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Mentoring: the Mentor's Perspective

Jeanne Lindholm

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MASSACHUSETTS
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
50 MEMORIAL DRIVE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

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Abstract

Mentoring is a general term used to describe behavior that is beneficial to the career of another individual. Mentoring has been described in terms of specific roles a mentor might play, but there is no definitional list of things an individual must do in order to be considered a mentor. Mentoring has also been described as a kind of "special" relationship, but again there is no clear understanding of the specific ways in which a mentoring relationship differs from other relationships. The purpose of this research is to look more closely at this elusive phenomenon, and by comparing mentoring relationships with other relationships, to gain a better understanding of this "special" relationship.

What Is Mentoring?

Mentoring is the current fad in the world of work. Articles describing the importance of having a mentor appear regularly in the popular press, but there is little conceptual clarity about what is meant by mentoring, and even less empirical research carefully anchored in a conceptual framework. Although words like sponsor, godfather, and guardian angel are used in conjunction with and interchangeably with it, the term mentor seems to be used most frequently to describe an individual with higher status in a relationship assumed to be beneficial to the career of an individual with lower status.[1]

Status can be measured by hierarchical level, knowledge and/or experience, age, or educational level, and the role of a mentor will vary with the way it is defined in the environment in which the relationship develops. For example, in a hierarchical organization, mentoring is associated with career advancement, facilitating an individual's progress up the promotional ladder.[2] Indeed, having a mentor has been correlated with higher salary and greater satisfaction with one's career (Roche, 1979). "Everyone who makes it has a mentor" (Collins & Scott, 1978, p. 89).

Prior Research

The literature and research on mentoring have focused on: 1) specific roles of mentors, or types of mentoring, 2) mentoring as a career stage, and 3) the mentoring relationship. The first approach as exemplified by Schein (1978) lists seven distinct mentoring roles: 1) teacher, coach or trainer, 2) positive role model, 3) developer of

talent, 4) opener of doors, 5) protector (mother hen), 6) sponsor, and 7) successful leader. The latter four roles require the mentor to be in a position of power; the first three do not.[3] However, this type of analysis fails to deal with the question of how many or which roles must be present before one would argue that "mentoring" is really going on.

Dalton, Thompson, & Price (1977) think of mentoring as a stage in the professional career. They describe behaviors generally associated with mentoring as the behaviors characteristic of an individual who has progressed past the Apprentice and Colleague Stages in his or her development. The mentor has "increased responsibility . . . for influencing, guiding, directing, and developing other people" (p. 29). This description of the Mentor Stage is more nearly a prescription. If one is not fulfilling the characteristics of a Stage III professional (i.e., mentor), then one has not successfully made the transition to Stage III. By treating mentoring as a stage, Dalton, Thompson, & Price lose the ability to deal with mentoring as a unique relationship between two individuals. Unless one is willing to say that an effective Stage III manager is a mentor to all of his or her subordinates by definition, then there must be a way of differentiating between these relationships. The whole implication of a mentoring relationship is that it is <u>special</u>, that it <u>differs</u> in some way from other relationships, but it is not clear in what ways.

In Levinson's (1978) extensive analysis, mentoring is "defined not in terms of formal roles but in terms of the character of the relationship and the functions it serves" (p. 98). "Mentoring is best understood

as a form of love relationship" (p. 100). Levinson also briefly addresses the functions of a mentor--1) teacher - enhance skills and intellectual development, 2) sponsor - facilitate entry and advancement, 3) host and guide - welcome and acquaint with values, 4) exemplar - serve as role model, and 5) counsel - give advice and moral support--but the connection between mentoring roles and a mentor relationship is not well defined. Is it possible to experience one without the other? Is it possible to play a mentoring role or roles and not have a mentoring relationship?

