

Guidelines for SSC Mentorship Program for Accredited Statisticians

Approved at the meeting of the SSC Board of Directors, October, 2004

What is Mentorship?

Mentorship involves a partnership between two people, where the mentor (who possesses greater skill, knowledge or experience) works collaboratively with a mentee (who is looking to enhance skills, knowledge and experience) in a mutually beneficial process.

While there is, by definition, a certain amount of asymmetry in the mentoring relationship there is also a certain amount of reciprocity. Both parties bring different but valid perspectives to the process, both gain from the relationship, and both are equally accountable for success.

Purpose

The purpose of the SSC Mentorship Program for Accredited Statisticians is to enhance the development of professional statistical practice in Canada through the sharing of knowledge and experience between designated professional practitioners (P.Stat.) and members entering as Associate Statisticians (A.Stat.).

The Mentor's Role

(S)He may be a host and guide, welcoming the initiate into a new occupational and social world and acquainting him/her with its values, customs, resources and cast of characters. Through his/her own virtues, achievements and way of living, the mentor may be an exemplar that the protégé can admire and seek to emulate. (S)He may provide counsel and moral support in times of stress.

Levinson et al. (1978)

Generally mentors will act as older and more experienced friends who are available to listen and help their mentees in situations that they may feel unprepared to deal with on their own. Although this might include making suggestions about the use of statistical methodology the mentor's function is normally not primarily one of adjunct statistical consultant to the employer/supervisor but one of professional advisor to the mentee. Thus, although the support given to the mentee will often facilitate the mission of the employing organization, the mentor is focused on facilitating the total adjustment of the mentee to the given circumstances.

The Mentee's Role

Upon receiving the A.Stat. designation the members acknowledge their interest in beginning a new phase of development as statistical practitioners and a willingness to seek guidance with respect to the fundamentals of applying their knowledge and skills to the practice of statistics in the chosen area of employment. Thus A.Stat. designees seek mentorship to accelerate professional growth through a one to one relationship with the mentor. Mentees may choose to implement suggestions received from the mentor but retain responsibility for their conduct in the fulfillment of the duties of their employment.

Benefits to the Mentee

- An introduction to the organizational culture and the statistician's role
- A source of professional/social contacts with other statisticians in the field – “plugs you into the power network”
- A role model
- A source of encouragement and motivation leading to greater self confidence and esteem
- A sounding board for questions about methods of analysis and communication of results
- Help in establishing professional development plans, career goals and acceleration of their achievement

Benefits to the Mentor

- A connection with the skills and perspective of new entrants into the profession
- Development and enhancement of communication and leadership skills
- Satisfaction of the desire to pass on skills and knowledge that can enhance the career and personal growth of the mentee and the profession

Benefits to the Employer

- Acceleration of the ability of the employee to make significant contributions to the achievement of organizational goals
- Greater job satisfaction and reduced turnover

Reference

Levinson, D.J., Darrow, C.N., Klein, E.B., McKee, B. (1978) Seasons of a man's life, New York, Knopf.