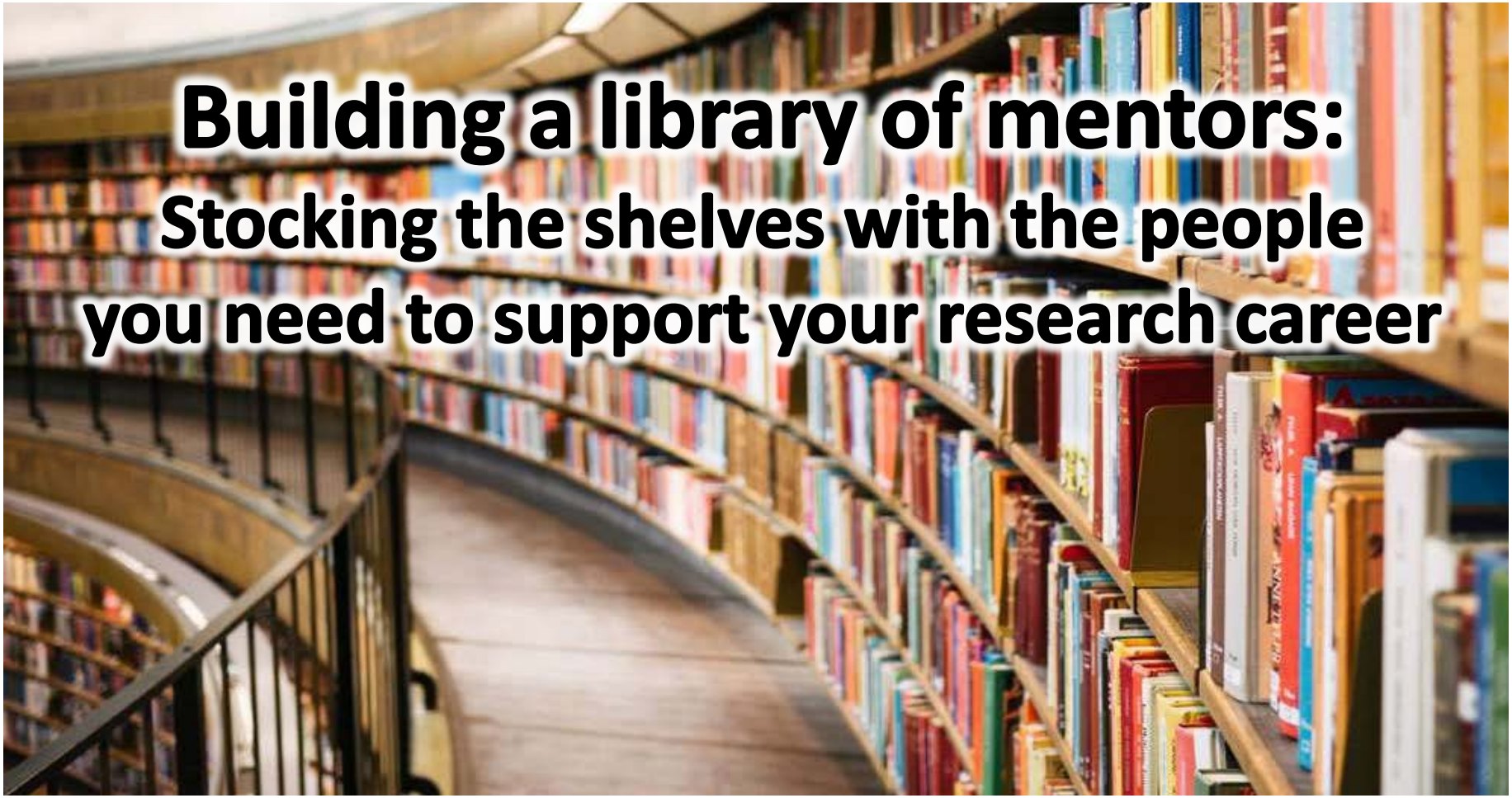


Building a library of mentors:
Stocking the shelves with the people you need to support your research career

CCHCSP-WCHRI Lunch & Learn, June 11, 2019

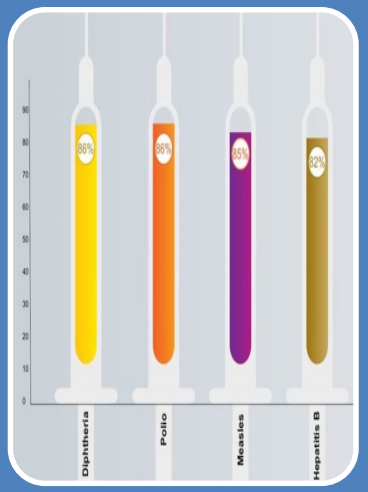
Shannon MacDonald PhD, RN
Assistant Professor, Faculty of Nursing & Adjunct professor, School of Public Health
University of Alberta
CCHCSP Career Development New Investigator

Today we will consider:

- Why do you need mentorship?
- Why do you need more than one mentor?
- How do you find good mentors?
- How do you maintain a good mentorship relationship?

