rela-

tionship significant to her career. Her perspective was

narrowly confined to the present and the organization. It

seems that the person from whom she needed and sought

support, her husband, did not provide it. Similarly, when

she asked for counsel from her supervisors, they refused

to "get involved." It is conceivable that the rift between

husband and wife made other possible supporters hesitant to

assume the role of arbitrator or benefactor. She described

herself as essentially a "loner" and isolated in the

organization.

The purpose in noting some of these personal life

traumas of the "non-mentor" group which were uncovered

during the interviews is to shed light upon or offer a

possible explanation for the need that these women apparently felt to deny supportive relationships which were clearly there and which the women themselves described.

These women all claimed: "No one ever helped me." "Whatever I have accomplished, I did it myself." "I've never had anyone shepherd me along."

The pattern of denial is clear. These women who claim not to have had any mentors did in fact have them. They simply did not recognize them as such or for their own reasons chose to deny them. So in profile at least, even with respect to actually having had a mentor, the mentor and non-mentor groups appear to be identical.

Difference Between Mentor and Non-Mentor Groups

Was there something revealed by the interviews that somehow distinguishes these two groups of women? Yes, indeed there is: Their perceptions of the world are antithetical.

The non-mentor group perceives the world as hostile and threatening--a place where their real worth is not valued and they have had to fight for everything they have ever gotten. They feel denied and unloved, and they continue to support their view of the world by effectively screening out help and support as these excerpts suggest:

"I sort of look around and laugh to myself when you ask about support, because I really, very seldom notice support."

The researcher sensed a bitterness, a hostility and a discontent in the demeanor of these women which was in sharp contrast to the mentor group. Significantly, they are perceived differently by their colleagues as well. Generally, they are perceived as "cold and emotionally distant." One of the women says she was perceived by her subordinates as "cold and inhuman" when she was in a line position.

The women admit to being hurt sometimes and somewhat confused by this perception because they don't see themselves in this light. Yet they understand how it happens.

As one explains:

"It is very true that at the top of my list was always performance. Get the job done. Don't spend time gossiping. Get on with it. But it still hurts."

In contrast, the mentor group views the world as an exciting and challenging place where most people are well-intentioned, helpful and supportive human beings. They see themselves in this light and are perceived so by their colleagues and subordinates.

While the following is a description of one of the mentor group by one of her subordinates, it is representative of the style employed by the mentor group as a whole:

"She has a unique ability to join the troops in the trenches, exhorting them at the same time she is planning the victory dinner." Explaining her motivational style, he adds, "She can make me believe I'm a cornerstone of the company."

Implications

One might ask: So what? Those who say that they did not have mentors are apparently professionally successful too. What difference does it make?

These are moot questions and perhaps difficult to speculate about. But it seems reasonable to conclude two things: (1) their perception of the world makes a difference in the quality of their own lives, and (2) it makes a difference in the quality of the lives they touch.

These women--those who claim not to have had mentors--were denied the kind of support and love they felt they needed, and perhaps as a consequence they now feel compelled to deny the support and even the love that they were given. In any event, it is clear that they have not yet come to terms with their anger and resentment.

The damage to these women personally is apparent as the pain they felt and their latent hostility was communicated to the interviewer as they spoke. But if this hostility was communicated to the interviewer in a period of a few hours, is it not also communicated on a day to day basis to those whom they supervise and train for management? It seems probable that such hostility is communicated and perpetuated--though not consciously.

It is not our intent to overemphasize this point; however, one might consider the battered child syndrome in family life. If we can view the organization as a

community--a family if you will--and the mentor as a surro-
gate parent, then it is reasonable to presume that the loved
child--the one with a mentor--becomes in turn a loving
parent. Similarly, the ignored, abused and often battered
child--the one denied the love of a mentor--becomes an
indifferent and dispassionate parent at best.

When you consider that leadership succession is
one of the principal responsibilities of top management,
then the implications of this analogy are profound.

C H A P T E R   V I I
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to: (1) answer the
general hypothesis and the research questions asked in
Chapter II on the basis of the data analyzed in Chapters
III, IV, V & VI; (2) to draw conclusions from this analy-
sis which may enhance our understanding of the mentoring
process in complex organizations; (3) to critique the
limitations of this research, and to offer suggestions for
future research.

General Hypothesis

Based on the survey results reported in Chapter
III and the interviews analyzed and reported in Chapters
IV, V & VI, the general hypothesis is confirmed:

Mentoring has been a significant part of the
career development of successful female managers.

Research Questions

Based on the analysis of the interviews in
Chapters IV, V & VI, all of the research questions sum-
marized in Table 7.1 can be answered in the affirmative
and restated as hypotheses which could be specifically
tested in future research.

TABLE 7.1

ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

---

* Mentors and proteges share values, attitudes and goals.

* Proteges become mentors in turn.

