

## FINAL PROJECT

## EFFECT OF MENTORING IN A CORPORATE ENVIRONMENT

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Master of Education Degree in the

College of Education and Human Service Professions

By

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2009

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### **Abstract**

This phenomenological study explores the role of mentoring and its effect on leaders and their leadership development in a corporate environment.

Implemented in conjunction with a leadership development program, a group of six junior leaders were assigned a mentor. With both mentors and mentees informed of the expectations, mentoring sessions occurred bi-weekly over a period in excess of 90 days. Following the mentoring period, both mentees and mentors were interviewed as to their experience from a personal and professional leadership development perspective.

### Chapter One

*“Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person.” Mother Teresa*

#### *Introduction*

Organizations valuing leadership development programs spend up to 30 percent of their corporate training dollars on developing leaders (Bersin, 2006). As the retirement of baby boomers looms nearer and this leadership gap widens, companies struggle to fill leadership roles and develop their workforce, turning to leadership development programs as a means of identifying and developing leaders within their organizations. Despite these good intentions, many traditional educational models of leadership development fail (Zenger, Ulrich & Smallwood, 2000).

Much research exists on mentoring discussing the benefits but few examine its effect in a corporate environment when coupled with a leadership development program. As stated by Shea (2002), “Mentoring is a fundamental form of human development where one person invests time, energy, and personal know-how assisting the growth and ability of another person” (p. 3). Mentoring has also been described as a “caring and supportive interpersonal relationship between an experienced, more knowledgeable practitioner (mentor) and a less experienced, less knowledgeable individual (protege or mentee) in which the mentee receives career related and personal benefits” (Henry, Stockdale, Hall & Deniston, 1994, p. 38). Moreover, mentoring is attributed to helping those realize their potential and their “possible selves” (Fletcher, 2007, p. 75). Fletcher (2007) elaborates that effective mentoring occurs when the mentor assists the mentee in first “auditing who he or she *is* and needs to become” (p. 76). For clarification, coaching differs from mentoring in that coaching is “directly concerned with the immediate

improvement of performance and development of skills by a form of tutoring or instruction” (Whitmore, 2003, p. 12). Furthermore Whitmore (2003) adds that, “mentoring is always one step removed and is concerned with the longer-term acquisition of skills in a developing career by a form of advising and counseling” (p. 12).

### *Purpose Statement*

The purpose of this project was to examine the potential effect of formal mentoring relationships when coupled with a corporate leadership development program. The following questions frame this study:

- Does a formal mentoring relationship for a group of junior leaders improve their leadership development—both personally and professionally? Moreover can the relationship impact the retention and application of leadership development concepts delivered in a formal corporate leadership development program?
- Does mentoring improve the leadership growth and development of new leaders as they embark on their new leadership duties and responsibilities?
- Does mentoring improve the leadership growth and development of mentors as well as a collateral benefit of the mentoring relationship?

### *Definition of Terms*

For this study the term *junior leaders*, as defined by the PI, refers to leaders with approximately one year or less of service in a leadership position within the organization.

The term, *protégé* may be used interchangeably with the term, *mentee*.

The term, *dyads* defines the partnering relationship of a protege and a mentor. Formal mentoring refers to the artificial assignment of members to a dyad by the organization while informal mentoring relationships are not structured nor recognized by the organization.

### *Limitations*

The complete study was conducted at only one facility—Cirrus Aircraft Corporation which presents its own challenges. Cirrus Aircraft is a very dynamic, fast-paced, manufacturing environment in a challenging economic environment and that limitation only provides a single perspective as to mentoring and in a corporate environment. This said, the research could also provide insight as to the effectiveness of mentoring in such an environment. Another limitation is the relatively small sample size. Six dyads were initiated in the pilot mentoring program. Of the six dyads, 3 would be interviewed and the data analyzed. Due to the lower percentage of females in a manufacturing environment, only one of the six dyads was female in gender. The mentoring sessions ran for approximately 120 days (30 days beyond the scheduled 90 days) before interviews were conducted. Was that adequate time for a mentoring relationship to form and be effective?

### Chapter 2: Literature Review

Research regarding mentoring falls in two basic categories: formal and informal with informal mentoring well studied. Most empirical research is either based on informal or *spontaneously-developed* mentoring relationships (Eby & Lockwood, 2004). Moreover, ample literature exists as to the purpose of mentoring with mentoring viewed as an opportunity for personal accomplishment for both the mentor and the protégé (Hirschfeld, Thomas, & Lankau, 2005, p. 526). Delong, Gabarro, & Lees (2008) describe mentoring as giving one the opportunity to “rise above your inner doubts and fears” (p. 117) as well as allowing you to see opportunities and challenges you wouldn’t have otherwise seen on your own. Three behaviors make up the relationships between mentors and mentees: career development, social support, and role modeling (Raabe & Beehr, 2003, p.2).

Formal mentoring programs are managed by the organization potentially leading to possible disadvantages. Informal relationships on the other hand arise naturally with mentors and mentees seeking each other out while Chao, Walz & Gardner (1992) would argue that formal programs “provide a degree of pressure” requiring mentor and mentee to participate (p.621). Those “motivational differences” could be concerns as to program effectiveness since participants are arranged, not forming spontaneously to help protégés grow and develop (Eby & Lockwood, 2004, 444).

Much is written on the benefit of mentoring on protégés as well as its effect on mentors. “Through modeling, listening, and encouragement, the mentor can help the protégé develop self assurance and confidence in newly developing roles” (Mott as cited in Hansman, 2002, p. 15). Perceived effectiveness is discussed by Allen, Eby & Lentz

(2006) on the part of the mentee when they have a greater understanding and clearer expectations of the program (p. 146). Mentors too, if utilized to their full potential, feel a sense satisfaction as to their role (Allen, et al., 2006, p. 146). Hirschfeld, et al. (2006) found “that being a mentor has a rejuvenating effect on mentors’ competence and innovation” (p. 534).

Defining the mentor or the qualities to look for in a mentor is prevalent in the literature. Kasper (2002) describes the mentor as a coach or sponsor who mentors in the phases of the relationship from initial guidance to outward promotion of the protégé (p. 12). He elaborates stating that a mentor’s duties should be both career-oriented as well as psychosocial contributing to “competence, clarity of identity and effectiveness in a professional role” (p. 12). Delong et al., (2008) describes the mentor of impeccable integrity, unbridled honesty while providing a sense of security and trust (p. 117).

Several studies addressed the frequency and time spent mentoring. Not surprising, Lyons (2004) found that the more time the mentee spent with his or her mentor, the more satisfied they were with the experience and relationship (p.224). In their formal mentoring program, Wanberg, Kammeyer-Mueller & Marchese (2006) asked that dyads meet no less than 90 minutes of month (p. 415) while Raabe & Beehr’s (2003) study requested 2 hours every 2 weeks but resulted in 1.5 hours (p. 13). Time and meeting frequency is a barrier to mentoring. Raabe and Beehr (2003) found that some mentors viewed their role as an “extra task” that they did not have time for (p. 14). de Vries and Webb (2006) elaborated on barriers to mentoring to include, “workload pressures, reluctance by mentees to take up mentors’ time, unclear expectations, lack of unclear

goals for the mentoring; and deference or lack of confidence on the part of mentees (p.584).

Mentoring, of course, centers on the dyad relationship and much literature exists as to the matching and compatibility of mentor with mentee. Hirschfeld, et al. (2006) describes how mentees were asked to indicate via a survey instrument 5 of 12 developmental areas that appealed to them for personal development (p.528). Similarly, mentors indicated 5 of 12 areas they felt comfortable mentoring (Hirschfeld, et al., 2006, p. 528). Critical was the fact that paired individuals “have at least something in common” whether it a sport or children of the same age” (Wanberg, et al., 2006, p. 421). Without proper care, random assignment of protégés to mentors is “analogous to a blind date” with a small probability of success (Chao, et al., 1992, 634). Hansman (2001) raises interesting points as she outlines who is being selected for mentoring and who is *not* (p. 163). She goes on to elaborate that mentors are selected because they best represent corporate culture while protégés are chosen based on dominant culture (Hansman, 2001, p. 163). This of course begs the question: Who’s mentoring the marginalized employee? Gibb (1994) goes further stating that mentoring can even be “seen as a 'threat' to others in the protégé role” in that being mentored is receiving unfair attention as well as managers feeling that their responsibilities are being challenged (p. 40). Allen, et al. (2006) summarizes the significance of compatibility stating, “match input may lead to less apprehension about entering the relationship, which in turn facilitates more frequent interaction among mentors and protégés, which ultimately leads to perceptions of program effectiveness” (p. 148).



Orientations and/or training sessions were repeatedly mentioned in the literature as beneficial. Through training, mentor and protégé could get the most “out of a mentoring relationship while simultaneously setting realistic relationship expectations” (Eby, Durley, Evans, & Ragins, 2006, p.440). Mentors and mentees need to know through training and facilitation; purpose, roles, duration, ground rules, where to get help, and the importance of keeping agreed meetings (Gay, 1994, 3). In addition to training, Egan and Song (2008) raise the issue of facilitation or third-party coordination and intervention on the relationships, stating that “high-level facilitated mentoring programs...strengthen the mentoring relationship between mentor and protégé to accomplish the specific goals identified by formal mentoring program administrators” (p.353).

Notably absent from the literature however was findings on context, specifically the context in which the mentoring was occurring with only one study comparing mentoring in a dynamic, progressive, innovative-based industry versus a traditional mature company well-established industry leader (Raabe & Beehr, 2003, p.11).

### Chapter 3: Methods

#### *Setting*

Cirrus Aircraft is a relatively young company, moving to Duluth in 1994. Producing private single-engine aircraft, Cirrus sold its first type-rated, FAA-approved aircraft in 1994. The company quickly flourished and the workforce swelled to nearly 1400 employees by January 2008. By the fall of 2008 however, the economy began to take a toll on the company. Purchases of high-end luxury items like single-engine, 4-passenger airplanes plummeted. At the commencement of this study, Cirrus Aircraft was nearly half strength in manpower as compared to a year ago. As of September 2009, 620 employees remained with "550 trimmed from the payroll in the past year" with the survivors having their pay cut 5-10% as described in the Duluth News Tribune article, "To those who kept jobs, recession brings pay cuts, fewer hours" (p 1).

#### *Participants*

The participants selected for this study were chosen just as the company was taking an economic downturn at the end of 2008. Despite this, both mentors and mentees for this study have survived multiple furloughs and lay-offs. How the turbulent economic times impacted the mentoring relationships is also explored in this study.

#### *Procedure*

Participants (mentees) were approached near the conclusion of a formal leadership development course offered and delivered by the organization. The leadership class was announced and made available through normal corporate communications and electronic mail as indicated in appendix A. Both mentors and mentees were solicited for the "pilot program" as per appendix B. The leadership development course that attracted

the study's participants is ~ 10 hours of classroom instruction and includes topics on leadership theory, emotional intelligence, ethics in leadership, change management, servant leadership, giving feedback, and presentations skills. Although the class had over 12 attendees, only six were asked if they would participate as mentees in a mentoring study based on key criteria. Potential mentees had to be junior leaders or striving to acquire a leadership position with less than one year service at Cirrus. With the criterion met, five males and one female protégés were selected to participate.