Who am I?

Research program



Immunization coverage & determinants, with a special focus on vulnerable populations

- Vaccine coverage of children receiving child intervention
- Vaccine coverage of First Nations children
- Vaccine coverage of immunocompromised populations
- Vaccine coverage on school entry
- Impact of perinatal depression/anxiety on childhood immunization
- Feasibility & impact of immunization reminder & recall systems
- Improving immunization needle pain management

AEFI
ADVERSE EVENT FOLLOWING IMMUNIZATION

Vaccine safety

- Safety of newly introduced vaccines
- Varicella vaccine and risk of pediatric stroke
- Vaccine safety in immunocompromised populations

But really…Who am I?

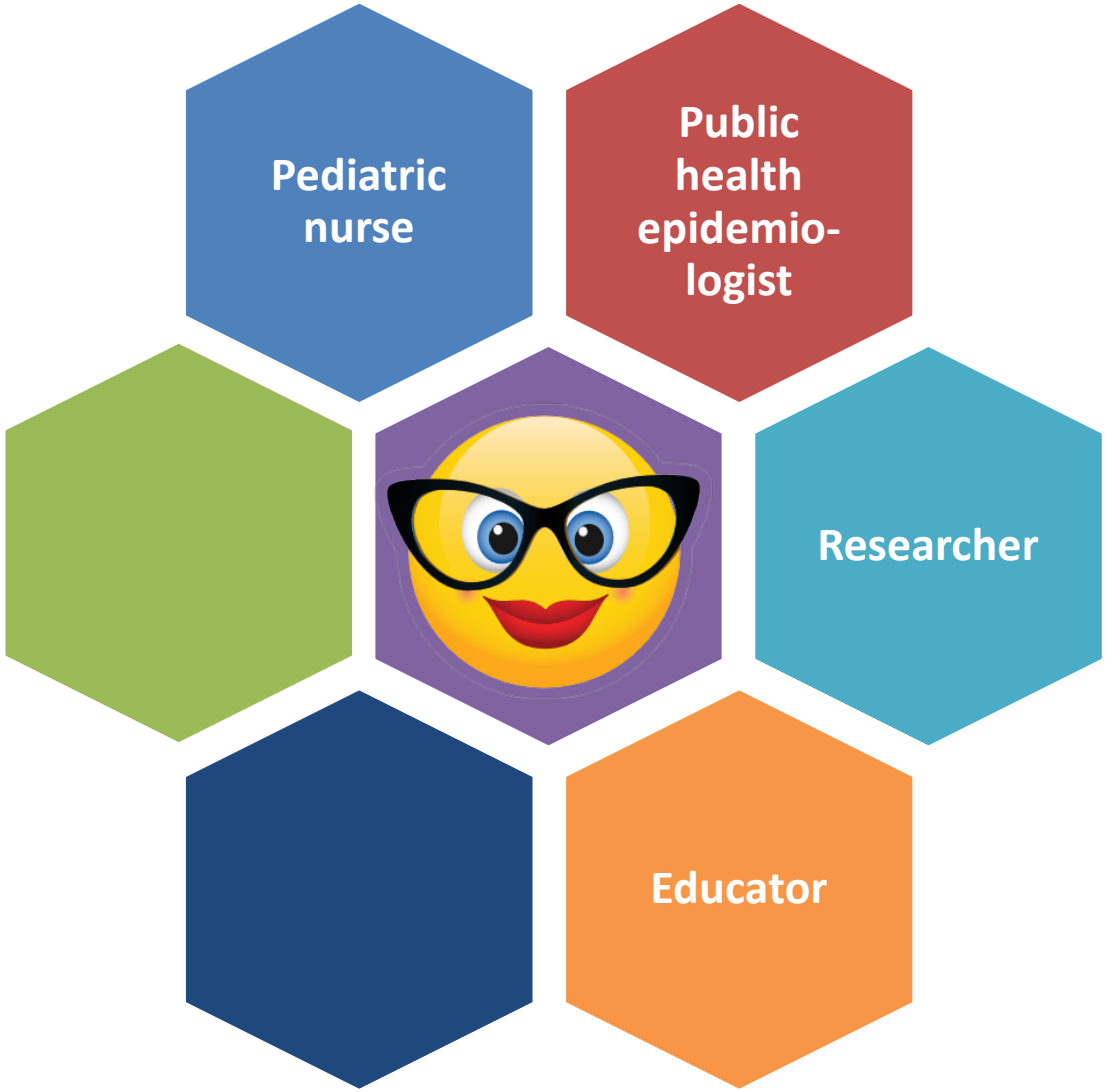
Who am I?