* Mentors choose their proteges.

* When mentor and protege are employed in the same organization, sexual tensions exist but sexual intimacy is avoided.

* Mentor/protege relationships of female executives differ in some respects from those of male executives.

* There are stages of socialization and patterns of behavior which can be clearly identified within mentor/protege relationships.

Now let us look at these answers in greater detail.

Mentors and proteges share values, attitudes and goals. As noted in Chapter IV, the shared values and attitudes are part of the "recognition" which precipitates the relationship. Moreover, an increasing level of identification--the taking on of the professional values, attitudes and skills of the mentor--is part of every stage of development. The goals, though not specified, are subliminally acknowledged and shared.

Proteges become mentors in turn. All of the women interviewed, even those who said that they had no mentor, as

well as 85 percent of the survey group are now attempting
to mentor or sponsor others. As women in top management,
they are sensitive to the uniqueness of their positions
and feel a certain responsibility to become role models
for younger women coming into the lower levels of their
organizations. They are often frustrated in this respect
because there are relatively few women in the management
ranks with whom they come in contact routinely.

So once again, they--prospective mentors--initiate
a relationship with a prospective protege. There seems to
be a strong need to repeat the behaviors of their mentors.
Perhaps this is seen as a way of repaying the mentor in
kind. In any case, these are women who have internalized
the professional values of their mentors, and therefore,
they recognize the development of the next generation of
business leaders as one of the principle responsibilities
of top management. Whether the potential protege is man
or woman is not a particular issue. What seems to concern
these women most is the person's potential.

Sexual tension exists; sexual intimacy is avoided. It is
important to differentiate between pressure exerted to
gain sexual favors--what may be termed sexual harrassment--
and the strong emotional involvement that can develop
between two people in a mentor/protege relationship where
sexual attraction is one of many attractions the pair
shares.

No sexual harrassment was reported. The women interviewed addressed the issue of sexuality in the relationship in much the same way in which they dealt with other risk-laden situations--with sensitivity and discretion. Each dealt with the sexual tensions inherent in such a close relationship in ways which were comfortable for them. There was a general consensus, however, that if the objective was top management, then the place to "make it" was in the boardroom, not in the bedroom. The experience of one of the mentor/protege pairs discussed in Chapter VI suggests that this logic applies to men in top management as well as to women.

Mentor/protege relationships of female executives differ in some respects from those of male executives. There is a remarkable similarity between the proteges' perceptions of the mentors' behaviors, i.e., what those behaviors really meant to them, and the fulfillment of their "ministration, maturation, and mastery needs." Harry Levinson (1968), as noted in Chapter I, conceptualizes that satisfying such needs for subordinates is one of the principle functions of management. It is through mentoring that top management provides for leadership succession, he says. By his standard and the standard of the women interviewed, their mentors were indeed "exceptional executives."

During the ministration stage, the mentors did for their proteges what the protege was not yet able to do for herself. While maturing in the job, they engaged in what Levinson describes as "rivalry with affection"; and when their proteges had gained mastery in their skills, the mentors had the foresight to "let go."

With respect to Daniel J. Levinson's (1978) description of mentoring relationships among men, there are some similarities and some differences. First the similarities: the relationships are formed in the early years of one's career, generally between the ages of 25 to 35. The mentor is generally older by some 15 years, though not necessarily. (As noted in Chapter IV, it is more likely that the seniority is in terms of power and expertise. Generally, one has more of both as one grows older.) There is a strong identification between mentor and protege; and there develops between them strong feelings of love. And yes, for men also, if the participants follow through on their sexual attraction for one another, it can complicate an already complex relationship.

Now for the differences: Daniel J. Levinson reports that ultimately, these relationships come to an unhappy and often ignominious end. Our findings differ. Each of the women who acknowledged their mentor still enjoys a viable relationship with that person. While

the "teacher/pupil" aspect of the relationship no longer
exists, the mentors and proteges in this study were able
to finesse a transition to a compeer relationship. They
were able to acknowledge their love for one another, and
the richness of their relationship continues as a deep
friendship.

As noted in Chapter III, our conclusion is sup-
ported by the Heidrick and Struggles (1979) study of top
businessmen. They also reported that the men with mentors
continued to maintain close and "friendly" ties. The
situation that Daniel Levinson describes should not be
viewed as inevitable but rather the consequence of men-
toring relationships gone awry. Some of these flawed
relationships were discussed in Chapter VI.

There are stages of socialization and patterns
of behavior which can be clearly identified within the
mentor/protege relationship. The process of mentoring
described in Chapter IV in considerable detail is recapi-
tulated in the subsequent sections of this chapter. The
three stages: Initiation, Development and Termination, as
well as the behaviors of the mentor, the perceptions of
the protege and the feelings engendered during each phase
are specified and explained.