Mentors, on the other hand, were selected from a list of qualified volunteers or approached by the PI to participate based on demonstrated leadership qualities and possessing a sound leadership reputation within the organization. Despite the invite as outlined in appendix B to participate as a mentor, the PI ultimately approached five of the six, requesting they participate as a mentor. As it applied to matching mentors with mentees, care was taken to ensure that no one from the same chain-of-command was paired and everyone was matched from different departments as well. No other compatibility criterion was used when matching mentees and mentors. The gender breakdown for mentors was the same as mentees; five males and one female.

#### *Facilitation*

With the classroom instruction complete, dyads selected, and consent forms signed (appendix C), both mentees and mentors received mentoring learning (appendix D) via a PowerPoint presentation delivered by the PI. The pre-program learning was designed to set the expectations of the program and provide for rudimentary guidelines for the mentoring relationship. The PI met first with mentors followed by mentees, each group separately to communicate expectations. As indicated in appendix D, the PI

checked for prior knowledge in mentoring, defined mentoring in terms of formality and intent, conveyed a sense of value for being selected, and expressed what mentoring is not. The PI communicated expectations as to the sessions and what they may expect being mentors.

Mentees too received initial learning concerning their roles and responsibilities as to the sessions. Mentees were required to initiate contact with their mentors throughout the mentoring relationship for meeting times and bringing forth all topics. Much of the responsibility of advancing the mentoring relationship was placed on the mentee for their development.

Following the initial “kick-off,” dyads were left to set up their first meeting. The expectation was communicated that dyads meet once every 2 weeks, no less than 30 minutes although longer and more frequent meetings were encouraged. The PI would occasionally inquire as to how the sessions were going, meeting frequency either in person, phone call, or email. Interviews begin in late May utilizing the questions in appendix E.

### *Data Collection*

Three dyads were selected for interview analysis to include three mentors and three mentees. The interviews individually, held from May 27, 2009 to June 3, 2009, took approximately 30 minutes to conduct with questions ranging from overall satisfaction, individual development, relational climate, to discussion content and overall value. All interviews were conducted in a private conference room and recorded using a MP3 player. Following the interview, I listened to the entire interview before transcribing. Each interview was transcribed using Express Scribe software allowing me to dictate the speed of the playback. Every effort was made to include in the transcription to record

every pause, every filler word, every chuckle, and every voice inflection since these mannerisms of speech speak to the qualitative answers as well. Once transcribed, I reviewed each interview several times, looking for common themes, ideas, and responses. I scrutinized the words as well how the words were stated. If answers seemed tentative or vague, I included those in my analysis. In reviewing the qualitative data, I used principles from both Chenail and Hyener in analyzing the interviews. Chenail (1995) refers to featuring the data collected in your study as “the star” while attempting “to build in some sort of simplicity”—principles I adhered to (p.6). Consulting Hyener (1985), I looked at all facets of the data from overt responses to latent meanings as I “clustered” the responses into common themes (p. 291).

In addition, at the conclusion of each interview, I posted my general impressions in a summary, taken soon after the interview, as to the participants' demeanor and overall fluidity of responses. If answers seemed disjointed or meandering, that was noted as well as articulate and introspective responses.

Chapter 4: Results

Reviewing and analyzing the transcripts, several common themes and ideas emerged:

Compatibility and awkwardness: All the dyads spoke of an initial awkwardness with their first meeting but quickly established a working dynamic that carried throughout the mentoring relationship. References to “chemistry” between the mentor and mentee were repeatedly mentioned and all expressed that the mentoring relationship would not have worked if had not been for the positive dynamic between the two participants (transcription comments 4, 17, 25, 45, 71, 72, 73, 86, 89). Other dyads expressed how the mentor and mentee shared the same leadership style. As the PI and the one who initiated the mentoring program, I found this particularly noteworthy since I matched mentees and mentors arbitrarily based solely on my knowledge of the personnel. In contrast to Chao et al. (1992) who stated, “...random assignment of protégés to mentors is analogous to blind dates; there would be a small probability that the match would be successful,” I matched dyads without a formal matching compatibility instrument and all of the matches worked with respect to personality compatibility (p.634).

Impact of the current economy on the mentoring relationships: The fiscally-challenging times definitely impacted the mentoring program as whole as well as individual dyads. The economy’s impact on Cirrus Aircraft manifested in two ways on the mentoring relationships: meeting frequency (comments 30, 60, 62) and discussion content (comments 44, 90). Due to restructuring and changes in duties and responsibilities, often times either mentees or mentors were unable to meet due to other

commitments or shifting priorities. These same barriers to mentoring are echoed by de Vries et al. (2006) resulting in less than satisfactory mentoring relationships (p.583). Potentially considered "non-essential," mentoring sessions were often the first to be rescheduled when schedules became busy (comments 9, 26, 47, 62). Moreover, with the constant talk of organizational changes, mentees looked to their mentors for answers in an uncertain corporate environment (comments 44, 90). Common topics included how to integrate into established teams, how to be heard, how to act upon new duties and responsibilities. As these were unprecedented times for Cirrus Aircraft, mentors often lacked any real answers for mentees but the mentoring discussion forum allowed for a venue in which to vent concerns, fears and frustrations.

Can mentoring be taught?; With the exception of one mentee (comment 55), all the mentors and mentees felt that being and acting as a good mentor was intrinsic to the individual and not based on training in that area (comments 14, 23, 39, 69, 87). Mentors either had the skills to be good mentors or did not although nearly all agreed that training and learning could make mediocre mentors into better more effective mentors.

Experience and in particular, experience in a desired area of development, was repeatedly mentioned as a key requirement of being a mentor. Listening skills, approachability, communication skills, patience, problem-solving, holding mentees accountable, humility, ability to defer to others, making time for the mentoring sessions, and the ability to divest oneself were also mentioned as preferred mentor skills. If implementing another mentoring program, I would utilize a survey instrument as illustrated by Hirschfeld et al. (2006) where both mentors and mentees identified areas of strength and weakness and are matched accordingly (p. 528).

Mentoring as it applies to professional and personal lives: For half of the mentoring dyads interviewed, discussion often spilled over to personal lives of participants as well as professionally (comments 6, 16, 76). In particular, if the mentor and the mentee were approximately at the same times in their personal lives, this phenomenon occurred more frequently (comment 72, 85).

Mentoring and its influence on participants: In nearly every case, both mentors and mentees felt honored to be either selected as a mentor or as a mentee (comments 20, 35, 45, 67, 77). Mentors felt valued that they had something worth sharing with new leaders while mentees felt special in that they were chosen to be developed. In addition, mentors were reminded through their sessions with their mentees as to how to conduct themselves and to "walk the talk" (comments 24,40). That sense of role modeling and self examination is expressed by Wanberg et al. (2006) as the mentors in his study became more cognizant of their own behaviors which subsequently caused them to interact differently with their own staff (p.421). The responsibility of acting as a mentor was apparent to all of them as well and they took their duties seriously. A conclusion can be made that the first benefit of mentoring is derived from the initial act of being selected to be mentored in the program.

Expectations and Accountability: In nearly half of the interviews conducted, expectations as to responsibilities as what it meant to be a mentor or mentee were unclear (comments 3, 7, 43, 65). Despite the principal investigator delivering an orientation presentation (appendix D) on what it means to be a mentor and mentee and expectations for the formal mentoring program, many participants were still unsure upon meeting for the first time and even in some cases, did research on their own to determine what was



expected of them. If implementing another mentoring program, I would increase the number and depth of content of the orientation training and facilitation. As stated by Eby, et al. (2006) the correct training would allow dyads to "get the most out of a mentoring relationship while simultaneously setting realistic relationship expectations" (p. 440). Egan (2008) speaks of high-level facilitation contributing to increased check-in, support, and the accomplishment of specific identified goals. One mentor expressed that a lack of prescribed, more rigid meeting times was too casual, resulting in meetings being cancelled, postponed or rescheduled (comment 19). As a result, this mentor began to question his effectiveness as a mentor (comments 26, 27). Feelings of inadequacy are mentioned by Eby et al. (2005) as a prevalent mentor problem in addition to a lack of relationship intensity. Mentors will gauge program effectiveness based on how effectively they were utilized by their protégé (Allen et al., 2006, p. 146).

Potential Bias: As the organization's Corporate Trainer, I interfaced with every person in the company—from training classes to orientation of new personnel. Initiating the mentoring program, the possibility of bias exists in how mentoring participants interacted with me in the day-to-day administration of the mentoring program as well as how they responded to me in the interview phase. As a member of management by virtue of my title, possibly participants were influenced by my position. Moreover, I knew all the participants—personally and professionally and one could question my objectivity in the administration of the mentoring program. This study was initiated while I was employed with Cirrus and completed later after I was discharged from the company. Did my dismissal affect the results? Would my results have been different if I was still an employee of Cirrus?

## Chapter 5: Discussion

The formal mentoring program at Cirrus Aircraft Corporation yielded mixed results and as a whole, formal mentoring was not readily adopted by leadership as being beneficial. Moreover there was little to no motivation from senior leaders to continue the mentoring program with subsequent waves of dyads. When initially starting the program, I introduced the idea of a mentoring program with the Learning and Development Steering Committee (a composition team of key Directors and Vice Presidents). As I presented the concept of mentoring to the committee, one of the senior leaders in attendance asked (during a tumultuous period of company restructuring and furloughs) if this was even the right time for a mentoring program with all that was occurring in the company. Another leader broke in to defend the concept. I would argue that during a time of great change and uncertainty in an organization, it is the perfect time for a mentoring program as evidenced by the number of mentees in this study who drew comfort, clarity, counsel and solace from their mentoring discussions.

In all studied cases, the act of mentoring provided a forum in which mentees could express, vent or question what was occurring in the company in a safe environment. Trust between the mentee and mentor was paramount and knowing that discussions would stay confidential contributed to building that trust. Establishing trust between mentor and mentee takes time and 120 days was adequate time for this study.

Although mentors were genuinely concerned with doing a good job, I received the general impression through my routine communication with mentors that some mentors viewed their roles and responsibilities as yet another added responsibility to their regular

duties and in some cases, came to resent those new duties. This could have been due to economy and the challenges placed on them and the company. As stated earlier, I also found that if dyads were unable to meet for whatever reason, mentors may begin to question his or her effectiveness in the role of a mentor (comment 27). Questions of effectiveness and meaningfulness of the sessions began to emerge. Were they in fact failing as mentors?

With the exception of two (comments 31, 74) nearly all of the mentors felt comfortable fielding the questions and topics brought forward by the mentees. And if there was a topic that the mentor was not comfortable with, mentors answered to the best of their ability or they directed them to someone more qualified to field the question (comment 38). Two examples come to mind: one mentee asked for more information on leadership and acting in a supervisory role of which her mentor had no experience. The mentor was very willing to direct the mentee to someone who could answer those questions. In the other example, another mentee ask about Cirrus' career progression program (of which the organization does not have) and the mentor answered recalling a past employer.