Who am I?

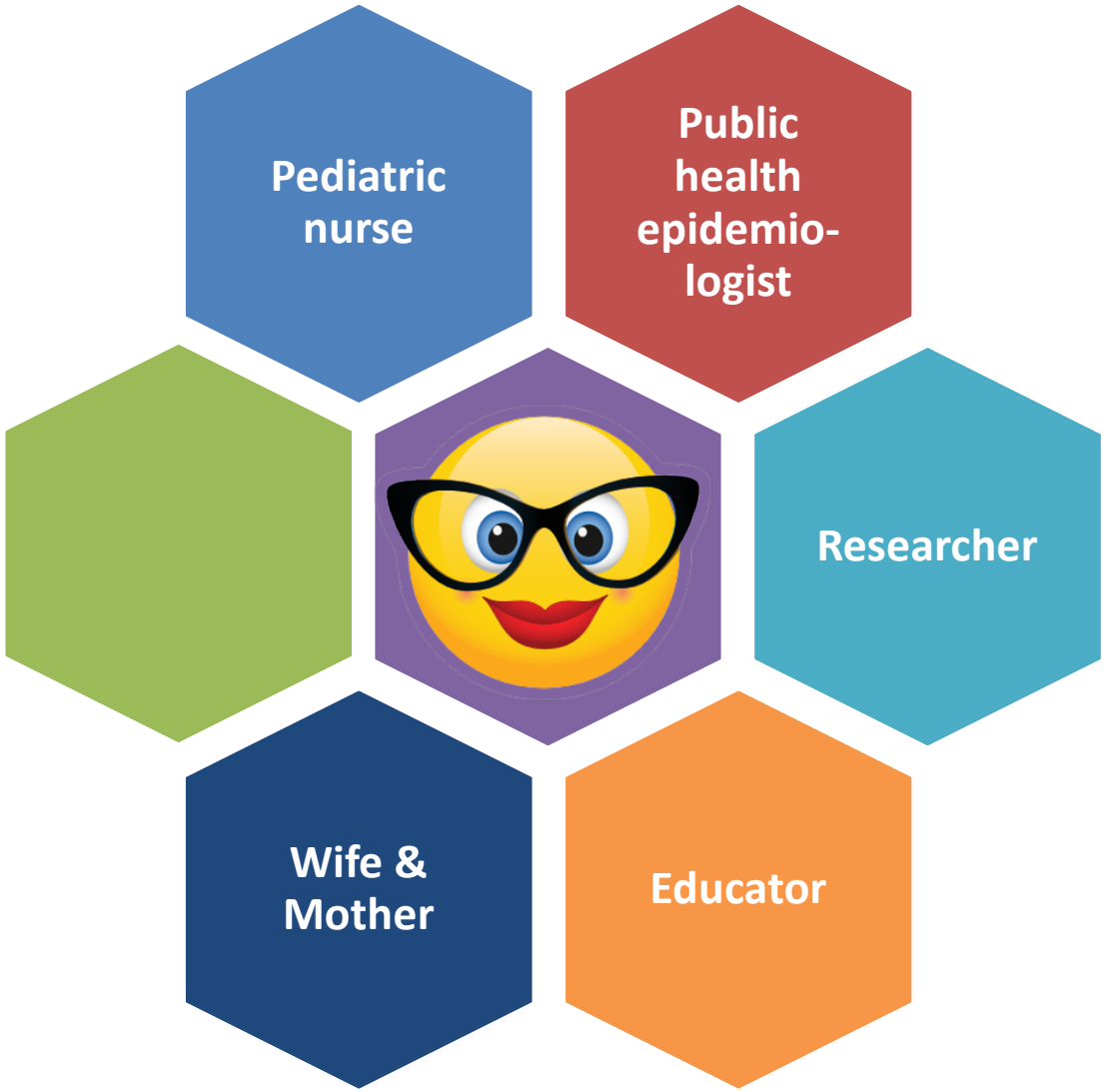
Who am I?