Our findings are similar with the findings of
Phillips (1979) with respect to stages of development for
female managers and with the stages of development concep-

tualized by Harry Levinson (1968). Both studies were reviewed in Chapter I.

Now let us consider what a mentor really is; how mentoring relationships differ from other kinds of supportive relationships; and what we infer from our analysis about the characteristic elements of mentoring relationships.

Conclusions

What is a mentor? Mentors have been referred to in the popular press alternately as Godfathers, coaches, Rabbis, guides, teachers, counselors, and a host of other psuedonyms. There is, however, no consensus on what the word really means, and Webster does not help much. The dictionary tells us simply that Mentor was the name of the teacher whom Odysseus entrusted with the education of his son, Telemachus, in Homer's Greek epic, The Odyssey.

Our analysis of the data suggests that these psuedonyms really represent different kinds of supportive relationships. It might be helpful, therefore, to think of supportive relationships along a continuum such as the one shown in Figure 11 representing increasing degrees of power.

Continuum of Supportive Relationships

(low)   (high)

| Peer | Coach | Sponsor | Mentor |
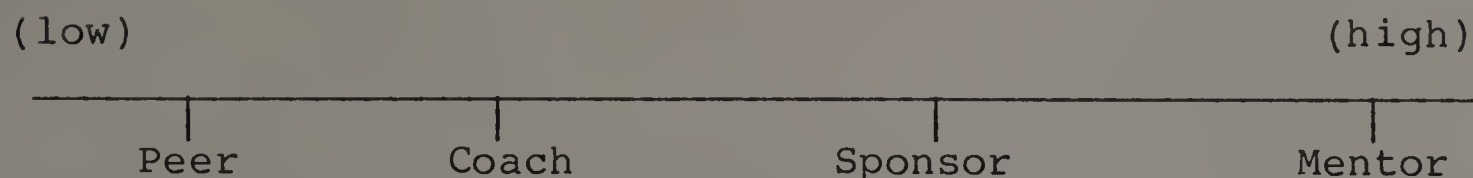
Figure 11. Degree of Power--Access to resources of all
kinds, i.e., expertise, influence, status,
time, money, information, etc. (Suggested by
the conceptual model of Shapiro, Hazeltine &
Rowe (1978)).

While a mentor can assume any one or all of the

less powerful roles--sponsor, coach, even peer--the

reverse is not true. Sponsors, coaches and peers, though

developmentally significant, do not have the degree of

influence mentors have upon their proteges.

Differences between mentors and sponsors. The sponsor is

a person who promotes, literally and figuratively.

Sponsoring is an administrative function. The rela-

tionship is one of utility. There is little ego involve-

ment. If the sponsorship should end, one would regret the

loss of an important utility, but one's ego would be rela-

tively undisturbed. This conclusion supports the findings

of Phillips (1977) noted in Chapter I.

In contrast, the mentor is a person who shares

"the dream"--not necessarily a consciously formulated

career goal --but rather a cherished perception of self

(ego ideal). While the mentor can also be a sponsor, one who promotes, this need not be the case. The mentor may promote the protege by association and influence, yet he may not be the person who literally promotes the protege in the job situation. Even when the mentor and protege are in the same company, the act of promoting from one job to another is an administrative function. The act of preparing a protege for promotion is a teaching function. Clearly, the latter function is of a higher order.

In reviewing all of the interviews both of the mentor and so-called non-mentor group, one thing stands out: The emotional involvement in a _true_ mentoring relationship goes far beyond the utility of the relationship in terms of sponsorship or career modeling. As described in detail in Chapters IV and V, a caring develops which makes the relationship at once stronger in every respect and at the same time much more tenuous. Each partner in such a relationship invests so much of self that each becomes the more vulnerable to the other.

The willingness to be vulnerable to the other person is the key to the issue of trust, which in turn, is the key to the development of a true mentoring relationship. The fundamental distinction, then, is essentially one of emotional involvement (ego) or the lack of it.

The degree of emotional intensity expressed by the

proteges during the interviews when talking of their mentors was dramatic, revealing and strikingly different than their demeanor when discussing sponsors or other role models. The visible physical changes noted are much the same as those associated with people talking about a loved one. The eyes begin to sparkle, the muscles around the lips soften, the tone of voice becomes vibrant, the breathing accelerates, a tremendous feeling of excitement is communicated; and the words used are words of love, <u>not</u> utility. It is an unmistakable phenomenon.

Needless to say, should one lose a mentor through misunderstanding, disenchantment or possibly death, feelings of anguish, anger or dispair are predictable as Daniel Levinson (1978) suggests.

In summary then, it can be said that sponsors are appreciated; but mentors are loved. What can we say about the characteristic elements of these powerful and intense mentoring relationships?