All mentees stated that they felt that the leadership principles discussed in class were reinforced as a result of the mentoring program. One mentee in particular mentioned that the timing of the mentoring program two weeks after the conclusion of the leadership development course was critical to reinforce the concepts from class (comment 81). In addition, mentees liked the examples through stories provided by the mentors and one could argue that these real-life work tales could prevent mentees from making the same mistakes all over again (comments 12, 51). One mentee specifically mentioned how his

mentoring relationship prevented him from “cutting corners.” An argument could be made that mentoring programs would reduce “common mistakes committed by young and inexperienced leaders.

In order for a mentoring program to work in any setting, its concept and execution must be not only accepted but embraced and communicated from the highest levels of leadership. I always felt that the mentoring program at Cirrus Aircraft was a burden, intermittently to the mentors, instead of being valued at all levels of the leadership. I felt too that leaders in the organization believed in the idea, the concept, the logic, *in theory* behind mentoring but the execution of the sessions, with everything else as a distraction, was less than a priority.

We set out in this study to answer the following questions:

*Does a formal mentoring relationship for a group of junior leaders improve their leadership development—both personally and professionally? Moreover can the relationship impact the retention and application of leadership development concepts delivered in a formal corporate leadership development program?*

The answer is yes—both personally and professionally, mentees benefitted from their mentoring relationships despite a tumultuous economic period for a highly-dynamic manufacturing environment. Mentees spoke of the transfer of mentoring benefitting their home lives and interaction with their families as well as work. For all participants, the concepts discussed in the leadership development course—from leadership to emotional intelligence to change management-- were reinforced as a result of the mentoring sessions. Mentees were able to apply in a real-world setting the theories and behaviors they learned in class.

*Does mentoring improve the leadership growth and development of new leaders as they embark on their new leadership duties and responsibilities?*

Mentees unanimously grew developmentally as a result of their mentoring. They were better equipped to handle the uncertainty of the current times and found a safe and trusted place to ask real-world questions to challenges they were facing in the workplace as a leaders.

*Does mentoring improve the leadership growth and development of mentors as well as a collateral benefit of the mentoring relationship?*

Mentoring did improve the growth and development of mentors but not to the extent of the benefit received by mentees. Mentors derived a satisfaction from the act of mentoring, helping a co-worker, and being selected to mentor but did not necessarily “grow” as leaders. The act of mentoring caused some mentors to examine their own behaviors and their own example on a day-to-day basis. On the other hand, a few mentors viewed the act of mentoring as an additional chore in an already chaotic work environment.

*Recommendations for future research*

Mentoring in a chaotic, dynamic, for-profit, manufacturing company during tough economic times provides unique challenges and opportunities for additional research as it applies to mentoring. Context and the mentoring environment makes a significant difference for the dyads and how the organization views mentoring. Mentoring will be perceived and carried out differently in a school, church, or company. How the work environment impacts the mentoring experience for both protégés and mentors is an opportunity for more research.

For my study, I did not utilize a matching instrument for compatibility factors. Matching was arbitrary with the knowledge I held with respect to the participants. Would matching participants using developmental areas provide for a better mentoring experience in a chaotic manufacturing environment? Would a matching instrument improve the mentoring experience for the mentor, allowing them to mentor to their strengths?

What would be the effect of mentoring if I had conducted more facilitation throughout the mentoring period? For some roles or expectations were unclear—what if I administered a high-level of facilitation throughout the program? With the chaotic economic environment however I question the participants' ability to attend additional trainings and meetings.

Throughout the mentoring study, I perceived that senior leadership tolerated but didn't necessarily endorse mentoring as a corporate program. When other opportunities during this study arose to implement additional mentoring relationships, leadership declined. In one example I can recall, the Leads (junior supervisors) were being restructured from 45 to 15 individuals with the remaining fifteen tasked with entirely different duties and responsibilities. At that time, I suggested that a mentoring program for the remaining fifteen would help those "new" leaders make the transition and my request was denied. Deliver a mentoring program with the complete and expressed support from the senior leadership of the *entire* organization—not just a departmental initiative— would be avenue for additional research.

And finally, what would be the impact of longer durations in mentoring relationships in a dynamic manufacturing environment. Would the mentoring relationships be more beneficial given additional time lasting 6 months to a year?

Afterword: On August 27, 2009, I was let go from Cirrus Aircraft in the sixth round of lay-offs and terminations. My position as Corporate Trainer and Manager, Learning and Development had been eliminated with some of my duties absorbed by others. My services were no longer required. From my tenure at Cirrus, I learned that personal growth and development as a whole was held in higher esteem in better times than in times of economic distress. I am not bitter nor do my comments come from my dismissal but rather from my observations on a day-to-day basis as the company faced reduced revenue and plummeting sales. Learning and development just wasn't as important when the company was in "survival mode." During the frequent business reviews, senior leadership often spoke of developing the company's talent but when faced with the reality of making a profit, learning and development was relegated to the background. It is my opinion as a professional working in the learning and development field; there is no better time to invest in your people. For it is through your people, the company will survive.

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Appendix A

Email text sent as an invite to attend the Leadership Development Course:

Cirrus **Learning & Development** will be conducting a Leadership Development Course in late Jan/early Feb. The class is 8 hours of instruction spread over several days.

Topics will include leadership theory/styles, emotional intelligence, ethics as well as four cornerstones of leadership: professionalism, communication, change management, and service.

Class dates are as follows:

Wed, 1/28/09 9-11 am (Kitty Hawk)  
Thurs, 1/29/09 1-3:30 pm (Kitty Hawk)  
Monday, 2/2/09 8:30-10 am (Kitty Hawk)  
Tues, 2/3/09 1-3 pm (Kitty Hawk)

Class size is limited. Call or write to reserve a seat.

**Ted L. Schick**  
**Associate Director, Learning & Development**  
Cirrus Design Corporation  
218.788.3319 Office

Appendix B

Email text sent as an invite to participate in a mentoring program:

In keeping with my 2009 Learning & Development initiatives and my final research project at UMD (M.Ed), I am conducting a study on the *impact of mentoring in corporate leadership development*.

This email is to solicit participants-- both leaders for the study and mentors.

For potential subject leaders (12 of them for the study) I am ideally looking for Manufacturing (direct or indirect) leaders (ideally leads or junior leaders) who have been in the leadership position no longer than 1 year and could benefit from leadership development.

If you're not sure if your suggested leader would qualify, please ask.

For mentors, I will consider anyone who submits their name to me. I will make the final determination as to who will participate as a mentor based on who receive for leaders to be developed. Mentor time commitment is manageable and you will participate in mentor training with myself.

Please let me know at your earliest convenience if you're interested as a mentor or have a nomination for the leadership study.

We need to get started asap.

**Ted L. Schick**  
**Associate Director, Learning & Development**  
Cirrus Design Corporation  
218.788.3319 Office

Appendix C

**Consent Forms**

For Mentors:

Mentoring in a Corporate Environment

You are invited to be to participate in a formal, short-term, mentoring pilot program conducted in conjunction with Cirrus Aircraft and a final research study with UMD (M.Ed). The study is being conducted by Ted Schick, Learning & Development and will examine the effect of mentoring in a corporate environment and its effect on both the mentor and mentee. You were chosen to participate as a mentor due to your positive leadership reputation in the organization. By agreeing to be in this study, you will have a time commitment for each mentoring sessions (bi-weekly, no less than 30 minutes) as well as initial mentoring training (1 hour). The mentoring period will run approximately 90 days. There are no apparent risks to this study but one can still withdraw without penalty at any time for any reason. The possible benefits include helping other leaders in the organization grow and develop while at same time, developing oneself. You will no receive no compensation for participation-only appreciation from the principal investigator, Ted Schick. All data collected with be held in strict confidence and under lock and key or password protected. You will not be asked by your seniors to divulge any of the confidential dialogue between you and your mentee.

Contact for this study is again, Ted Schick, Learning & Development, 788-3319, [tschick@cirrusdesign.com](mailto:tschick@cirrusdesign.com). My advisor's name is Dr. Mary Ann Marchel, UMD, Education Dept. If you have any questions regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researchers, you are encouraged to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 5545; (612) 625-1650

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and received answers. I consent to participate in this study.

Signature/Date:

Signature of Investigator/Date:

Appendix C

For Mentees:

Mentoring in a Corporate Environment

You are invited to be to participate in a formal, short-term, mentoring pilot program conducted in conjunction with Cirrus Aircraft and a final research study with UMD (M.Ed). The study is being conducted by Ted Schick, Learning & Development and will examine the effect of mentoring in a corporate environment and its effect on both the mentor and mentee. You were chosen to participate as a mentee due to your relatively little time in a leadership position (less than 1 year) or your expressed desire to one day be in a leadership position. By agreeing to be in this study, you will have a time commitment for each mentoring sessions (bi-weekly, no less than 30 minutes). The mentoring period will run approximately 90 days. There are no apparent risks to this study but one can still withdraw without penalty at any time for any reason. The possible benefits include development and growth as a leader as a result of the time and counsel of a mentor. You will no receive no compensation for participation-only appreciation from the principal investigator, Ted Schick. All data collected with be held in strict confidence and under lock and key or password protected. You will not be asked by your seniors to divulge any of the confidential dialogue between you and your mentor.

Contact for this study is again, Ted Schick, Learning & Development, 788-3319, [tschick@cirrusdesiim.com](mailto:tschick@cirrusdesiim.com). My advisor's name is Dr. Mary Ann Marchel, UMD, Education Dept. If you have any questions regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researchers, you are encouraged to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 5545; (612) 625-1650

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and received answers. I consent to participate in this study.