Clawson's (1980) analysis of mentoring relationships deals with both mentoring roles and mentoring relationships. He uses a two-dimensional framework, comprehensiveness of influence (roles) and mutual personal involvement (relationship), to classify status differentiated relationships, with mentor-protege relationships characterized by a high degree of comprehensiveness and mutuality. Clawson's research, however, investigates supervisor-subordinate relationships, not mentoring relationships. He compares the direct subordinate relationships of managers who had been identified as exceptional developers of young managers with the direct subordinate relationships of others who had been identified as ineffective developers of young managers, and finds that, although effective managers do not differ from ineffective managers in their expressed interest in developing young people, the relationships of the effective managers have higher levels of mutual trust, respect, and interest. Many of the behaviors associated with effective managers are identical to the behaviors associated with mentors. However, by using a single word to describe all of a manager's relationships with his or her

subordinates, Clawson, like Dalton, Thompson, & Price (1977), loses the ability to differentiate between these relationships. Because subordinates differ in personality as well as ability, their relationships with their manager are likely to differ as well.

In summary, the problem with the existing literature is that mentoring is used in such a broad based way that its meaning is lost. There is no definitional list of things an individual must do in order to be considered a mentor, and there is no clear understanding of the specific ways in which a mentoring relationship differs from a sponsoring relationship or from a good supervisor-subordinate relationship.

Purpose

My purpose in doing this research is 1) to define precisely the characteristics of mentoring relationships, 2) to discover how mentoring relationships are viewed by the mentors themselves, and 3) to discover how mentors' perceptions of mentoring relationships differ from their perceptions of other relationships.

Defining Characteristics of Mentoring Relationships

In order to study the phenomenon of mentoring, we need a working definition and a set of factors that serve to distinguish mentoring relationships from other relationships. In this paper, a mentoring relationship is defined as a relationship that 1) is status-differentiated, 2) exerts a positive influence on the "lower's" career, 3) is considered "special" by the "upper", and 4) involves high personal attraction for the lower on the part of the upper.[4]

There is general consensus in the literature that mentor-protege relationships are status-differentiated relationships, with the mentor

in the higher status position (Clawson, 1980; Schein, 1978; Shapiro, Haseltine, & Rowe, 1978). In hierarchical organizations, status tends to be measured by hierarchical levels.[5] The most frequently experienced relationship between individuals on different hierarchical levels is the direct supervisory relationship, though hierarchical relationships may also involve a manager and a subordinate's subordinate, or people in different departments. A mentor-protege relationship may develop out of any of these relationships.

Second, mentors are expected to influence the careers of their proteges, the one aspect of mentoring that is universally acknowledged. But, while influence on another's career is a necessary condition for a mentoring relationship, it is by no means sufficient. Every supervisor has considerable influence on the careers of his or her subordinates, but not every supervisor-subordinate relationship would be characterized as a mentor-protege relationship.

The third characteristic of mentoring is that the upper in the relationship must consider the relationship special in some way. Special means that this relationship stands out from other relationships. The requirement that a relationship be defined as special by the upper before the relationship can be considered a mentoring relationship allows for differentiated relationships between exceptional developers of subordinates and their subordinates. Even a manager who is considered an outstanding developer of his or her subordinates is unlikely to perceive or treat all subordinates exactly the same.

This characteristic of mentoring emphasizes the active[6] role on the part of the mentor in deciding how he or she will interact with any given

individual. One may choose to consider a relationship special, or merely typical. A would-be protege can no more decide unilaterally that an individual will be his or her mentor than he or she can decide unilaterally that another individual will be his or her best friend. There are certainly ways of fostering a mentoring relationship with an upper; however, the upper must still be a willing participant.[7]

From this notion of mutual choice follows a fourth characteristic of mentor-protege relationships: personal attraction. This personal attraction is similar to the attraction element involved in forming friendships. This is not to suggest that mentor-protege relationships are the same as friendships in all respects, merely that there are common factors that lead to the formation of both types of relationships. Thus a mentor-protege relationship is a relationship based on something more than the required interaction around the work being done.