Pediatric nurse
Public health epidemio-logist
Researcher

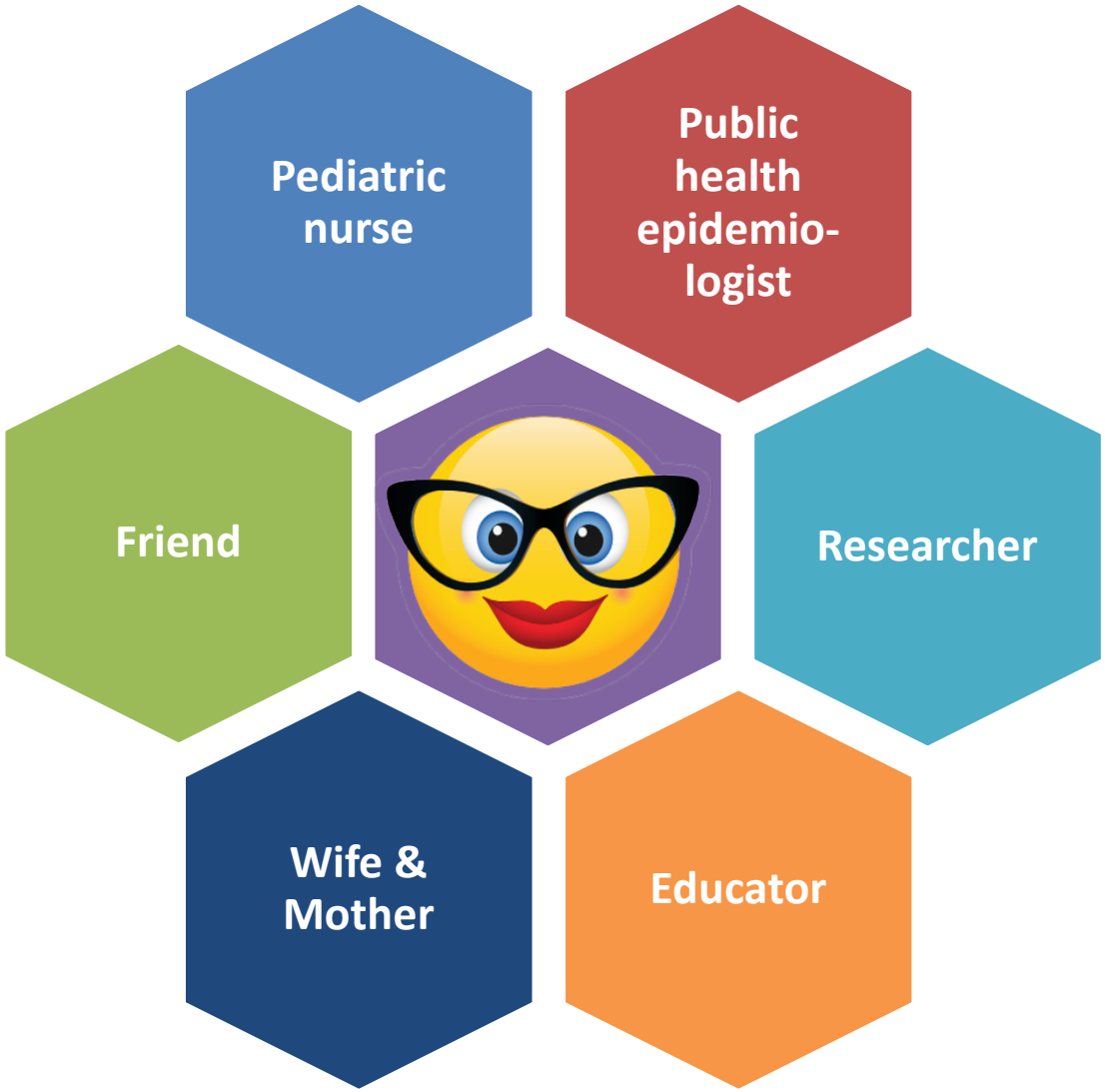
Who am I?


Pediatric nurse
Public health epidemio-logist
Researcher
Educator

Who am I?