<u>Characteristic elements of mentoring relationships</u>. There are three elements which this research indicates distinguishes <u>true</u> mentoring relationships (the highest point on the continuum in Figure 11) from other kinds of supportive relationships:

1. The <u>power</u> that the mentor represents in terms of access to resources of all kinds, personal and material, i.e., expertise, influence, status, time, money, information, etc. The men-

tor, in general, will possess or have access to more "power" than either a sponsor, a coach, or a peer.

2. The <u>level of identification</u> that develops between mentor and protege, i.e., the degree to which the protege identifies with the mentor both in terms of professional values and behavior as well as personal values and behavior, will be greater between mentor and protege than between any of the other diads noted on the continuum of supportive relationships.

3. The <u>intensity of emotional involvement</u>, i.e., the psychological bonding, the linking of minds, the sharing of dreams, and the eventual sharing of unconditional love, occurs <u>only</u> in true mentoring relationships. It is significantly absent in sponsoring relationships.

Figure 12 consolidates these distinguishing characteristics in the process of mentoring and keys them to the three phases which were identified and discussed in detail in Chapters IV and V, namely, Initiation, Development, and Termination. Let us trace these characteristic elements through each phase of the relationship in turn.

Characteristic Elements of Mentoring Relationships

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Level of Power	(low)		(high)
	Meaningful Work	Supportive Relationship	Fulfillment of the Dream
Identification			
	Idealization	Self-assertion	Internalization
Emotional Involvement			
	Respect	Affection	Love

Figure 12. Levels of power, identification & emotion.

The power of the mentor makes it possible for the protege to receive a range of rewards which have real value for the protege. During the Initiation Phase, the reward is meaningful work to do--work which is challenging and growth-facilitating. In the Development Phase, the power of the mentor in terms of status and influence provides the protege with referent power and a supportive relationship which heightens her self-esteem. And by the Termination Phase, all of the powers of the mentor together with the evolving abilities of the protege make it possible for the protege to realize her potential.

The degree of identification with the mentor proceeds along familiar lines in much the same way that

children identify with their parents or significant others. In the Initiation Phase, the mentor is idealized into the all-powerful, all-knowing, God-like figure. As the protege becomes more conscious of her own strengths, the need to test the reality of that strength is dramatized by numerous incidents of self-assertion. Mentor and protege spar with one another and test wills. The confrontation during this period, contrived and real, is healthy and predictable. The stronger the protege gets, the less God-like the mentor seems. Finally, the most admired attributes of the mentor (and some of the least admired too) are internalized and become part of the protege's professional repetoire of behaviors.

The emotional involvement and intensity builds throughout the various stages of the relationship. In the Initiation Phase, feelings of respect, admiration, and gratitude are experienced. As the interactions between mentor and protege increase, the protege develops in line with mentor's expectations. Feelings of affection develop between the pair in the context of mutual respect and admiration. In the final stage of the relationship, mentor and protege reach an exquisite level of understanding which enables them to love one another unconditionally. They achieve the emotional maturity to accept one another as they really are: professionally distinguished, perhaps; but less than perfect human beings.

The process of mentoring. Let us examine once again the behaviors, perceptions, and feelings which were identified as dominant during each stage of the mentoring process--Initiation, Development, and Termination. (See Figure 10, Chapter IV, pp. 99-101.)

As we examine the behaviors of the mentor, we find that we are looking at an activity component, task-relevant behaviors. When we examine the perceptions of the protege, we are looking at a personality component, an individual's unique perception of the world. And when we examine the feelings of the protege, we are looking at an emotional component, a person's visceral response to what is being experienced externally and internally.

Taken as a gestalt, these three components present a reasonably coherent picture of the dynamics of the mentoring process over time. The components are interdependent; and the process is interactive.

For example, the same behaviors given different perceptions and emotional contexts render different outcomes in the interactive process. How the behaviors of the mentor are interpreted depends upon the perceptions of the protege--not just the functional aspects of the behaviors, but the situational context in which they occur. This interaction is further complicated by a host of subliminal signals exchanged between mentor and protege. So while we may regard a particular behavior as having a

generally constructive effect in and of itself, the real force of it exists in the meaning attributed to the behavior by the protege.

We infer from our analysis of the data that while it is the mentor who initiates the process of mentoring, it is the protege who signals the shift from one phase to the next. This could be interpreted to mean that it is the protege who controls the progress of the relationship. It is our sense, however, that the progress of relationship depends also upon the critical judgement of the mentor. He decides when to acknowledge the signal and when to yield to the pressure of the protege. Readiness to move on to the next phase may be in the form of an overt signal on the part of the protege, or it may be a subliminal signal perceived by the mentor in the protege's demeanor. In either case, the decision to act on the signal rests with the mentor.