This line of reasoning draws attention to a set of variables not typically analyzed in relation to mentoring but highly relevant, the sources of attraction in love and friendship relationships. Proximity, similarity, competence, and rewards all affect the perceived attractiveness of an individual. A review of the literature on the relationship between each of these attributes and attraction will show their relevance to mentoring.

Proximity. Proximity, physical and/or functional, offers opportunities for regular interaction, which enhances the probability that attraction will develop in a relationship. If the frequency of interaction between two or more persons increases, the degree of their liking for one another will increase (Homans, 1950). Festinger, Schachter,

& Back (1950) discovered that friendship formation in the married student housing at MIT was largely dependent on the physical arrangement of the houses. Similarly, Newcomb (1956), in the second year of his housing experiment, found that the mean level of attraction between roommates was higher than for all non-roommate pairs, regardless of whether the roommates were assigned to insure minimal or maximal attraction between roommates. Interaction with respect to work-related matters follows the same pattern. Allen (1977) found that the probability of weekly communication about technical and scientific matters decreases sharply with distance, and reaches a low asymptotic level within the first twenty-five or thirty meters.

Physical proximity, however, is only one source of opportunity for interaction. Organizational proximity provides both immediate supervisors and division heads with regular opportunities for interaction with their subordinates, and hence the opportunities for attraction to develop. Roche (1979) found that most mentoring relationships develop from supervisor-subordinate relationships or direct line relationships one level removed.

Similarity. The more similar one person perceives another to be to himself, the more likely it will be that the first individual will perceive the other as attractive (Byrne, 1961; Newcomb, 1961). The relationship between similarity and attraction works two ways: people are attracted to those whose attitudes are similar to their own, and people perceive themselves as more similar to those to whom they are attracted (Berscheid & Walster, 1969; Byrne & Blaylock, 1963; Levinger & Breedlove, 1966). Newcomb (1961) found that the correlation between

attraction and attitude agreement increased with the length of the acquaintance. Similarity of attitudes provides social validity for the correctness of our beliefs, according to Festinger (1954), and should be rewarding. In addition, people tend to like those who like them, and "individuals tend to assume that similar others are likely to like them" (Berscheid & Walster, 1969, p. 73).[8]

Competence. More competent individuals are perceived to be more attractive than less competent individuals. Students rated candidates for a College Bowl program from tape recordings which portrayed the candidates as either highly competent (92% correct) or mediocre (30% correct). The highly competent were rated as more attractive (Aronson, Willerman, & Floyd, 1966).

Common sense would suggest that a manager is unlikely to invest time and energy in an individual whom he or she perceives to be incompetent. The Harvard Business Review article, "Everyone who makes it has a mentor" (Collins & Scott, 1978) implies that the mentor makes a difference in the career of the lower individual. An alternative interpretation may be that mentors are attracted to more competent individuals and that these competent individuals are more likely to be successful anyway.

Rewards. We tend to perceive as attractive individuals with whom we have a rewarding relationship. One type of reward may be perceived similarity, described above. When another person perceives things the way we do, our opinions are validated. This rewarding interaction is one aspect of a positive relationship (Byrne, 1961).

Rewards may also include personal help. Goranson & Berkowitz (1966) conducted an experiment in which a confederate either 1) voluntarily

assists, 2) is instructed to assist, or 3) refuses to assist the subject in a dull preliminary task. In the second part of the experiment either 1) this individual or 2) another confederate serves as "supervisor" of the subject "worker". The subject works harder for, and likes better, the supervisor who voluntarily assisted the subject in the first part of the experiment.

We usually think of rewards in terms of the potential rewards a manager has to offer a subordinate: raises, promotions, opportunity for career development. However, a manager can also be rewarded by a subordinate who makes him or her "look good" by doing excellent work, or who speaks positively about the manager to the manager's superiors, or who provides a sounding board for new ideas, etc.