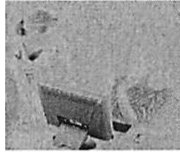
Signature/Date:

Signature of Investigator/Date:

Appendix D

Mentoring Learning and expectations delivered to both mentees and mentors

**Mentoring**  
**"Giving back "**

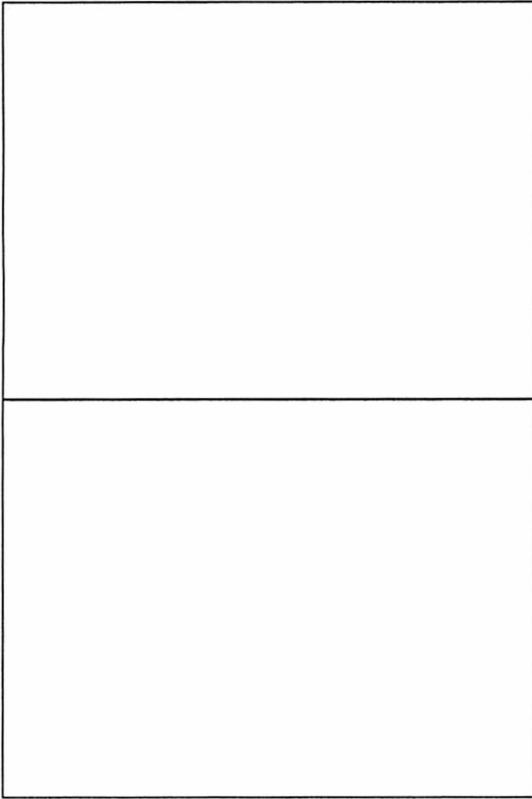


Feb 2009

Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person. - *Mother Teresa*

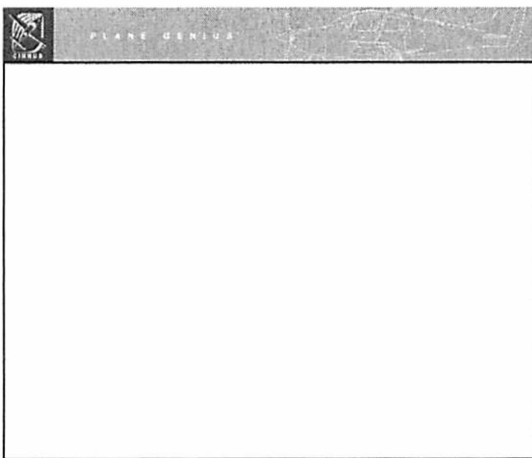


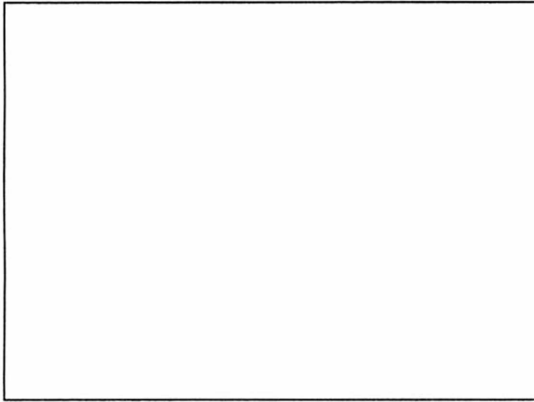




**Formal versus informal**

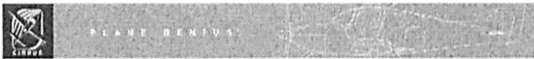
**Professional versus  
Emotional/psychological**





**What are you NOT as a mentor?**

A friend  
?  
?



**First session**

Expectations  
Leadership philosophy  
Boundaries?



**Responsibilities of the mentee**

- Mentor logs and field notes
- Meeting times and topics



### Mentor behaviors

- Venting
- Judging
- Listening
- Speaking
- Body language
- Modeling



### Problems in the relationship



### How to be a good mentee



### Objective

- Consent forms
- Expectations for this relationship
- Reservations?
- Meeting frequencies
- Topics
- It's about you
- Field notes
- Interviews



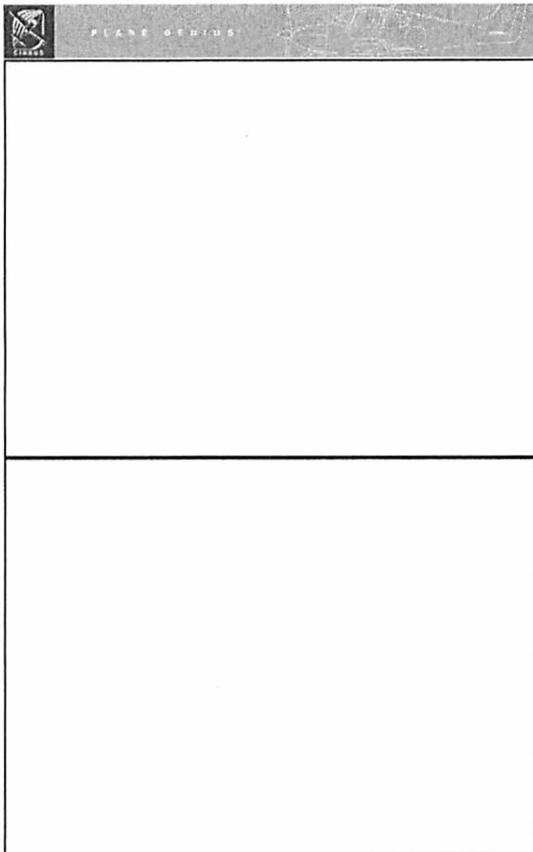
### Mentoring defined

- "Offline support by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking." Dr David C. Duberuck & David Megginson, Mentoring in Action
- "A partnership that leverages one leader's experience to accelerate another's development." Thomson University
- "Power-free facilitation of learning" Chp R. Bell, Managers as Mentors



### Formal versus informal

### Professional versus Emotional/psychological



Appendix E

Research Interview Questions:

For mentors:

Overall, your impressions of the mentoring program? What did you like? Not like?

What did it mean to you to be selected as a mentor?

Do you think anyone can be a mentor? What unique qualities do you feel a mentor should have?

Can mentoring be taught or is it intrinsic to the individual?

Did being a mentor, acting as a mentor, change your own behaviors and interactions with people on a daily basis? Describe.

How would you define your relationship with your mentee? Easy, casual, strained, stiff? What contributed to that relational climate?

Were there topics/issues you didn't feel equipped to address with your mentee? In what way do you wish you had been better prepared?

Would you continue this mentoring relationship, if able?

What impact, if any did the economy and fiscally-challenging times have on your mentoring relationship?

For mentees:

Overall, your impressions of the mentoring program? What did you like? Not like?

What did it mean to you to be selected as a mentee?

How did your mentor make you feel? Describe the mentoring sessions. Did you look forward to the mentoring sessions?

Mentees were responsible for providing the topic of discussion each session-was that difficult to find and bring topics to discussion? Give examples of topics you contributed.

Do you feel your mentoring sessions helped you develop as a leader? You completed the Leadership Development Course in February 2009. How did your mentoring relationship reinforce (or not reinforce) the concepts/leadership principles discussed in class?

## Corporate Mentoring, Schick 38

What did you get from your mentor in the form of insight that you would have not otherwise received?

Do you think anyone can be a mentor? What unique qualities do you feel a mentor should have?

Can mentoring be taught or is it intrinsic to the individual?

Did being mentored change your own behaviors and interactions with people on a daily basis? Describe.

How would you define your relationship with your mentor? Easy, casual, strained, stiff? What contributed to that relational climate?

Were there topics/issues you didn't feel comfortable discussing with your mentor?

What impact, if any did the economy and fiscally-challenging times have on your mentoring relationship?

Would you continue this mentoring relationship, if able?

Appendix F

**Mentoring Dvads:**

**Kirk (Mentor) & Dean (Mentee)**

**Heather (Mentor) & Jen (Mentee)**

**Mike (Mentor) & Nick (Mentee)**

**Transcription Dean Niemi 5-27-09**

PI: Thanks Dean, overall I want to get your impression of the mentoring program-been running for probably 4 months, roughly 120 days-what did you like? What did you not like?

Dean: My overall impression was beneficial definitely and certainly helped me and if I read Kirk properly, it was beneficial for Kirk as well-I think it was a 2 way street. Ah, beneficial enough, trying to find a means to keep this going and I need to talk to Kirk about that to see if he will keep it going. Yeah, I'd like to keep it going. The first meeting, I had up a big long agenda of items to talk about with Kirk over time and it was way more than we would ever get to in one hour we knew that but we wanted to get through that agenda and it took us till April, middle of April, last week of April to get all the way through it. Then we decided to meet at a future date once I got-I want to roll out *The Cheese*, a story to my team. I want to meet with him one more time before I did that. Haven't had an opportunity to get that that point so we haven't met again. Ah, we met once a month.

PI: What did it mean to be selected as a mentee?

Dean: I didn't know. I had mixed emotions about it, I guess. I thought about different scenarios of why I might have been selected. Um, never really knew why. What it meant to

1. "2 way street"—reference to beneficial relationship to both mentee and mentor.

2. This mentoring relationship has not met since conclusion of formal mentoring program.

3. Seemed skeptical as to why chosen to be a mentee.

me is that it gave me an opportunity to make some gains, professional. For me, I thought it was a benefit and a good thing.

PI: How did your mentor make you feel? Describe your mentoring sessions. And did you look forward to the mentoring sessions?

Dean: Ah, Kirk made me feel, um, very relaxed in our meetings which is a good thing. Course, the first one was a bit nervous, going into, all new, don't know what to expect—going into the unknown has been uncomfortable but yeah, almost immediate comfort with Kirk—and what the other two questions?

4. "immediate comfort"—speaks to chemistry.

PI: Describe the mentoring sessions and did you look forward to the mentoring sessions?

Dean: The mentoring sessions were, ah, geez, almost like a sounding board. We would just throw things out and we would discuss them and a lot of the things we end up of discussing I was able to relate to real life as well as professionally and benefits supported things I do-not really knowing the reason I do them—I just do them. To be supported-good stuff. I absolutely, ah, very much looked forward to the meetings.

5. "Sounding board"—does that mean that the sessions lacked formality? What happened to selecting topics for discussion?

6. Topics included both professionally and personally.

PI: Mentees were responsible for providing the topics of discussion for each session. Was that difficult to find and bring topics of discussion? Give examples of topics you contributed.

Dean: Boy, like I said I came up with that big agenda, ah..I don't know how many things were on their total-15-20 items to discuss...um,,,I googled mentors and mentees and came up some ah from the edu world... came up some university. Came up with some university curriculum on mentors and mentees and so shared with Kirk as well-him being the mentor and I looked at mentees and it gave

7. Mentee came up with an agenda but was still unsure as to the expectation of being a mentee and the mentoring sessions.



some examples of things to expect to get out of it-out of these sessions.

PI: Do you remember any of the topics, Dean you wanted to cover with Kirk?

Dean: Um, yes, um, experiences and communication with the executives here at Cirrus was one. Um, we talked about handling with conflict between the execs, you know ...guidance on ways to proceed-that was certainly one that I remember. Been so long since I've looked at that...like I said, there was 15-20 items on there we went through. I guess another was how to roll out cheese to my team. Came up with a bulleted list of things to do with the roll out, how to roll out. Came up with-instead of rolling out to an entire team at one time, Kirk suggested and it was a good suggestion, roll it out individually-one person at a time. Make it more personal that way.

8. From 15-20 items suggested, couldn't recall topics other than two.

PI: Did you end up following Kirk's advice?

Dean: I'm going to -I haven't rolled that out yet, haven't had an opportunity to formulate that so I get some legwork I have to do before I can get to that (inaudible) but it will happen. There's no if involved.

9. 'Tm going to...' Speaks to time constraints and getting to commitments.

PI: You completed the Leadership Development Course in 2009. How did your mentoring relationship reinforce-or not reinforce the concepts and leadership principles discussed in class?

Dean: Um..I was say total reinforcement. And from the git go, Kirk and I are both relationship, relational-type leaders which made us a great fit to discussing things together which helped out a lot too. Yeah, it reinforced-I don't think there was any-I don't recall anything that didn't reinforce...