The mentor's judgement in the timing of this forward movement in the process of mentoring determines in large measure the success or failure of the relationship. If the mentor yields too soon, the protege may falter and growth to potential may be jeopardized. If the mentor is reluctant to yield, the relationship may become stalled or irreparably damaged. His actions must reflect an accurate assessment of the emotional needs of the protege as well as a dispassionate appraisal of her professional develop-

ment at the particular moment. The mentor plays his most significant role in the process of mentoring at these critical junctures between phases.

Discussion

At the outset of our investigation, a review of the existing literature on the topic of mentoring in general and mentoring in the organizational context in particular, was spare and provided little insight as to the nature of the process of mentoring. To be sure, there were descriptions, conceptions, bits and pieces, but nothing that could be described as a complete process applied to a specific and homogeneous group.

As a consequence of our analysis of the mentoring relationships of the top management women in this study, a dynamic process of mentoring has been described from beginning to end. Beyond this, our efforts to explain the phenomenon have led us to a number of powerful theories and principles of human relationships from other disciplines. It is our sense that these theories and principles are relevant to mentoring relationships in organizations, and may enhance our understanding of mentoring as a phenomenon.

The organization as a family. First, let me suggest that it might be a useful tool to think in terms of organiza-

tional life vis a vis family life. This analogy is very powerful when one considers that those who reach the top of the management hierarchy--the women in this study as well as their male counterparts, the chief executive officers of the FORTUNE 500--spend some 20 to 25 years of their adult lives in a single organizational environment. This is longer than most children today spend with their biological families!

Harry Levinson (1962) and his colleagues at the Menninger Foundation found support for this concept in their intensive study of a large utility company. Levinson hypothesizes that "one of the significant differences between those who become executives and those who do not lies in the presence or absence of certain kinds of identification models." In much the same way that children grow and mature through identification with authority figures such as parents and teachers, a supervisor or junior executive will grow in stature and competence to the extent that superiors provide models with which he or she can identify.

The behaviors of the mentor, then, in providing for the needs of the organizational neophyte--what Harry Levinson has referred to as providing for the "ministration, maturation, and mastery needs of subordinates"--may be considered analogous to the behaviors of responsible and loving parents.

<u>Relevant theories and principles</u>. In his recent book, <u>The</u>
<u>Ecology of Human Development</u>, sociologist Urie
Bronfenbrenner (1979) provides a striking parallel between
what has been described in this chapter and in preceding
chapters as the principle dimensions of the process of
mentoring--power, identification, and love--and what
Bronfenbrenner describes as the factors most influential
in successful parenting.

After an extensive review of the literature on
parenting, Bronfenbrenner concludes that three factors are
paramount in the rearing of children: the two-person pri-
mary relationship (what we have termed love between mentor
and protege); the shifting balance of control between
adult and child (the process of identification); and the
adult's power in the external world (or the power of the
mentor in the business world as the case may be).

Bronfenbrenner argues, as we have in Chapter V,
that the "quality of the relationship is crucial: the
more secure and supported the developing person feels in
it, the more easily communication, learning, and growth
take place." Needless to say, for young children these
relationships are usually with parents; but for young men
and women in organizations, these relationships could be
with senior members of management.

He goes on to say that "development occurs most
naturally when children observe increasingly complicated

activities being done by important loved people and then do such activities jointly with the same people." Finally, Bronfenbrenner suggests that "human development is affected by the amount of power in the larger society that the adults in the relationship hold. Adults cut off from power over the economic and political institutions which shape their lives," he says, "are less likely to provide the time, energy and resources needed for activities with children."

The issues that Bronfenbrenner raises--the quality of the relationship, the balance of control between the pair, and the power to reward in a meaningful way--are exactly the same issues to which our analysis of the successful mentoring relationships in this study have led us. They were described in Chapter IV and developed in Chapter V as the crucial elements in the development and maintenance of successful mentoring relationships.

If we follow through with this analogy, we can see that elements of the process of mentoring are elements with which we are already familiar. Just as in the case of children for whom the first four years of life have a lasting impact, so it is for the career lives of men and women in organizations.

As noted earlier, the Berlew and Hall (1966) study emphasizes the tremendous impact of encounters during the early years of organizational life, particularly the

first. Similarly, Edgar Schien (1965) emphasizes the impor-
tance of developing a "creative individualism" in dealing
with the pressure toward conformity in the organizational
socialization process if one seeks upward mobility. And
finally, Daniel Levinson (1978) points out the problems of
individuation that can occur in mid-life if these develop-
mental needs are not met. On an organizational level, Harry
Levinson (1968) points out the problems of succession which
can occur if these developmental needs of junior managers
are not met.

To be sure, the mentor/protege relationship is
unique, powerful, and complex; but it seems clear that it
builds upon some of these well-known elements. The archi-
tecture of the relationship, however, depends upon the
personalities of the participants and the setting.

Let us look again at the world as seen through the
eyes of the women in the mentor and non-mentor group.
Were they simply operating in different environments? Or
were they experiencing the environments differently?