In summary, by defining attraction as a characteristic of the mentoring relationship we can analyze a wider range of variables such as the four described above.

Focus of This Research

A status-differentiated relationship that is considered special by the upper, that is high in both career influence and personal attraction, is defined as a Mentor relationship (See Table 1). The dual focus on career influence and personal attraction differentiates this definition of mentoring from others in the literature.

Insert Table 1 about here

A special status-differentiated relationship that is high in career influence but low in personal attraction is a Sponsor relationship. A

manager may have a very capable subordinate, whom he or she may recommend for promotion because of his or her ability. However, if personal attraction is not a salient characteristic of this relationship, this relationship is primarily work-oriented, and will not be a Mentor relationship according to the above definition.

A special status-differentiated relationship that is high in personal attraction but low in career influence is a Friendship. A manager may enjoy an excellent personal relationship with a very capable subordinate. However, if this subordinate is planning to retire in the next few years, or is not seen as promotion material, the manager is unlikely to get involved in this individual's career, and hence, is unlikely to be this individual's mentor.

Finally, a special status-differentiated relationship that is low in personal attraction and career influence is defined as a Neutral relationship. This kind of relationship is what one might expect of a typical supervisor-subordinate relationship. If it is considered special, it is so for idiosyncratic reasons.

The purpose of this study is first, to isolate that set of relationships which a group of managers consider special, and, second, to pinpoint within that set the subset described as mentoring relationships by the above criteria. Once mentoring relationships have been identified in this manner, they will be compared to the other special relationships to determine 1) if there are differences in the way uppers perceive individuals in the mentoring relationships, and 2) if there are differences in the behaviors that uppers say they exhibit toward individuals in the mentoring relationships.

Method

Questionnaires were distributed to upper level managers from a variety of large, hierarchical organizations. The sample consisted of managers who were participants in the Senior Executive Program[9] at the Sloan School of Management at MIT in 1979 and 1980. Seventy percent (90 managers) of the total sample of 128 returned usable questionnaires.

The respondents (88 men and 2 women, mean age 46.6) were to identify two specific individuals on a hierarchical level below theirs, and to answer demographic, attitudinal, and behavior-specific questions about these individuals and their relationships with them. One individual was to be a special relationship, the other a typical subordinate.

This strategy involved a number of deliberate choices on my part. First, I chose to use questionnaire data in order to attempt to quantify some of the concepts around mentoring that have previously been explored primarily in a qualitative way. I included open-ended questions throughout the questionnaire in order to accommodate those respondents whose experiences did not fit the categories defined by the questionnaire.

Second, although some research has included both parties to the relationship (Clawson, 1980; Kram, 1980), most researchers have sought the opinions of proteges (lowers) about their (former) mentors (Davis & Garrison, 1979; Levinson, 1978; Roche, 1979). Because I was interested in the active role played by the mentor, I asked upper level managers about their downward relationships.

Third, although mentoring implies higher status on the part of the mentor, such status may not always be based on hierarchical position. I chose to focus on hierarchical organizations, and hierarchical

relationships, recognizing that mentoring may be different in a flat organization, or in an occupation with no hierarchy.

Finally, I collected data from managers from a variety of companies, industries, geographical areas, and functional areas in order to learn more about the general characteristics of mentoring.

The questionnaire tapped into the four characteristics of mentoring in two different ways: 1) differentiated status and special relationship were defined by the instructions for choosing the individuals to be described in the questionnaire; 2) career influence and personal attraction, on the other hand, were measured through the responses to questions in the questionnaire.

Differentiated Status and Special Relationship. The instructions for choosing the individuals to be described required the respondent to identify both a Special Relationship and a Typical Subordinate. In order to guarantee differentiated status, both were to be individuals who either currently or at some previous time were at a hierarchical level below the respondent, as described below:

Please answer the following questions for both Person A (Special Relationship) and Person B (Typical Subordinate).

