

## Chapter 4

# Blended Mentoring: Integrative Approach for Faculty Mentoring

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study is an integrative literature review to analyze the different approaches of mentoring methods and propose a good model of blended mentoring that can be used in various educational settings. The main foci of this study have been the different forms of mentoring used in educational settings, strengths and limitations of the different forms of mentoring, definition of blended mentoring, different approaches of blended mentoring, and benefits and limitations of blended mentoring. Based on the literature review, this study proposes a model of blended mentoring. Also, this study provides in-depth discussions about the research and practice implications for using blended mentoring in educational settings. The authors expect that school administrators, faculty, and instructors will find this chapter useful as they strive to identify more efficient and effective ways of mentoring.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Mentoring has been an effective tool for schools and educational institutions regarding the improvement of faculty performance, in addition to early and smooth adaptation of junior faculty into new job situations. Mentoring is considered a development process for faculty and instructors in educational settings, which creates a more open and innovative environment (Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008). Recently, many organizations have been adopting different delivery formats of mentoring including e-mentoring,

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tele-mentoring, virtual mentoring, etc. Also, there have existed various patterns of merging traditional mentoring with electronic medium to effectively manage mentoring relationships between the mentor and the protégé (Rowland, 2012). Benefits of these variant forms of mentoring are many, including increased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and less role conflict and ambiguity (Baugh & Scandura, 1999). Single and Muller (2001) also supported the usefulness of electronic mentoring as it not only facilitates knowledge, confidence, and cultural understanding of the protégé to be successful, but also for the developmental purpose of the mentor.

While the benefit and usefulness of electronic mentoring methods are abundant, many organizations and educational institutions have adopted blended approaches of mentoring between traditional methods (i.e., face-to-face mentoring, formal mentoring) with electronic mentoring methods in order to save time and provide more timely feedback for the protégé (Bierema & Hill, 2005). Research indicates the benefits of blended approach of mentoring are: anytime and anyplace support for the protégé through e-mentoring, more flexible scheduling and time management, and less psychological burden for personal meeting during mentoring process (Kirk & Olinger, 2003). While the adoption of a blended mentoring approach in educational settings is promising to improve the existing practices of mentoring, a significant research gap is found on how to blend and mix different types of mentoring approaches reflecting the organizational and individual level needs and context.

## **Study Purpose**

The primary objective of this book chapter is to analyze the different approaches of mentoring methods and propose a good model of blended mentoring that can be used in various educational settings. In addressing the research purpose, the following research questions are developed:

1. What kind of mentoring forms are used in educational settings?
2. What are the strengths and limitations of the different forms of mentoring?
3. What is blended mentoring?
4. What are the different approaches of blended mentoring?
5. What are the benefits of blended mentoring?
6. What constitutes a model of blended mentoring?
7. What are the research and practice implications for using blended mentoring in educational settings?

By answering these questions, we pursue to address new ways to foster effective mentoring programs in educational setting. We expect that school administrators, faculty, and instructors will find this chapter useful as they strive to identify more efficient and effective ways of mentoring. We present the best practices to facilitate blended mentoring that can be applied to their general mentoring programs. We also discuss not only practical implications for how individual faculty can utilize a blended mentoring method to boost their mentoring relationships with the protégé but also research implications to identify the effectiveness of blended mentoring approaches in educational settings.

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