10. Seemed hesitant in his answer.

PI: ...the concepts learned in class?

Dean: Yes.

PI: What did you get from your mentor in the form of insight that you would have not otherwise received?

Dean: Um, the way you roll out cheese. I would certainly rolled it incorrectly.

PI: How to implement change? Is that another way of saying... when you say how to roll out cheese, I think how to implement change-am I thinking the same thing?

Dean: It is more dealing with change and how people deal with change is the cheese story and then rolling it out starting to discuss it with team members and guide them to be, ah, how to better deal with it, embrace it, change is a good thing, not a bad thing-those kinds of concepts...and lot of it was just having the sounding board and have somebody reiterate that this was a good way of doing things even though, you know, I was planning on doing things that way, but having Kirk there to support that and say yeah, that's the right way to do it kept me in a straight line rather than that-probably would have deviated away from a few things that I typically do- not stress related but time. Having to do things quickly sometimes, sometimes cut kinda cut corners..yeah, and I think having Kirk's support that in concept kept me straight and I didn't cut corners anywhere near as much. I think that helped out a lot.

PI: Do you think anyone, Dean, can be a mentor? What unique qualities do you feel a mentor should have?

Dean: No I don't think anyone can be a mentor-ah, I think that takes a special person. Certainly communication skills you gotta have them, without a doubt. I think you have had to been a leader for quite some time,

11. Only thing he received in the form of insight from his mentor was how to deal/manage change? Should he have received more from the relationship?

12. Mentor prevented mentee from "going off course."

13. Mentors need to be respected and experienced. "Been there, done that."

real life situations that come up, experiences to relate to and then pass them along. Ah, I don't know if that's just me, but, um, I have a difficult time learning from someone who hasn't been there, done that. You know, a textbook leader-I'd have a hard time following, And having a textbook type person as a mentor would be difficult.

PI: Do you think, Dean that mentoring can be taught or is it intrinsic to the individual?

Dean: There's a lot of traits that go along with being a good mentor and certainly for those traits you can have training for them. But I don't think, I don't think that you can take training and then become a great mentor, good mentor. It can help you become a better mentor but I don't think it will help you become a great one. That's where the intrinsic stuff would kick in.

PI: Training could help but....

Dean: It will help yes, definitely would help but it can't make a mediocre mentor into a great one. Just make them better.

PI: Did being mentored change your own behaviors and interactions with people on a daily basis-describe.

Dean: Ah, yes, made me feel a lot more comfortable and confident in my discussions with people. And being a leader, exhibiting confidence is certainly key so definitely helps with that. And I want to add to that mentoring and leadership made me realize how much of this gets carried down the family. You know-raising kids. You know it's all leadership role in raising kids too and Kirk and I got into a lot of those discussions personal and family you know being a leader and how it applies to the family. It was surprising how much it related to work too.

14. Being a good mentor is innate to the individual. Training can develop a mentor but can't make a mentor.

15. Mentoring instilled confidence in this relatively new employee.

16. Back to comparisons to personal/family life again.

And vice versa—from work to home, how much it really carries over. It's everyday stuff—not just workers, co-workers.

PI: And you found yourself, you and Kirk, talking about both personal and professional quite often.

Dean: Quite often! Yeah but it was a good thing because we talk about in one sense or another and then we would translate that over to family, you know, really there so much similarity, it was real easy transitioning from one to another and applying it and making a lot of sense after that. Yeah so those were some very interesting discussions.

PI: And you kinda already answered this next question, Dean—how would you define your relationship with your mentor—was it easy, casual, strained, stiff—what contributed to that relational climate?

Dean: Ah, it was easy and casual. And I would have to...

PI: Would you call it a good fit to you, Dean? The two of you...

Dean: Oh yeah, I think the reason the primary reason for that was ah, Kirk's and myself's personalities being compatible.

PI: Were there topics or issue you didn't feel comfortable discussing with your mentor?

Dean: No-- in our sessions I felt like I could discuss anything I wanted to and that led to a lot of off-the-cuff discussions. I wouldn't say they were tangents because we always went around the corner and came back and brought it back to the work environment so they were not just tangents and we were able to do that with surprising ease.

17. Second reference to chemistry/compatibility.

18. Impromptu discussion—coming off topic. To be expected? Seemed to like the meandering topic line and informal structure.

PI: Would you continue this mentoring relationship, if able?

Dean: Ah, yes, and I expressed in the beginning that I wanted to so I intending on contacting Kirk so if we could meet-just meet him for lunch you know and just have discussions.

Interview summary: My general impression is that it was hard to follow Dean's responses and his answers were often disjointed. Intuitively, I felt too as if he was telling me what I wanted to hear instead of how he really felt about his mentoring relationship. Although I think he generally felt as if there were portions of the mentoring relationship he enjoyed, it was difficult and time-consuming to make the relationship work. It is also fair to state that Dean began his mentoring relationship at the same time his duties were changing in the organization affecting his priorities. As to content, it is my impression that he received the most benefit from the discussions surrounding personal/family issues. Although his mentor has extended himself to his mentee several times, Dean has made no effort to continue the relationship.

### **Transcription Kirk Douglas 5-27-09**

PI: Overall Kirk your impressions of the mentoring program-what did you like? What did you not like?

Kirk: Well. I like the fact that we decided to actually pilot a program-that fact that it is a pilot program there isn't anything to say not like. Ah, the concept is a great idea, I think, myself and the mentee had a fairly good time. You never know exactly how-I say one thing and he says, "Oh that's just terrible!" Um, overall, I thought it was seem to be a good experience for both myself and the other individual. I would say if we were to do anything, I probably would like to formalize parts of the process a little bit more there would alittle bit more accountability, maybe, ah, more formalized reporting to you to use to ensure that whoever that leader is that they're more aware how things are going you know whether it's weekly or bi-weekly reporting,

something of that nature. But no, I didn't have any issues.

PI: What did it mean to you to be selected as a mentor?

Kirk: Ah, it was a great honor! A great honor. When somebody sees in you the ability to impart some type of knowledge, encouragement, guidance to another individual—that's very encouraging so high praise.

PI: Do you think anyone can be a mentor? What unique qualities do you think a mentor should have?

Kirk: (Long pause) That's an interesting question. Unless you're the type of person...to answer simply, no. Ah, but I would say that everyone has the capability to be a mentor with the right guidance and the right training. First and foremost if you are not willing to divest yourself of self-meaning if you're not willing to think more of the needs of the individual than the needs of yourself than you will never be a mentor, you will never be a good mentor. Ah, in terms of skills, the ability to first and foremost the ability to just listen to the employee, the mentee. You may not have all the answers but by listening to actually what they're saying or what they're trying to say, ah, that's the key thing, um. Holding them accountable, when necessary. Being able to do a little bit of problem solving. I found that to be an important part of that. Communicating effectively—that would be a huge part too.

PI: This kinda plays to your previous answers—can mentoring be taught or is it intrinsic to the individual?

Kirk: I would think a little bit of both. I would say that there's people who seem to be, to have a natural bent to be good mentors and

**20. Honored to be selected.**

**21. Unique comment—other mentors did not mention about how mentoring is not about the mentor—it's about the mentee. Kirk feels that ideally mentors give of themselves to the mentee.**

**22. Accountability mentioned again. Holding mentees accountable. Frustration over the inability for mentoring sessions to occur.**

**23. Nature versus nurturing. Mentoring training can help.**

then there's those individuals who we can look at and say with right training, this person would make a great mentor.

PI: Did being a mentor, acting as a mentor change your own behaviors and interaction with people on a daily basis? Describe.

Kirk: It made me more aware how I was communicating to people. It reminded me of the many things you learn as a leader and maybe you forget and so as you're now in a one-in-one situation where you really have been placed with some responsibility in terms of guidance and giving them the right skill sets, talking about the right principles and you should actually be doing those things yourself and so it's a good refresher to think when you leave that-am I doing that when I leave this room? In talking to this individual hopefully saying all the right things that they need to hear but then am I living it once I leave the room? So that was the reminder and challenge to make sure, oh yes, I need to be doing this- I need to be actually looking at Ted when I'm speaking to him and not just mentee because that's important to my mentee-those are some of the gut checks that I experienced.

PI: How would you define, Kirk your relationship with your mentee-was it easy, casual, strained or stiff? What contributed to that relational climate?

Kirk: I would say that it was encouraging that in our first meeting we had similar outlooks and philosophy on work and life so ah, so that first meeting seemed to go extremely well. (Pause) What didn't seem to go well was for whatever reason, I would have like to have seen just a regular scheduled meeting and ah, there was this kinda, there would be this brief burst of consistent meetings and then whether it was for vacations or just being busy, they would just fall by the wayside...

**24. Being a mentor, acting as a mentor reminds to live what you preach.**

**25. Reference to chemistry. Knew immediately that the dyad was compatible.**

**26. Kirk continues to express his disappointment as to meeting frequency.**

PI: Because the responsibility of scheduling the meetings rested with the mentee...

Kirk: Exactly so you know, you can't drive the relationship-you're hoping they find value in the relationship, in the meetings, therefore will make time for it. So it's a little concerning, you question, you hear the reasons whether they be reasons or excuses and so but as a mentor, you question yourself and say, are things not going well? Is this a reflection of how they feel the meetings are going? Or are they just genuinely busy? You have no way of knowing until you maybe meet again and get a sense of what is actually been going on. Ah, I wouldn't say that the relationship was strained, I would just say that I would like to have been...I think there were some clear things that were identified to work on and we never got a chance to gain any momentum by consistently meeting and going, ok we're to address this, we're going to address this-I would have liked to be able to address one thing complete and then move on and just kinda got to be hodge-podge.

PI: I'm going to stray from the questioning just for a second, Kirk and ask you then-our mentoring pilot went down in a very economically-challenging time for the organization.

Kirk: Yes.

PI: Do you think that impacted your mentoring relationship? With the restructuring and just the...

Kirk: Most definitely. Most definitely, ah...at least for this individual, ah their focus was not so much, they valued the mentoring program and relationship but the reality was that they had other significant challenges and responsibilities that seem to distract and detract away from their commitment so.

28. Mentor felt there was topic items that were not addressed or addressed fully.

29. Kirk did not like the "sounding board" approach, meandering discussion line whereas Dean enjoyed the informality of the topic.

30. Economy impacted the ability to meet and give the mentoring relationship the time it required.



PI: Were there topics or issues you didn't feel equipped to address with your mentee? And if there was, in what way do you wish you had been better prepared?

Kirk: There was only one subject that he wrote down that he wanted to discuss that we never got to discuss it-ah, that was the only one and I can't remember what I was-the was the only one that made me nervous. Ah, I think it was more about the hierarchical structure of Cirrus and how we make decision-making at the upper levels of the company and ah, so yeah, that was the only one that made me nervous but at least he gave me time to think about it (inaudible) but we never quite get to that one.

31. Mentor felt uncomfortable with the topic of senior leadership decision making given to him by his mentee. Mentee did not mention this topic when interviewed by the PI.