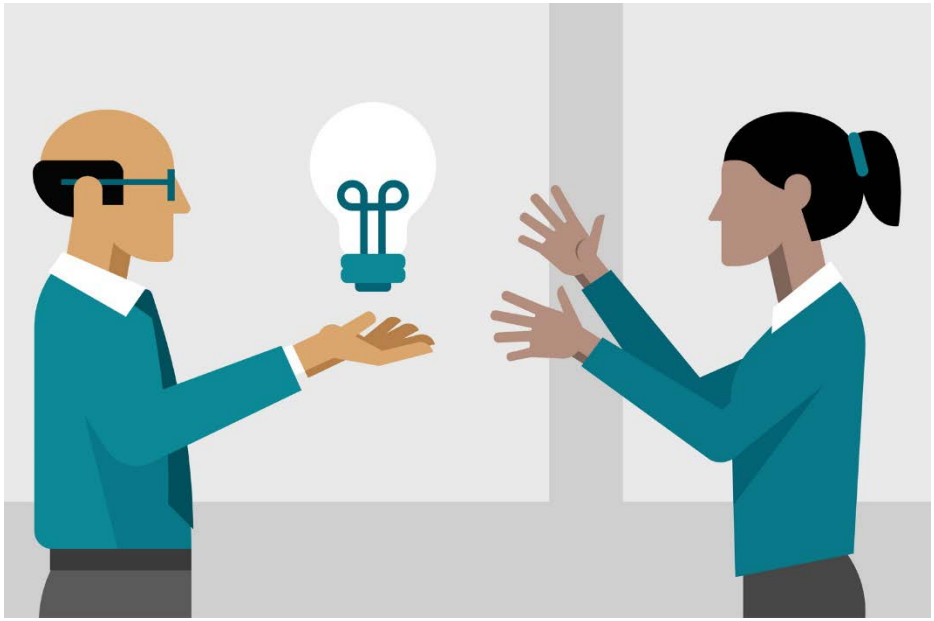

Pediatric nurse
Public health epidemio-logist
Researcher
Wife & Mother
Educator

Who am I?


Pediatric nurse
Public health epidemio-logist
Friend
Researcher
Wife & Mother
Educator

A Mentor

An experienced, highly-regarded, empathetic person who guides another junior individual in the development and re-examination of their own ideas, learning and personal and professional development.



Oxley et al. 2011

Why is mentorship needed?

Academic clinicians who get mentored:

- Get more peer-reviewed research grants
- Publish more papers
- Get faster academic promotion
- Are more likely to stay at their academic institution
- Report greater belief in their own ability to accomplish specific academic goals and tasks
- Report greater career satisfaction

Straus & Sackett 2011 (pt 1)

A mentor benefits from the reflected glory of the trainee who does well

Tobin

What can mentors do for you?

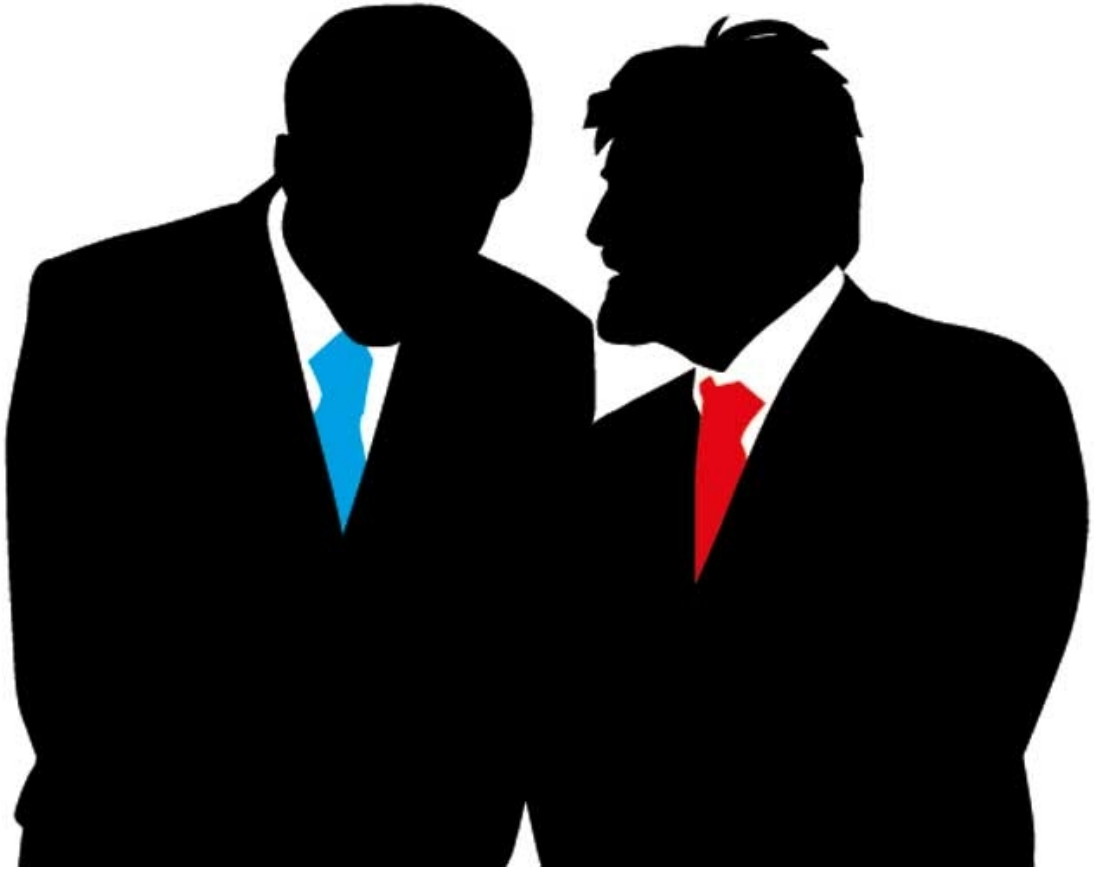
High Stakes
Opposing Opinions
Crucial Conversations
Strong Emotions

