Forget Mentorship, Find Sponsorship

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None of the above speakers have any conflicts of interest to disclose.
Objectives

✓ Define what a makes someone a sponsor

✓ Identify the difference between mentors and sponsors

✓ Develop an individual road map for sponsorship
Sponsor Imperative

✓ Who’s pulling for you?
✓ Who’s got your back?
✓ Who’s putting your hat in the ring?

✓ This person’s not a mentor but a SPONSOR!
Fast Tracking Your Career

Sponsors do the following:

✓ Believes in your value and potential, will go the extra mile to advocate for you
✓ Have voice at decision making table and can advocate for promotion, pay, etc..
✓ Allows you to take risks – a senior leader makes it safe to fail
Have a sponsors back – create a strategic alliance

- Do your job well
- Keep fully informed
- Don’t be afraid to ask for help
- Share your motivations = trustworthy
Mentor vs. Sponsor

Mentors:

- Listen sympathetically
- Offer advice
- Give generously with their time

- Energy flows one-way: Toward You

Sponsors:

- Furthering your career is an investment in their career, organization or vision
- Role is to develop you as a leader
- Ensure manifest of dividends, earned through loyalty and performance

- Energy flows two-ways: Strategic Alliances/Trust

Mentors give, sponsor invest.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Mentor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior person who believes in your potential and is willing to take a bet on you</td>
<td>Experienced person willing to help and support you</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocates for your next promotion</td>
<td>Builds your confidence and provides a sounding board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourages you to take risks and has your back</td>
<td>Offers empathy and a shoulder to cry on</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expects a great deal from you (stellar performance and loyalty)</td>
<td>Expects very little in return</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsor/Mentor</td>
<td>Advice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Makes introductions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gives feedback</td>
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*Table provided by Center for Talent Innovation (CTI)*
Sponsored Employee Data

Satisfaction with career progress:
- Sponsored Men: 70%
- Sponsored Women: 68%
- Un-sponsored Men & Women: 57%

Likelihood of sponsorship:
- Men 46% more likely than women
- Caucasians are 63% more likely than professionals of color

Stats provided by Center for Talent Innovation (CTI)
### What is a sponsor?

**Delivers high-octane advocacy**

A sponsor is a senior leader who, at a minimum:

- Believes in me and goes out on a limb on my behalf
- Advocates for my next promotion
- Provides “air cover” so I can take risks

And comes through on at least two of the following fronts:

- Expands my perception of what I can do
- Makes connections to senior leaders
- Promotes my visibility
- Provides stretch opportunities
- Gives advice on “presentation of self”
- Makes connections to clients/customers
- Gives honest/critical feedback on skill gaps

*Table provided by Center for Talent Innovation (CTI)*
What is a protégé?

Delivers high-octane support

A protégé is a high-potential employee who, at a minimum:

- Outperforms—contributes 110%
- Is loyal to me and the organization
- Contributes a distinct personal brand

And comes through on at least two of the following fronts:

- Is trustworthy and discreet
- Covers my back
- Promotes my legacy
- Brings “value added”—different perspective/skill sets
- Leads with a “yes”
- “Burnishes my brand” across the organization
- Builds my “A” team

Table provided by Center for Talent Innovation (CTI)
Two Way Street

- Sponsor and Protégé each a star in their own right
- Each gives and takes from the relationship

Table provided by Center for Talent Innovation (CTI)
Road Map for Protégé

Vision

✓ Goal → Dream
✓ Destination → Inspiration
✓ Sense of Direction
✓ Overabundance of Drive

Easier for Men than Women

✓ Women Purpose → Dream
✓ Hesitant to put foot down
✓ Modify career plans – marriage/family
Dream

Embrace God-given right to

- Power
- Influence
- Agency
- Impact

OWN YOUR OWN AMBITION & DESIGN YOUR CASTLE
Dream Activity

To get started with your dream – give yourself permission to dream!!

✓ What place would feel magical? What kind of room or space do you want to inhibit? What is the view when you look out the window?

✓ Whom do you want to meet with? Who intrigues you or excites you? What sort of conversation do you wish you could have with them?

✓ What transformation do you most want to drive? What sort of large-scale change do you wish you could be part of?
Assess what you have (only strengths):

✓ What have you done?
✓ What have you proven you can do?
✓ What are you ready/willing to do again?
This is a strictly positive inventory only!!

✓ What do you do exceptionally well? In what skill sets do you have your black belt?
✓ What is your currency? What sets you apart?
✓ What experiences distinguish you?
✓ What inherent or acquired differences lend you a distinctive brand or value added that others may not bring to the table?
✓ What accomplishment has given you joy and won you accolades? What gives you satisfaction so you want to do more of it?
✓ How does the mission or mandate of your organization overlap with your own values or goals?
Assess Your Organization

✓ Is your organization flat (few titles, no apparent ladder) or hierarchical? If there is a ladder, how is it constructed?

✓ What do titles mean in terms of what you do, where you do it, and whom you manage? Where are you on the ladder?

✓ If your organization is flat and titles mean nothing, how do you then navigate the organization?

✓ What deliverables will get you promoted?