PI: If able, would you continue this mentoring relationship?

Kirk: If they so desired, yes. Yeah, and it really needs to be, I will still like ah, for us I think it was over but I you know talked to him since, sent him an email, hey just touching base, ah, and I will probably send him an email one-a-month just to see how thing's are going, was thinking this morning, grabbing a coffee with him on a Friday-something very informal-like I said, it really is up to that individual if they wanted to continue that relationship.

32. Reference made to the point that the mentee is responsible for fostering the relationship and keeping it viable.

Interview summary: I found Kirk to be thoughtful and articulate in his responses. I could tell he gave the questions considerable thought and complete responses. He was easy to follow in his logic and responses. I could also tell that Kirk, although in favor of the idea of a mentoring program, was frustrated with the lack of accountability of meeting and staying on task with the mentoring discussions. Inconsistent meetings made him question his own value and worth as a mentor when scheduled meetings were cancelled or rescheduled. He took how he did as a mentor, personally. Discussions were fine with Kirk but I could sense too that he was frustrated by the lack of progress of finishing topic items Kirk took his role as a mentor very seriously and wished his mentee took his role as seriously.

**Transcription Heather Fisher 5-28-09**

PI: Overall, Heather, your impressions of the mentoring program-what did you like? Or not like?

Heather: I liked that in my particular experience I had someone who was about a year out of college and liked the fact that this person in the "Sea of Cirrus" had someone to go to ask questions. I think that was really important thinking about other people put in that position here at Cirrus-I think that was very good.

33. Like the fact that the mentee had someone to go. Sees the reality that new people too often in the organization are on their own in the "Sea of Cirrus."

PI: Anything you didn't like about the program?

Heather: One thing that I didn't like about the program and I can say as I've had this happen as I was a mentee before sometimes the formalize, ah, formalization of the program sometimes inhibits the spur of the moment stuff or the true, somebody who's truly wanting some kind of, ah, some kind of mentoring-they might not get it or ask for it or they are forced into doing something in a certain time period so it may not be as full face as something else, as an informal or hybrid of an informal.

34. Felt the formalization of the process affected the spontaneity of informal mentoring.

PI: So since we set this up-that you're matched with this person, something was lost in that?

Heather: Yeah a little bit. I had known my mentee before and I felt like we were a little bit more free to talk about things in some respects then with the formality of the program which was interesting.

PI: So once the program became formal, it encumbered the relationship?

Heather: A little bit-it was a little bit like, um, a little forced, a little forced.

PI: What did it mean to you to be selected as a mentor?

Heather: Well, honored, I would say first that someone thought my experience was good enough to be shared with other people—that's true. And also, I thought, so okay, I am known as someone people would go to—and for people who are maybe 2 to 3 years out of school, I could say I would be an appropriate person to come to for general questions but after that, based on some of my experience, I am not the right person to go to and I thought that, wow I hope people aren't are like- (laughs) it kinda freaked me out, like, I hope people aren't like taking my stuff and saying, I going to do this, and this, and this, because Heather said I should do that or thought that was a good idea. So I was a little freaked out.

35. Honored to be a mentor with conditions. Felt she was qualified to be a mentor but for the right audience (e.g. professional right out of college.) Didn't feel qualified to be a mentor for someone with more experience.

PI: About the responsibility?

Heather: About the responsibility.

PI: About the awe of all of this?

Heather: Yes

PI: Like this person is going to sit there and listen to...

36. Slightly intimidated by the responsibility of being a mentor.

Heather: Yeah, yep, and that was a little bit nerve wracking. Yeah. And I also thought about how being a female that I am one of the most experienced female engineers here and that really scared me. And that made me sad as well because I thought, who do I go to?

37. The mentor wishing she could be mentored. And although young, she realized that she was one of the most experienced female engineers.

PI: Do you think anyone can be a mentor? What unique qualities do you think a mentor should have?

Heather: No I do not think everyone should be a mentor (laughs). I think humility is a good quality. Um, being able to listen to understand

38. Mentor should match what the mentee needs. Also, mentor's ability to realize what they can't speak to—"I'm not the right person..."

what the person is searching for-I think that's important. I think the ability to say-I haven't experienced that so what you're asking for-so I'm not the right person but I can find you somebody.

PI: So it's the ability to recognize your own abilities...

Heather: Yeah.

PI: Anything else?

Heather: To be able to find a comfortable way of communicating- I think that's important because you almost have to take the lead in the communication style to have to figure out what's comfortable for your mentee. And how they learn.

PI: Can mentoring be taught or is it just intrinsic to the individual?

Heather: I have to say it's more intrinsic- there could be some things that could be taught but ultimately you need to pick the best people based on the characteristics that I we all share with you.

PI: Did being a mentor, acting as a mentor change your own behaviors and interactions with people on a daily basis?

Heather: Yeah, (laughs) It totally made you more accountable-and we talked about that too, like, you know, whatever advice or thoughts I'm sharing with mentee-I know I damn better be living that day-to-day (chuckles).

PI: How would define, and you have done this to some degree Heather with your earlier answers, but how would define your relationship with your mentee-was it easy, casual, strained, stiff-what contributed to that relational climate?

39. Again, training as it applies to mentorship can help but selection is key.

40. Like Kirk, being a mentor reinforced the principles and forced mentors to "lead by example."

Heather: For the most part I'm going to say it was easy and conversational. Some things were strained.

PI: Like what? Some topics?

Heather: Yeah, some topics or some experiences my mentee had heard about before that other mentor groups had been doing like reading books together-or things like that I wasn't able to commit to and so the strain part came into that that I am not able to commit to that and the expectations being dashed, the hopes being dashed (chuckles) of my mentee. Ah, so some things may be based on expectations, um, or desires were more strained. I think one thing that I think that helped our conversations that we tried to do lunches. We wound up figuring out that lunches worked well for us. The common denominator of eating food together was very nice.

PI: Were there topics or issues you didn't feel equipped to address with your mentee? In what way do wish you as a mentor, had been better prepared?

Heather: Well...I think there was some topics that were about supervisory or management experiences that I said I am not qualified to talk to you about those so I felt like-I wasn't qualified but I put that out there saying there are some things you should not take advice from me on because I have had no experience doing that kind of stuff ah but, but we did talk about the other like supplemental things too like what I look for in a leader, what I expect leaders to have in a supervisory or managerial position so if she's thinking about going into those positions, these are some things she should think about before she even starts thinking about supervisory positions.

41. Potential conflict—mentees comparing other mentoring relationships in the organization and what they were doing. Expectations.

42. Topics not qualified to speak to—managerial/leadership experience.

PI: We spoke to this stuff you felt comfortable speaking to and you were pretty clear right up front if you felt you didn't have the expertise and would redirect her to somebody.

Heather: Can you ask that question that you asked?

PI: Were there topics or issues you didn't feel equipped to address with your mentee and in what way do you as a mentor wish you had been prepared?

Heather: I think one thing there is the topic was more like this is what we're going to talk about when we meet for an hour for lunch and I think having set more limitations on give me at least three days to think about the topic-I think that would have been-I would have felt more prepared. Yeah.

PI: Do you think the economically-challenging times that the organization was in right now-that it was really in the first part of Q1, Q2 impacted your mentoring relationship?

Heather: Yes. A lot of the questions that were asked I had noticed were based on situations that my mentee had been in that was due to economic situation and fortunately I thought about where are these questions coming from-why is this so right now and so we talked about the economic situation of right now is just right now so she shouldn't let that contribute to the rest of her life-her experiences over the last 8 months should not mold her into what she should be or could be in the next 5-10 years.

PI: And finally, Heather if you were able to continue to this mentoring relationship would you?

Heather: Yes.

43. The expectation was set in initial training that the mentee should give the mentor advanced notice of upcoming topics but that was not necessarily done. Heather felt ill-prepared to handle topics "off-the-cuff."

44. The economy had two distinct impacts on mentoring and the mentoring program at Cirrus Aircraft—either in prevented people from meeting due to the time commitment, changing roles, etc or the economy's impact on Cirrus was the topic of discussion as the company restructured and reevaluated priorities. It could be argued that mentoring and forum to ask questions was a comfort to new leaders as they struggled with the company climate.

Interview summary: I could tell Heather enjoyed her mentoring role although she wondered where her own mentor was. She was the only participant in the mentoring pilot that had had a formal mentor in another organization. The responsibility of being a mentor was somewhat daunting to Heather. Her answers were succinct and to the point. I sensed too that Heather believes in the program and the concept of mentoring. Heather had an informal relationship with her mentee before this mentoring pilot.

### **Transcription Jen Hartman 5-28-09**

PI: Overall your impressions of the mentoring program. What did you like? What did you not like?

Jen: There really wasn't that much that I didn't like. I thought that Heather and I were a really good pair. That's probably one reason why I was so receptive to it. I think the hardest thing in the beginning was coming up with topics. You know, as much as we know each other, it was still kind of awkward to open up and talk about your hopes and dreams with someone you don't really know outside of work so that was probably the biggest challenge.

45. Chemistry. It worked well between these two. These two had done some informal mentoring before the formal pilot began.

PI: What did it mean for you to be selected as a mentee?

Jen: I was excited. When not everybody's selected, you feel special.

PI: How did your mentor make you feel? Describe the mentoring sessions? Did you look forward to the mentoring sessions?

Jen: Definitely. Heather was excellent. She gave me a lot of examples about her experience going to work-were kinda on the same career path. She's just, you know, 5,6,7 years further down the road than I am. That was really helpful and she's an excellent listener. A very good listener and that always makes it a lot easier to talk to. You can tell if someone's actively listening.

46. Felt a connection to Heather from a career path perspective.

PI: I assume you looked forward to the mentoring sessions?

Jen: Yeah, it was a little stressful in certain weeks, especially when AFSO (Air Force Smart Ops) was in for two weeks at a time trying to meet to get a time project for her to make time but...

PI: Mentees were responsible for providing the topic of discussion each session. Was that difficult to find and bring topics to discussion? Give examples of topics you contributed?

Jen: Yeah, that was a little difficult- especially at first but as we went on, things that we would talk about came from like previous meetings so we run out of time and go let's start here at the next meeting and then it became easier but we started out talking about you know one year from now, five years from now, ten years from now, personal vision of where I want to be in my career. So we started out looking at all the options with someone with my degree, um, we talked about getting into management and then she gave me her philosophy things you should do before you take a management route, um...we did that CD on tape, *Ergonomics* and that was a ton of topic discussions there. We talked about project management, um, what she's done with Lean and the training she's had. That's kinda the big ones.

PI: Do you feel your mentoring sessions helped you develop as a leader? You completed the Leadership Development Course in Feb 2009-how did your mentoring relationship reinforce or possibly, not reinforce the concepts and leadership principles discussed in class?

Jen: I would say that it reinforced a lot of those ideas because a lot of that stuff came up when you were talking about your career path.