There is an old saying that goes: What we see is
largely what we look for. In other words, what one sees
is one's unique perception of the world, not necessarily a
statement of fact. While our outlook may be altered from
time to time by our experiences, by and large, that aspect
of our personality is set at a relatively early age and is
something one brings to the organizational setting.

Therefore, a person such as one of the mentor group entering an organization--a person who considers environments generally open, benign, even supportive--is likely to find it so. Conversely, a person like those in the non-mentor group who sees environments as initially frightening, even hostile, is likely to find it so. The outcome is a perceptual matter.

This is not to suggest that some environments do not contain hostile elements. Of course, they do. What it does suggest, however, is that one's perception of the world will influence one's behavior in a given environment, and that behavior will influence how one is perceived by others in that environment.

We had a clear sense of such a perceptual and behavioral difference between the mentor and non-mentor group. But it was only our sense, our perception if you will. There is not sufficient data in this study to support such a conclusion. We have no way of knowing whether these differences are personality differences or whether they result from differing organizational contexts or both. We do know, based on our findings, that they are important variables that can make a difference in the outcome and bear closer examination in future research efforts.

To underscore the importance of these variables, let us consider two principles, one relating to organiza-

tional environments and one relating to interpersonal dynamics which can alter the course of a mentoring relationship.

The successful mentor/protege relationships described in Chapter IV seem to have developed in organizational environments which adhere closely to a principle of supportive relationships which was enunciated by Rensis Likert (1961) some years ago as a desirable ideal to work toward.

He said, it was important that:

> The leadership and other processes of the organization must be such as to insure the maximum probability that in all interactions and relationships with the organization, each member, given his/her background, values and expectations will view the experience as supportive and one which builds and maintains a sense of personal worth.

It appears from our analysis in Chapter IV that this is indeed the way in which the mentor group saw the organizational community to which they belonged. They experienced the environment as supportive in the sense that Likert describes.

Their relationships with their mentors seem to have followed yet another principle, Carl Rogers' (1961) concept of "congruence." Rogers defines congruence as an "accurate matching of experience, awareness, and communication."

Rather than attempt to paraphrase this complex

construct, let us simply state the principle:

> The greater the congruence of experience, aware-
> ness, and communication on the part of one indivi-
> dual, the more the ensuing relationship will
> involve: a tendency toward reciprocal com-
> munication with a quality of increasing
> congruence; a tendency toward more mutually
> accurate understanding of the communication;
> improved psychological adjustments and functioning
> in both parties; mutual satisfaction in the rela-
> tionship.
>
> Conversely, the greater the communicated
> incongruence of experience and awareness, the more
> the ensuing relationship will involve: further
> communication with the same quality; disin-
> tegration of accurate understanding; less adequate
> psychological adjustment and functioning in both
> parties; and mutual dissatisfaction in the rela-
> tionship.

Rogers goes on to say that it is the percep-

tion of the receiver of the communication which is cru-

cial.

From the foregoing, it seems clear that from

beginning to end, each of the mentor group was engaged in

a mentoring relationship which hits all of the targets

cited for achieving the greatest probability of success in

a growth-facilitating relationship. While true mentoring

relationships are unique, complex and relatively rare in

the organizational context, there is impressive evidence

supporting the view that this ideal can be approximated if

not fully reached at all levels of the organization.

Limitations of this study and future research. The

strength of this study, the representative nature of the

sample, is also its major limitation. That is, it deals only with mentoring at the highest corporate level. It says nothing about mentoring at lower levels of the organization. Is it as prevalent? Does it exist at all? Is it different?

Moreover, the process of mentoring described is from the perspective of the protege alone. While we have a sense of the mentor's perceptions of and feelings for the protege from her perception of his behaviors, we do not have his <u>actual</u> perceptions and feelings. Would they be substantially different? Would they change the model if we included his view? Would his behavior be different if the protege were male?

This study does not provide answers to these questions, but it does provide a base from which other researchers may begin. The exploratory nature of this study lead us to a number of interesting conclusions about the process of mentoring and its relationship to organizational structure, power and other supportive relationships which have implications for future research.

For example, let us look in sequence at our interview sample of top management women, all of whom reported having had a mentoring relationship; then at the survey population from which they were drawn, 85 percent of whom reported having had a mentoring relationship; and then at the Phillip's (1977) sample of general management women,

60 percent of whom reported having had a mentoring relationship. One observation which might be made from the foregoing is that the higher the organizational level, the greater the prevalence of mentoring relationships.

Then there is the correlative issue of power in the organization. The mentor, on our continuum of supportive relationships, represents the highest level of power in terms of personal influence and access to resources of all kinds. He has more expertise, status, time, money, information, etc. than a sponsor or any other organizational helper. He represents the epitome of the managerial success model.