Person A - Special Relationship. Consider all the individuals whose careers you have influenced in a positive way over the past several years, and who were on a lower hierarchical level when your relationship began. Include those in whose careers you are no longer active, as well as those who may now be on a hierarchical level equal to or higher than yours. Pick one of these individuals, the one whose career you have influenced most. This is Person A. Please answer the following questions about Person A with this individual and relationship in mind. If you are not currently active in this individual's career, describe the relationship you had with this individual at that point in time when you were actively involved in his or her career.

Person B - Typical Subordinate. Consider all the individuals who currently report directly to you. Select one of these individuals, the

one with whom you have a working relationship that is most typical of the relationships you have with your subordinates. Please answer the following questions about Person B with this specific subordinate and relationship in mind.

Career influence and personal attraction. Career influence and personal attraction, the remaining two defining characteristics of mentoring relationships, were measured through the responses to the following questions:

Q-14	Comparing the influence you have had on this person's career to the influence you have had on the career of your average subordinate, to what extent have you influenced this person's career? (Circle number)	Relatively much less influence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Relatively much more influence
Q-18	How much do you like this individual, relative to how much you like your average subordinate? (Circle number)	Relatively much less	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Relatively much more

While "special relationship" was clearly defined in terms of career influence in the instructions to the respondent, it is not clear whether "special" carries with it any additional meaning supplied by the respondents themselves. Before we can investigate the differences among the types of Special Relationships we must first compare Special Relationships with Typical Subordinates in order to better understand how respondents viewed the whole class of Special Relationships.

Comparison of Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates

Since "Special Relationship" was defined in terms of career influence in the instructions to the respondent, one would expect the respondents to indicate more influence on the careers of Special Relationships than on

the careers of Typical Subordinates. In fact, this was the case, as is evident in Figure 1.

Insert Figure 1 about here

The responses for Typical Subordinates approach a normal curve distribution, indicating the respondents followed their instructions for choosing the Typical Subordinates. The distribution of responses for Special Relationships is skewed to the right, indicating the respondents followed their instructions to pick the individuals whose careers they had influenced most.

The instructions for choosing the Special Relationship described the Special Relationship in terms of career influence; they specified nothing about attraction. Yet Figure 2 clearly indicates that individuals who were identified as special were more often seen as personally attractive as well.

Insert Figure 2 about here

The managers clearly like their Special Relationships more than their Typical Subordinates, a finding that supports the inclusion of Personal Attraction as well as Career Influence in the definition of mentoring. Therefore, we shall use the four determinants of attraction described earlier to continue the comparison of Special Relationships with Typical Subordinates.

Organizational proximity. The instructions for choosing the

Typical Subordinate required that the Typical Subordinate be a direct subordinate of the respondent. Thus, all of the Typical Subordinates were direct subordinates of the respondents.

Although the criteria for selecting the Special Relationship did not require that the Special Relationship be a direct subordinate of the respondent, an analysis of current and former reporting relationships reveals that 86% of the Special Relationships either are now or formerly have been direct subordinates,[10] and an additional 11% are current or former direct line subordinates.[11] Only two percent of the Special Relationships are not now and never have been either a direct subordinate or a direct line subordinate. This finding highlights the importance of organizational proximity in forming these relationships, but does not differentiate between Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates. Thus, organizational proximity alone is not a sufficient condition for the formation of Special Relationships.

Physical proximity. Physical proximity,[12] like organizational proximity, provides opportunities for regular interaction. One might predict, therefore, that Special Relationships would be more likely to be located physically closer to the respondents than Typical Subordinates. This is not the case, however. Special Relationships are no more likely than Typical Subordinates to have an office close to the respondent, χ^2 (5) = 0.828, p = .97.[13]

Similarity. Table 2 shows that, in general, Special Relationships are perceived to be more similar to the respondents than are Typical Subordinates.