Teacher

Grant Writing
• How
• When

NE
E
SE
S
MS
M
NW
N

Confidante



Sponsor

Advisor

A trainee doesn't need someone to pave the road, but needs help in becoming a better navigator

Straus & Sackett 2012 pt.3

Agent

Role model

"We do not assimilate values by listing attributes we wish to develop and looking up their definitions, but instead, we identify with people who appear to have these attributes, and emulate their behavior"

Tobin 2004

Coach

what are other words for paragon of virtue?

angel, saint, gem, treasure, darling, dear, star, nonpareil

Thesaurus.plus

Your mentorship team might include:

1. A clinical mentor
2. An academic (process) mentor
3. A scientific (subject area) mentor
4. A work-life balance mentor

Straus & Sackett 2012. pt 3

Hi-Flier XL

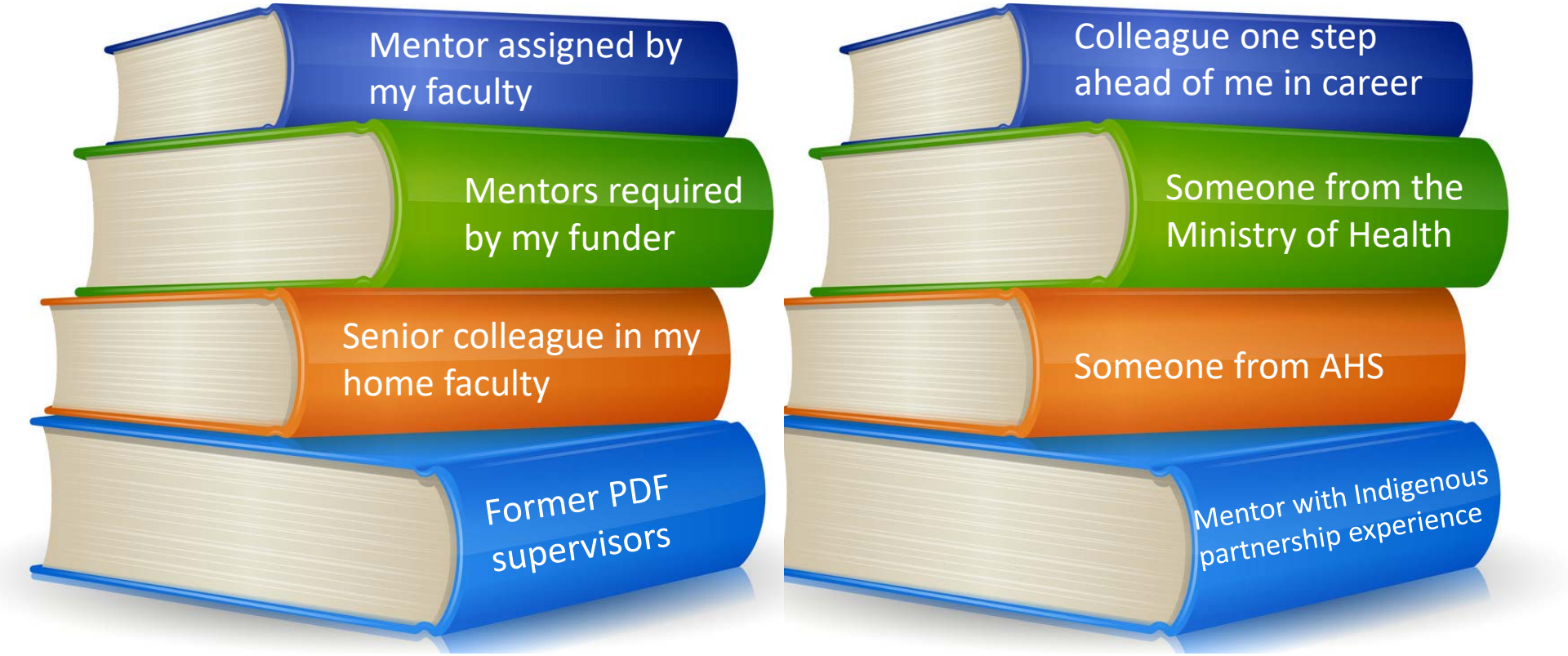
Ahead
Step
One

Having a mentor may be a requirement

- Your mentor (or mentorship team) may need to fit the criteria of a specific organization, such as a funding body

  e.g. Alberta Innovates, CCHCSP

My Mentorship Team



Looking for the right mentors

Identifying Mentors

Options:

- Assigned mentors
- Existing relationships …or those of colleagues
- Troll your organization's website
- Recommendations from people you know and trust
- Consider your supervisor
- Think of who you typically go to with questions

Straus & Sackett 2011. pt. 2

Essential Criteria for a Mentor

- Has your best interests at heart
- Does not have a personal agenda that conflicts with yours
- Someone on whom you are not dependent for success

Bruce et al. 2011; Sambunjak et al. 2011; MacDonald et al. 2013

Is a same gender mentor important to you?

"As long as gender-based inequalities exist in running households and raising children, mentors must be knowledgeable and effective in addressing and advising around the special problems that face women in academic careers"

Straus & Sackett 2012. pt 3

Connecting with Potential Mentors

1. Identify them
2. Study them
3. Contact them
4. Meet them
5. Reflect on the meeting
6. Follow up soon after meeting
7. Don’t force it
8. Commit to the process

J. Goins. How to Find (and Keep) a Mentor in 10 Not-So-Easy Steps

Don’t think of mentorship as something you *get.*

Think of it as something you *do.*

https://www.themuse.com/advice/9-tips-for-findingand-gettingthe-perfect-mentor

What Is Expected of the Mentee?

- Take the driver's seat
- Be proactive and willing to learn
- Have the courage to accept critique
- Be selective in accepting advice
- Have commitment to the success of the mentoring relationship and passion to succeed in career