If we recall that having had a mentor is significant in the development of successful managers, and that being at the top of an organization gives a person access to the power to be a mentor, and that having had a mentor equips (and we presume inclines) a person to be a mentor, then we can surmise that mentoring is most likely to be carried out by persons at the top of organizations.

If we conclude from this that mentoring may be an elitist phenomenon for the socialization of top managers, what does that suggest about supportive relationships at other levels of the organization? Perhaps sponsoring relationships, which we have said are less powerful relationships based on mutual utility, are more prevalent at middle and lower levels of management where relative power

is a function of organizational level. Perhaps sponsoring relationships which begin at lower levels of management develop into mentoring relationships over time. Or perhaps, because of their dependence upon utility, sponsoring relationships could have a limiting effect upon the career development of proteges. These are all interesting and important questions which deserve closer examination.

One of the most exciting and informative outcomes of this research is the actual process of mentoring described. Though not exhaustive, the behaviors, perceptions, and feelings outlined in all three phases-- Initiation, Development, and Termination--are expressed in considerable detail. There is remarkable consistency in the behaviors of the mentors reported during the Initiation and Termination phases. Similarly, there is greater consistency in the perceptions and feelings expressed by the proteges during the Initiation and Termination phases than were reported during the Development phase. We also infer from our analysis of the data that while it is the mentor who initiates the process, it is the protege who signals the shift from one phase to the next. These outcomes suggest that while subsequent research might well focus on every phase of the mentoring process, the Development Phase offers the greater challenge.

Are there more stages between the beginning and

the end of the process as Phillips (1977) suggests? Or is development a dialectic phase as this research suggests, where development and disillusionment are not mutually exclusive?

Yet another important issue is the timing of the stages in the mentoring process. This research shows that the mentoring process in three stages spans a period of 10 to 12 years. Perhaps the time frame is altered by the number or sequence of stages, or the converse? Moreover, if as we have indicated, the time frame of the mentoring relationship is a function of a number of variables, not the least of which are the level of the proteges' abilities and the organizational situation (i.e., the availability of opportunities for enrichment or advancement), is it not possible that the process could be accelerated or retarded and the number of stages reduced or increased accordingly? Much more extensive research is needed to clarify and expand upon these issues.

To further understand the process of mentoring, it would be very valuable to see if mentors handle male and female proteges in the same way or differently. Therefore, continuation of this research with a follow-up study involving mentors who have both women as well as male proteges seems justified. We would then be able to examine the process of mentoring from three different perspectives. We would be able to see which parts of the

process are corroberated and which appear to be a function
of individual perception. Further, we would be able to
determine if and how the process differs when the mentor
is the same and the protege is male.

Last but not least, each of the six research ques-
tions confirmed by our findings and summarized in Table
7.1 can now be posed as testable hypotheses. (A
discussion of these appeared earlier in this chapter.)

The body of knowledge about mentoring in complex
organizations is still relatively limited. Without
question, as the importance of supportive relations in
organizational life, for both men and women, is more
widely recognized, there will be an increase in the
research on mentoring and other supportive relationships.
The overall pattern of the process of mentoring described
here will be enriched and refined by such research.

Hopefully, as our knowledge of these powerful
relationships increases, our understanding will contribute
to the enrichment and quality of organizational life.

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A P P E N D I X   I

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Babson College

<u>Research Study</u>

Career Development of a Select Group of
Outstanding Women in Management

by
Agnes Missirian
Asst. Professor of Management

<u>Personal History</u>:

1. Name _____

2. Title _____

3. Company _____

4. Street Address _____ Tel _____

5. City _____ State _____ Zip _____

6. Married _____ Single _____ Divorced _____ Children _____

7. Please list schools attended since high school, noting major,
   type of degree and years.

School	Major	Degree	Year

8. In addition to the foregoing, please list any management education
   or development programs you may have attended, such as the Harvard
   Advanced Management Program or a University or professional
   association development program. Note the duration of the
   program and if it was conducted "in house" or outside.

Program	Duration	Site

9. A brief description of your present position.

    _____

    _____

    _____

10. Name the title of the person to whom you report _____

    _____

    _____

11. Number of years with the company (   ).

12. Number of years in the present position (   ).

13. Salary range: Up to 30k (   ) 31-40k (   ) 41-50k (   ) over 50k (   )

14. Age (   )

15. Please describe the career path leading to your present position
    starting with the most recent experience first. In that job in
    the company at that time, was this a line or a staff function?
    Note: "line" will be defined here as a position which deals
    directly with the operating functions of management. "Staff"
    will be defined as support services. If ambiguous, please describe.

    a. Company (even if same) _____

        Job Title _____

        Dates _____

        Line (   ) Staff (   ) Other (describe) (   )