✓ What are the notch points – the sticky places, the plateaus, dips, or pitfalls – you need to power through?
Identify Potential Sponsors

3 Things to look for:

✓ Already aware of skills and strengths

✓ Stands to benefit from your help

✓ Have clout/position to move you toward goal
Choose Targets Carefully

- Efficacy over affinity – Role models may not be effective sponsor
- Don’t be put off by leadership style – looking for clout
- Friends don’t make good sponsors
- Impress your boss and ask for connections to help energize your career
- Secure assignments in your sponsor’s line of sight
- Request meeting with target sponsor for career development
- Network – Introduce yourself
- Suggest collaborating on a project
- If target sponsor says no, ask if they can direct to more appropriate leader
Distribute Risk

Keep a diversified portfolio

- More than 1 sponsor (medium-large organization)
  - If only 1 sponsor and they leave organization

- Sponsors independent of one another

- May need to increase arena where you play a leadership role, church, community, etc..

- Best candidates typically not people likely to share innermost secrets
Diversification Tactics

Increase Internal Visibility
- Lead a network, employee resource
- Spearhead an event: cultural, sports, philanthropy
- Ask boss to introduce you to their boss
- Ask for personal and leadership development

Increase External Visibility
- Join non-profit board
- Run for office in professional association, community, school, church, etc..
- Attend conferences as speaker, panelist or facilitator
Not Just about Protégé

Communicate
✓ Recognize when you need help
✓ Keep sponsor in the loop regarding career

Contribute
✓ Deliver outside your job description
✓ Give what’s needed without being asked
✓ Make small gestures – random acts of thoughtfulness
Come Through: Two Fronts

Performance
- ✓ Deliver outstanding bottom-line results
- ✓ Meeting targets and deadlines
- ✓ Display impressive work ethic and availability
  - ❖ Get others to deliver

Loyalty
- ✓ Trustworthy, discretion, have sponsor’s back
- ✓ Polish sponsor’s brand across organization
- ✓ Grow sponsor’s legacy
Come Through Tactics

✓ Hit the numbers. Meet all deadlines. Exceed expectations.

✓ Sponsor and Protégé must be able to cite protégé’s accomplishments based on company’s values.

✓ Get word out about your success.
Personal Brand

Develop and Deploy Your Currency
- Identify
- Develop
- Deploy

- Revisit Performance Reviews
- Self-Assessment
- Identify where continually excel
- Ask family/friends/co-workers
- Ask mentor

If don’t develop own personal brand, only fulfilling your sponsors ambitions.
Ponder:

✓ How am I innately different from my peers?
✓ What about my background, experience, and schooling make me unique?
✓ What skills sets do I have that set me apart?
✓ How does my perspective differ from others? What informs my perspective that doesn’t inform their?
✓ What approach do I bring to solving thorny problems? How might this approach distinguish me from my peers?
Personal Brand Tactics

- Identify your personal currency and lift it up
- Acquire skills your current job doesn’t require
- Reverse Mentor – bring your sponsor the skill set(s) or know-how they lack.
- Innovate – process, system, etc.
JUST SAY YES

- Show commitment to institution
- Demonstrate commitment 1\textsuperscript{st}, reservations 2\textsuperscript{nd}
- Say yes even if a qualified no

ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING

- Save yes for your sponsor
- Propose solutions rather than present problems
Women Make Yourself a Safe Bet

- Do not have an illicit affair with your supervisor
- Relentlessly transmit professionalism – no flirting
- Meet your sponsor in public
- Be upfront about personal and family commitments you value
- Introduce spouse/significant other to sponsor
- Be clear about what you want and where you’re going
- When gossip identifies you as a leaders favorite, prove you warrant singling out
Minority Distrust

- Don’t trust those in power to fairly reward/compensate, believe person of color will not get top position
  - 21% Hispanics
  - 35% African-Americans
  - 29% Asian

- Compromise Authenticity – Must conform
  - 37% African Americans & Hispanic
  - 45% Asians

- Others take credit for contributions
  - 24% African Americans
Distrust Continued

- If reveal struggle of bias or discrimination – would be held against them
  - 50% African Americans
  - 36% Asian and Hispanic

- People of color perceive best to put up and shut up

- Minority Leaders feel responsible to Sponsor
  - 40% African-Americans
  - 18% Hispanic
  - 20% Asian
Surmounting the Color Barrier

✓ Master Social Banter
✓ Pick up a sport or Join a team
✓ Propose a project positioning you as a problem-solver or leader
✓ Dare to ask for help
✓ If you are passed over, find out why
Executive Presence

No man or woman attains power or exerts influence without it executive presence.

3 Pillars

✓ How act (gravitas) – 67%
✓ How speak (communication) – 28%
✓ How look (appearance) – 5%

People of Color are expected to conform in appearance and behavior.
Aspects of gravitas

According to senior leaders, top aspects of gravitas are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>For Women</th>
<th>For Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence and grace under fire</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisiveness and showing teeth</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity and speaking truth to power</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation and standing/pedigree</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision/charisma</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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✓ Look to up and coming leaders in your organization for clues on the unwritten rules of appearance

✓ No matter how casual the dress code, look pulled together

✓ Look appropriate in your environment, but authentic to yourself

✓ Win a seat at the table then dare to stand out
Communication

✓ Tone it down  ⚫ deep bass or shrill
✓ Over prepare
✓ Less can be more
✓ Get to the point
✓ Invoke your vertical
✓ Polish your small talk
Gravitas

✓ When you know you are right, stick to your guns

✓ Show teeth – assure others you mean business

✓ Assert your integrity – acknowledge errors, and correct
Sponsorship is Earned – Own It

- Build Castle and Embrace Dream
- Exude Executive Presence
- Target the right leaders
- For every get, you need a give
- Give 110%, Be Loyal = Establishing Two-way Street
- Discover your special currency
- LEAD WITH YES – LEAN IN
We appreciate and value sponsorship

We appreciate those whom choose to lead with positivity

We appreciate you spending time with us today