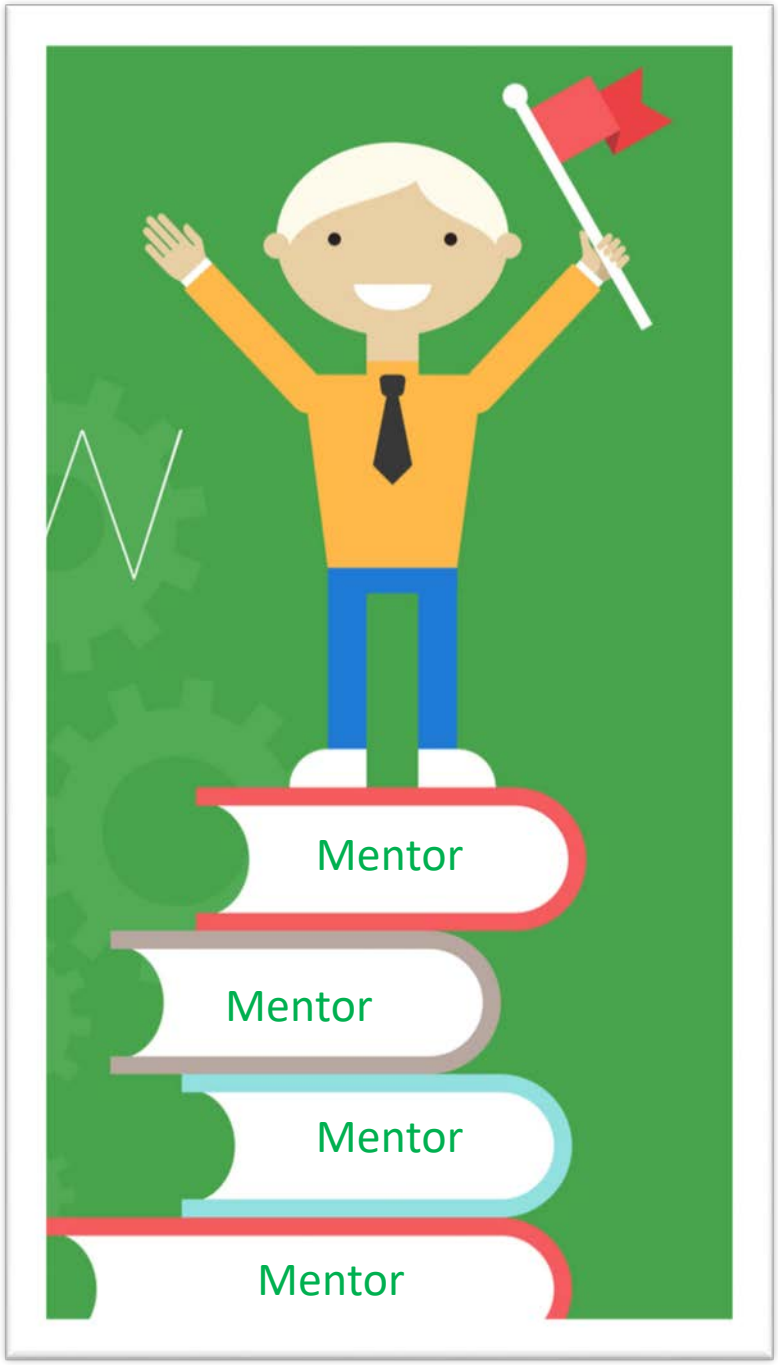
Sambunjak et al. 2009

Mentee-Mentor Pitfalls & How to Overcome Them

Vaughn V. et al. 2017; Sambunjak et al. 2011

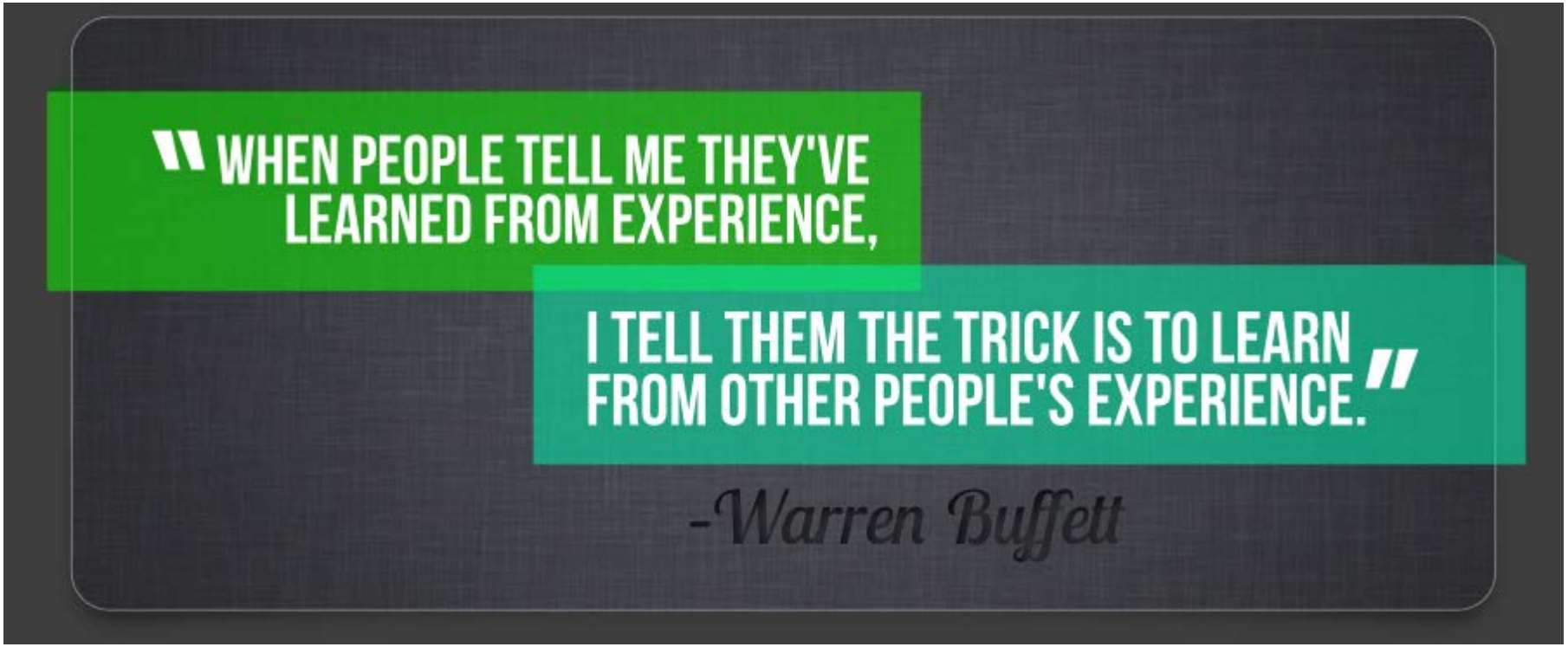
You don't call
You don't write
You don't text
Boooo!

WELCOME



A lot of people have gone further than they thought they could because someone else thought they could.

Unknown



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Or follow me on Twitter at:
@SE_MacDonald