        _____

        _____

    b. Company (even if same) _____

        Job Title _____

        Dates _____

        Line (   ) Staff (   ) Other (describe) (   )

        _____

        _____

c. Company (even if same) _____ _____

Job Title _____

Dates _____

Line (   ) Staff (   ) Other (describe) (   )

_____

_____

d. Company (even if same) _____

Job Title _____

Dates _____

Line (   ) Staff (   ) Other (describe) (   )

_____

_____

e. Company (even if same)_____

Job Title _____

Dates _____

Line (   )   Staff (   )   Other (describe) (   )

_____

_____

f. Company (even if same) _____

Job Title _____

Dates _____

Line (   )   Staff (   )   Other (describe) (   )

_____

_____

Note: If you need more space, please attach a sheet following
       the same format.

16. To what extent has affirmative action legislation had an impact on your career progress?

   Greatest ( )   Substantial ( ) Some ( ) Minimal ( ) None ( )

17. How so? Please explain and try to be specific.

   _____

   _____

   _____

18. Is there some one person (or perhaps more than one person) who stands out in your mind as the one who most influenced your career development at a critical juncture? (Perhaps a boss, a senior staff person, a teacher, a consultant who helped you to acquire the professional skill and sophistication required to advance to higher corporate levels.) Yes ( ) No ( )

19. If yes, how many? 1 ( ) 2 (✓) 3 ( )   4 or more ( )

   If more than one key person was instrumental in sponsoring or encouraging your career progress, please answer the following questions with respect to the one most influential.

20. In what ways was this person influential or instrumental in your career progress and development? _____

   _____   _____

   _____

   _____   _____

   _____

21. How did you happen to meet?

   On the job ( ) Socially ( ) At School ( ) By chance ( )

   If other, please specify _____

   _____

22. Was there something that particularly attracted you to this

   person? _____

   _____

   _____

23. How would you describe this person? _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

24. Is this person male? ( ) female? ( )

25. During what time period did this relationship exist?

    19____to 19____

26. Do you have a sponsor or a mentor now? Yes ( ) No ( )

27. Is this person male? ( ) female? ( )

28. Have you ever been a sponsor or a mentor? Yes ( ) No ( )

29. Is (was) your protege male? ( ) female? ( )

30. Would you be willing to contribute your personal insights
    in an interview? Yes ( ) No ( )

Note: Please attach any additional biographical information
       on publications, lectures, professional associations, etc.
       if readily available.

A P P E N D I X   I I

COVER LETTER

Babson College

With the growing numbers of young women entering the lower levels of management today, there is a vital need to examine the factors instrumental in developing women into effective managers. I am conducting a research study, funded in part by the Business and Professional Women's Foundation, that may help illuminate some of these factors. But, frankly, I can't do it without your cooperation.

A critical part of the research involves a survey of experienced and prominent practitioners to be followed by a selected sample of personal interviews. You are one of the 100 top businesswomen in the country. As such, your career history and personal insights can contribute what no one else can to our understanding of the career development of women in top management. I appreciate the fact that since there are so few women at the highest levels, this does put a burden on those who have achieved distinction--but a proud one I think.

As a former businesswoman myself, I am well acquainted with the pressures, as well as the excitement, challenge and rewards present in your corporate life. You and others like you have set an excellent example for those who will follow. While it is not possible for all of these younger women to engage in direct interactions with you as an individual, it is possible for them to learn from and identify with the joint experiences of their most successful predecessors as a group.

So, please take time to fill out and return the enclosed questionnaire. I've tried to make it as concise and to the point as possible. Yet, it allows you to add to it, and I would encourage you to do so. Often, once a question is asked, it triggers a series of tangential thoughts that help to amplify or qualify the original answer. A significant incident, a feeling, an anecdote will add much to the richness of the data you contribute. Needless to say, your anonymity will be strictly preserved throughout all phases of this research, and I will gladly share with you the results of my analysis.

Should you need any clarification, please don't hesitate to call or write me. I would enjoy hearing from you, and I would value our exchange. Perhaps this would lead to your becoming one of the women interviewed in the study, should that appeal to you. Many thanks for your cooperation and help.

Sincerely,

Agnes K. Missirian
Assistant Professor of Management

AM/jb
Enclosures 2

A P P E N D I X   I I I

DATA MATRIX IN STAGES

Data Matrix in Stages

Mentor/Protege Relationships

Case I		Initiation	Development	Termination
Behaviors	M			
	P			
Perceptions	M			
	P			
Feelings	M			
	P			

A P P E N D I X   I V

SAMPLE DATA ANALYSIS CARD

Data Analysis Card

Participant Code No.

$B\mu$ ①

He just happened to see my work and took the trouble
to find out who had done it and where I could be
located. While I wasn't directly hired by him, he
(the founder and CEO) was the one who spotted my
talent and saw to it that I was recruited for his
company.