47. Time or a lack of time to meet was a challenge.

48. At first meeting was somewhat awkward and labored but with time, it got easier.

49. Yes, mentoring reinforced the concepts learned in the Leadership Development Course.



And lots of times everyone kinda heads towards the leadership role, um...

PI: How did your mentoring relationship reinforce or not reinforce the concepts and leadership principles discussed in class?

Jen: I think I got lucky with Heather and she definitely leads by example and I think, you know, just talking about her experiences. One story she had told me was-I don't know if she'll mind if I say it-in a meeting with ten people, she was the only female and one of the guys had turned and said, will you take notes? So you know-sometimes it feels like you're singled out as a girl when you work with a lot of guys to be the secretary. She said she took notes and after the meeting gave it to him and said you know thank you for asking me and next time someone else can take a turn at taking notes. I thought that was a really cool story because I never would have, I would have never thought it was because I was a girl that I asked to take notes and if I did, I probably would have never said anything. I think she had a very tactful way of you know, being very honest and...

PI: You learned something from that?

Jen: I definitely learned a lot from her experience that she shared with me.

PI: What do you think you got from your mentor in the form of insight that you have not otherwise received?

Jen: I think I kinda learned a lot more about Cirrus because she's been here longer and she kinda shared what it used to be like and what it's like now and if she hadn't told me some things, I would have probably, never, never known.

50. Enjoyed the relationship. Felt a connection.

51. Relayed a story to me told by Heather to Jen. At first was concerned as to the confidentiality of the story.

Put herself in the story and wondered if she would respond the same way.

52. Felt that she received feedback from her mentor that gave her an edge in her role.

PI: Do you think, Jen that anyone can be a mentor? What unique qualities do you feel a mentor should have?

Jen: I don't think anyone can be a mentor. I think you have to have experience for one to give good advice. And I think you have to be approachable because in the beginning even though we were pretty well acquainted, it was still kinda uncomfortable.

53. Experience and approachability—desired mentor skills

PI: Any other unique qualities besides being approachable that you think are unique to be a good mentor? You said approachable and experienced were the ones that I had.

Jen: Yeah, I think experience's number one, um...Heather did a great job making time you know. She made it seem like it was really important to her that we did these meetings and I think if she wouldn't have been so receptive that it would have been a lot harder.

54. Ability to make time for your mentee.

PI: Can mentoring be taught or is it intrinsic to the individual?

Jen: I think it could be taught. I think it could be taught-I think if the person really wanted to be a good mentor they could teach themselves how.

55. Only person that mentioned that mentoring could be taught—and that someone could teach themselves how to be a good mentor.

PI: Did being mentored, Jen, change your own behaviors and interactions with people on a daily basis?

Jen: Probably-I don't have a specific example but I definitely came away with a lot.

56. Seemed somewhat hesitant—answer lacked conviction. Telling me what I wanted to hear?

PI: And you alluded to this to some degree in an earlier question, how would you define your relationship with your mentor—was it easy, casual, strained, stiff—what contributed to that relational climate?

Jen: I think it was really easy—a lot of our meetings we would go out to lunch so it was

57. Mentee enjoyed the social aspect of mentoring and all the other social activities mentoring exposed her to.

really relaxed. We did jewelry bingo which is really fun (laughs) and on top of the mentoring program, once a month, with a couple other female engineers here we'd go out to dinner and that's been another informal mentoring experience too there to listening to everybody at the stage they're at in their career to share things so.

PI: Were there topics and issues you didn't feel comfortable discussing with your mentor?

Jen: Yeah, I kinda laid out you know what I thought we would talk about right at the beginning and as we met, things changed and came up and soon it was I just didn't want to talk about-it was really hard for everything to be focused on me. A little narcissistic so what I originally thought we would do was develop a vision with short-term and long-term goals and create some type of action plan to go through and help achieve those goals. We talked about those things but really didn't come up with an action plan. We talked about leadership skills and project management, um, I also put in the beginning like what I think my weaknesses are and how I can overcome those and that's another thing that was harder to get into so...

PI: Talking about your weaknesses?

Jen: Yeah, not that I would be ashamed to talk about my weaknesses, lord knows I got a million (laughs) but just bringing that topic up always having it be about me, kinda hard for me to go that way.

PI: You didn't like that part of it? Seem like it was always---

Jen: I like it to be kinda of a mutual thing too.

PI: If you were able, Jen, would you continue this mentoring relationship?

58. Uncomfortable with all the attention on her as the mentee. Also felt as if all her needs were not met (e.g. action plan not complete).

59. Another reference as to the topic/attention always on her as the mentee.

Jen: Definitely.

PI: Have you met recently at all?

Jen: Um, we went out to dinner last night. So last night was kinda another mentoring session. The last one before that was our power mentoring weekend which was the end of April, the 25<sup>th</sup>. Did we meet after that? We met 2 weeks ago right before AFS)-came in to talk about project management.

PI: Now, I've been adding this last question-do you think that the economic times that the organization is in right now and you've been here the whole time that we have had some pretty difficult times with the furloughs in the fall, the first of the year difficulties-do you think the economic-challenging times Cirrus Aircraft has been in affected your mentoring relationship.

Jen: I don't think so.

PI: You were still able to meet and all of those things?

Jen: Yeah, no Heather, like I said, was always can you meet? Even though she was really busy and she'd be like, yeah, you know, we'll find time this weekend. Anytime I asked she found time.

Interview summary: It was very evident that Jen enjoyed her mentoring experience with Heather and was disappointed that the formal portion of that mentoring experience was coming to a close. Her answers were often short and sometimes ended suddenly-as if she wasn't sure of her response. I felt as if I was pulling responses from her.

### **Transcription Mike Coon 6-03-09**

How do you think the economic times that the organization is in-the challenging times the organization is in right now-how did that impact your mentoring relationship?

60. Jen's answer is in contrast to Heather's (Jen's mentor) answer—Heather stated that Jen often referred to the current economic situation in their mentoring sessions together and was concerned about her career and the organization.

61. Jen looked at the challenging economy—not from a discussion topic point-of-view but whether it prevented the dyad from meeting.

Mike: I don't think it really had an impact, you know, I mean, we found the time-it was ah, of course there's some of our scheduled or planned time didn't happen but they always got rescheduled but I don't think as far as the economic impact if you want to throw dollars at it, I guess you could do that but um if we're talking about people that we want to invest in the company, you know, if we feel that's worthy of our time to spend, then I don't see an issue with it. I do think its worth to spend that time and I think it's a good way to do it. Because, you know, it seems a lot different than if we send someone, ok, you're going to go to a leadership course, oh, great, go to a leadership course and learn alot of different things that leaders should know but whether or not they get out and practice that after the fact. Seems like this is more based on issues and challenges they were having as individuals whether they were in leadership positions or not and that's worthy of our time to do what we did.

PI: With that said, and you kinda alluded to it so some degree, overall your impressions of the mentoring program-what did you like? Were there things you didn't like?

Mike: Um...maybe a little more of the upfront-what does it mean to be a mentor? We had that quick and I was, partially that I was my fault, I was late for the meeting we spent 10 minutes and went through some guidelines and ah, you know, aside from folks that you know work with me-I hate to say for me so I'll say with me, um, you're always mentoring those folks in some way, shape or form. Whereas in this position, you were mentoring somebody that you know you never met before or you know doesn't work for you at all and you're just working on their issues so if for me, um, maybe a little more structure up front might have been, might have been worthwhile-maybe not. I don't know. You know when you first asked me to be a mentor,

62. Viewed the current economy as impacting only meeting times. Didn't feel as if it was an issue.

63. Answer started out addressing the role of the economy on mentoring and shifted abruptly to how mentoring reinforces principles delineated in the Leadership Development Course.

64. Felt that the mentoring bridged the gap between classroom theory and real-life application and practice.

65. Unsure of the expectations of being a mentor for someone outside the chain-of-command.

66. Unclear on expectations, unclear on role.

I had to really think about-what the hell does it mean to be a mentor? You know, really, you know-for someone who doesn't work with me, what do I do? How do I do it? What am I doing? What's my function? What's my goal? That kind of thing so...besides that, I think things went pretty well I guess...

PI: What did it mean to you Mike to be selected as a mentor?

Mike: Pretty good, I mean obviously it means that somebody out there feels that I am worthy of mentoring somebody else and they feel that I have good things that I can share as far as experience and ah, I guess that's about it...

67. Felt honored to be selected.

PI: Do you think that anyone can be a mentor? What unique qualities do you feel a mentor should have?

Mike: Patience, um, you have the ability to talk to people. Some people just aren't-I guess, I'll put it this way, some people are somewhat intellectually-challenged as far as being able to talk to somebody because when they're coming to you with their problems, you have to be open and you have to be able to listen. You can't be rash or harsh so I think a quality of a good mentor is someone who is knowledgeable, two, is willing, three is personable. I guess I'd probably leave it at that.

68. Qualities—patience, ability to engage in conversation, open, listen, knowledgeable,

PI: So back to it-do you think anyone can be a mentor or...

Mike: Um, no, no. And it kinda goes back to those things I just mentioned. If they're not knowledgeable, and they don't past experience, and they don't have anything to share, give, or they're not willing to or they're incapable, then no, I definitely think not.

PI: Well that...then you kinda answered this next meeting, can mentoring be taught or is it intrinsic to the individual?

Mike: Um, I think it's kinda intrinsic to the individual. I think there's certain aspects of mentoring that can be taught But it's just like the leadership course. You can, you can bring someone through the leadership course and say, these are all the things a leader can do but if they really don't get it, you know, they're really not going anywhere, not going to be able to function in a leadership role or this case, not going to be able to function as a mentor because they don't have I guess the stuff it takes to apply it. Any one of us could read a book but when it comes to you know actually applying something, you need some mentoring upfront yourself but then, speaking of the whole mentoring thing (chuckles)...

PI: Did being a mentor, acting as a mentor, change your behaviors and interactions with people on a daily basis?

Mike: No I went back to this, I look up mentoring and leadership there was some things that as far as leadership goes and ah, what do I value-there was honesty and all that stuff so I treat people the way I like to be treated and a mentoring program isn't going to change how I interact with people or how I (inaudible)-it may solidify how I do it or just reinforce what I am doing but it hasn't changed anything that I do.

PI: Mike, how would you define your relationship with your mentor-was it easy? Casual? Strained? Stiff? What contributed to your relational climate?

Mike: Um, I think at first it was awkward just because you know we hadn't met before..I mean I had seen him and I heard the name before but had never had put the two together and I didn't know what he did so all that stuff

69. Being a good mentor is mostly intrinsic to the individual although training can help to learn to apply the principles.

70. The act of mentoring did not change this leader's day-to-day behavior/activity but did to some degree reinforce what he was doing.

71. Opening session was awkward. Many respondents felt initial meetings were uncomfortable. To be expected?

at first was just kinda getting an idea of who we were and how this whole things was going to work together and um, pleasantly I was surprised and I think I sent you an email awhile back talking about in a round-about-way, we both-he's in kinda in a position I was used to be in. He's really not getting any guidance from anybody, he's just doing the things he needs to do at least in the beginning of the mentoring program because Eric had left and this before Jay had taken over the M&P so that part was pretty cool and I think we kinda connected at the point. I think that throughout the mentoring program, Nick Faust would be somebody I would call, maybe not a cold sprint but like a quickened step if I see him in the hall, stop and bullshit for awhile. He's a nice guy, we clicked, and we got along so everything worked out but it was awkward at first.

PI: Awkward for the first couple of sessions or...?

Mike: Part of the first session, you know, we both, we both came to the table not really sure what to do or how to do it so I basically asked what are you faced with? What are your issues? Let's start there. That's how we started.

PI: Were there topics and issues, Mike you didn't feel equipped to address with your mentee? In what way do you wish you had been better prepared?

Mike: Um, I think the one topic that right off the top of my head I couldn't necessarily give him as good of guidance that maybe I would have hoped but we just spent a whole bunch of time talking about the subject and that was career progression and so, this is I think the fourth session he brought this up and ah, so we kinda stepped back you know talked about how did you get to where you are right now and what do you want to do, keep going with

73. "Clicked"—speaks to chemistry.

74. Requested topic by mentee challenged the mentor since Cirrus doesn't have a prescribed career progression/succession program. Mentor spoke to what he knew and what he experienced. His response seemed to be sufficient.



that? What's your goal? So we talked our way through it so of course he asked me how I got to where I was so I just kinda went back a number of years and stepped him through my progression at my previous company and this company, how I got there and why I got there and a lot of that was doing good at the right time and in front of the right people. Um, so that's one of the things we talked a lot about in regards (inaudible)...prime opportunity to do goodness and what he felt was right. I figured if he had a good enough, strong head on his shoulders, he's do just fine. But I think that's probably the one subject that caught me off guard-I was like, oh, that's a really good question-we had to really think about it, talk about it for awhile. He seemed content when our session was done but at the same time I was thinking (inaudible)-it's not something I think a whole lot about because I like what I do, I am comfortable with what I do. Do I want to be a mentee some day? Probably not. So maybe I'm not quite the person that should be talking about career progression. I think we got there.

PI: I think you can speak to career progression even though you don't have aspirations to be a VP.

Mike: Yeah, I've come a long way from being a technician troubleshooting a circuit board to today...

PI: Yeah, we all take a meandering path, don't we?

Mike: (chuckles)

PI: And finally, would you continue this mentoring relationship if able?

Mike: Yeah we both talked in our last session and I told him even though this thing is over, doesn't me you can't send me an email or give me a call more than happy if you run into

75. The topic of career progression was not something the mentor thought about because he has no interest in progressing out of his current role.

76. Another reference to mentoring applying in and out of work. Mentoring for this mentee caused him

issues or just have questions or just need someone to talk to because we talked about things in and out of work. He is the Chair of....oh,,ah, he has an autistic child.

PI: Down's Syndrome child

Mike: Down's Syndrome child-right. So he's the Chair of the local section-I think the state or national (inaudible) so we talked a lot about that because I had started the SQ subsection here. I was able to talk him through what I had done. How we are able to leverage certain things here at work. It had to do with work whereas his is outside of work.

Interview summary: Mike came across in his interview as confident and articulate in his responses. It was evident that he was proud of his own career accomplishments and felt honored and capable to be a mentor and provide counsel. He identified quickly with his mentee and his situation. Of all the prescribed dyads, Mike and his mentee continue to see each other informally.

### **Transcription Nick Faust 5-29-09**

PI: Overall, Nick your impressions of the mentoring program-what did you like? What did you not like?

Nick:: Ah, what I liked, um, I have worked in many different companies and I have never been involved in a mentoring program like this one and so, what I really liked about it was having, um, access to a successful leader within the organization that could ask questions of and ah, you know, help me through some issues.

PI: Anything you did not like the program?

Nick: Ah, it did prove to be a little bit difficult to get together at times over the time period I ended up only meeting with my mentor four times. Ended up having to reschedule a couple.

77. Welcomed the access he had to an established, respected leader in the organization and when assigned, had every intention of making the best of the relationship. Went into the dyad with particular issues he was going to work on.

PI: What did it mean to you, Nick to be selected as a mentee?

Nick: I guess I was, ah, flattered (chuckles). It left the impression that I was worth being mentored.

PI: How did your mentor make you feel? Describe your mentoring sessions. Do you look forward to your mentoring sessions?

Nick: I did look forward to my mentoring sessions. Initially I went into the mentoring sessions, you know, I had some questions that I wanted to ask but I wasn't sure if they were dumb questions or if they were politically correct questions. To be perfectly honest, I went into the first mentoring session with canned questions and quickly gained confidence that if at least I was asking a stupid question that it wouldn't make obvious. (Laughs) So it was good.

PI: How did your mentor make you feel? Overall? Did you answer that?

Nick: Well I guess my mentor made me feel like the questions I had were valid ones and reasonable ones and he left me feeling like I could ask pretty much any question I had.

PI: Mentees were responsible for providing the topic of discussion. Was that difficult to find topics to bring to discussion? Give example of topics you contributed.

Nick: Ah, initially it wasn't difficult at all— one of the things that I feel that I need to work on, um, and I felt this going into the mentor/mentee program was ah, emotional intelligence and so a lot of the questions that I had were around emotional intelligence so we talked a lot about emotional intelligence—we looked at different aspects of it and how it was affecting some of the things that were happening to me.

78. Viewed the mentoring relationship as a non-judgmental opportunity to ask questions he was struggling with or was afraid to ask in another forum.

Felt out the mentoring relationship with some "canned" questions first to see if it was a safe environment.

79. Mentor established an atmosphere of comfort, safety, and confidentiality for the mentee.

80. Entered the dyad relationship wanting to discuss emotional intelligence—a topic discussed at length in the leadership development course.

Had already done some self-assessing as to his areas of development.

PI: Do you feel your mentoring sessions helped develop you as a leader? You completed the Leadership Development Course in Feb 2009-how did your mentoring relationship reinforce or possibly not reinforce the concepts and leadership principles discussed in class?

Nick: I think that the mentoring relationship definitely reinforced the concepts that I learned in class, um-I think that getting into the mentoring program immediately after the class was excellent timing, um, and, as I said-I kinda recognized going through the class, um and it became more and more evident through the mentoring and as I asked questions about it, was the emotional intelligence-learning about that. Did that answer the question?

PI: Yeah, I think so. I think, ah. You had mentioned to me earlier that while the mentoring program was still going on, the mentoring had actually caused you to reflect on your own life-could you elaborate a little on that?

Nick: Um yeah actually ah-I always felt, well that in my adult life, I recognize that I am a fairly talented person um, and people always seem to expect more of me that is outside my comfort zone and the mentoring class and then having the mentor that I could ask questions of-all the questions I was afraid to ask, um, really helped me gained some confidence to step outside my comfort zone and um, you know, it's allowed me to, well, I ended up taking a board position for the Downs Syndrome Society of Minnesota which honestly I don't think I would have done before taking the class and going through the mentoring program.

81. Thought the timing of mentoring immediately following the conclusion of classroom leadership development was beneficial.

82, Again, the mentoring relationship provided a safe place for the mentee to ask questions he was already struggling with once trust was established. This in turn led to the mentee taking a position in a non-profit organization that he may not have taken otherwise.

PI: What do you think, Nick, you got from your mentor in the form of insight that you would have not received otherwise?

Nick: He helped me, sort of, take my emotion out of situations, sort of, you know, kinda, sort of almost made me a mantra like when we talked about conflict management um, I have four points from my discussion that I talked about and they were remain relaxed, recognize what matters most to you, recognize and read the non-verbal cues of the people you are discussing, and the capacity to be playful in tense situations but it just sort of helped me articulate and organize thoughts and go into situations where there might be conflict with a game plan.

PI: Do you think, Nick, that anyone can be a mentor? What unique qualities do you feel a mentor should have?

Nick: I think anyone *can* be a mentor but not necessarily right now (chuckles). I think that experience of being through the ah, ...Mike was a great mentor to me because he's had experience with the things I wanted to learn about and navigated those waters successfully so I think that's really the prerequisite to be a mentor.

PI: Any other unique qualities besides experience?

Nick: Um, I think there that the relationship has to work. Um, I think that Mike was very...very good at making relationships work at the emotional intelligence part of it...um...maybe that's a talent that is required, maybe it's a chemistry that would naturally happen but there needs to be some kind of chemistry for lack of a better word.

PI: Did you feel that was the case...

Nick: Yeah, I did.

83. Another reference to the mentor meeting the mentee's needs as to emotional intelligence

84. Felt as if he wanted to tell me what he learned and was practicing as it applied to emotional intelligence.

85. Reference to experience as being key for a mentor and more specifically, experience in what the mentee wanted to know more about.

86. Mentee spoke about the importance of the relationship, chemistry. It was apparent that the dyad genuinely liked each other.

PI: So again, this kinda answers the last one- can mentoring be taught or is it intrinsic to the individual?

Nick: I think mentoring can be taught but at the same time there are people who will have inherent talents for it and there are people who will not necessarily be talented in that area.

PI: Did being mentored change your own behaviors and interactions with people on a daily basis?

Nick: I think that it could- I think it's, ah- it's like anything else, ah, you need to develop a habit- a habit of doing it and um, I have the desire to change my behaviors on a daily basis but I haven't practiced that to make it a habit yet.

PI: Some of this you've spoken to earlier- how would you define your relationship with your mentor- was it easy, casual, strained, stiff? What contributed to that relational climate?

Nick: Ah, it was easy and casual and ah, you know, Mike really set the tone with it by being easy and casual right from the start (inaudible).

PI: Were there topics, Nick that you didn't feel comfortable discussing with your mentor?

Nick: No, I really laid myself out there I think, ah you know I recognized the opportunity I had to talk to Mike was worth quite a bit and I trusted him.

PI: Do you think that the economically-challenging times, Nick that the organization has been in since the first quarter of 2009 when this mentoring pilot started impacted your mentoring relationship at all?

87. Again, truly good mentors are born with inherent talents and skills.

88. Being mentored didn't necessarily have an impact on this mentee's day-to-day interaction with others. I would argue based on the mentee's interview, that mentoring did initiate the taking on of responsibility of a non-profit leadership position.

89. Whether a mentoring relationship "clicks" can be seen right from the start.

90. The organization's fiscally-challenging times often determined the topics discussed between this mentor and mentee. With difficult times it would not be unusual for new

Nick: It definitely impacted some of the things we discussed-you know, we discussed some of the reorganization going on and ah, how to get things done (chuckles) stuff like that so we ended up discussing (inaudible) on the changes that were made.

PI: If you were able, Nick, would you continue this mentoring relationship?

Nick: Yeah, I think I would-I know I will. I talked to Mike and asked him if we could continue it and he said definitely.

Interview summary: Nick received much benefit from his relationship with his mentor stating that this was an opportunity he was going to take advantage of. He came into the relationship looking for answers to specific questions he felt were developmental areas. He came across concise and thoughtful and very appreciative for having had the mentoring experience.