Insert Table 2 about here

The dimensions of similarity on which respondents saw both Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates as most similar to themselves are also the ones with statistically significant differences between the ratings of Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates. Ambition, intelligence, education, and approach to solving problems all have mean ratings of similarity greater than 5.0 for Special Relationships, and all four dimensions show statistically significant differences between Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates.

It should also be noted from looking at the range of similarity ratings for Special Relationships that the respondents clearly discriminate between the work relevant dimensions (on which they saw more similarity) and the non-work dimensions (on which they saw less similarity).

Competence. Because competence implies the ability to be promoted, and mentoring is associated with helping someone up the promotional ladder, one would expect the Special Relationships to be perceived as more competent than the Typical Subordinates. In fact, this is the case.

Insert Table 3 about here

Clearly, the Special Relationships are perceived by the respondents as more competent than the Typical Subordinates. Because there are no unbiased measures of competence for these individuals, it is possible only to note the differences in perceived, not necessarily actual, competence.

Rewards. The final determinant of attraction is the degree to which an individual finds the relationship rewarding. The following table presents a list of activities that might be presumed to be rewarding to the respondents, and the mean frequencies of interaction with both Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates.

Insert Table 4 about here

Table 4 reveals that, in all but one activity (discussing long range career plans), the respondents interact most frequently with Special Relationships who are also direct subordinates of the respondents (Table 4, column 1). When the frequencies of interaction with these direct subordinate Special Relationships are compared with the frequencies of interaction with the Typical Subordinates of these respondents, the differences in frequency of interaction are statistically significant for every activity.

The relative importance of the Special Relationship vs. organizational proximity becomes clear when Special Relationships who are not direct subordinates of the respondents are compared with the Typical Subordinates of these respondents (Table 4, column 2). In four of these activities (the more frequent, work-related ones), the frequencies of interaction with the Typical Subordinates (who are by definition direct subordinates) are higher than the frequencies of interaction with the Special Relationships who are not direct subordinates. These differences in frequency of interaction are statistically significant for all four activities.

However, in the other four activities (the less frequent discussions of personal lives and career plans), the frequencies of interaction with Special Relationships who are not direct subordinates are higher than the frequencies of interaction with the Typical Subordinates, and three of these differences in frequency of interaction are statistically significant.

Organizational proximity, therefore, affects frequency of interaction in those activities that occur more frequently and that are more directly related to work. Interaction around the respondents' personal lives and their own career plans, which occurs less frequently anyway, is less affected by organizational proximity.

To conclude this section, it is clear that there are significant differences between Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates. The Special Relationships, who are by definition the individuals whose careers the respondents influenced most, are also liked better than the Typical Subordinates. Relative to the Typical Subordinates they are perceived as both more similar to the respondent, and more competent. These relationships also seem to be more rewarding for the respondents in that the respondents are more likely to discuss their personal lives and career plans with their Special Relationships. However, there appear to be no significant differences between Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates in either physical or organizational proximity.

Types of Special Relationships: What is Special about "Mentoring"?

Having identified these general characteristics of Special Relationships by comparing them with Typical Subordinates, we turn to

a more detailed analysis of differentiations among them. It is here that we hope to garner evidence for what is unique about Mentor relationships, in comparison to Sponsor relationships, Friendships, and Neutral relationships.

In the following section, I shall 1) use the dimensions of Career Influence and Personal Attraction to classify these Special Relationships into the four types defined at the beginning, 2) determine if there are differences in the way uppers perceive individuals in the mentoring cell compared to the other types of relationships, and finally, 3) determine if there are differences in the behaviors uppers say they exhibit toward individuals in the mentoring cell compared to the other types of relationships.

Classification of Special Relationships

I chose to group the responses to the question measuring Career Influence (p. 14) into High (6 or 7) and Low (5 and below) in order to make the High Career Influence category represent only those relationships in which career influence was considered substantially greater than the influence on the career of the average subordinate. This grouping resulted in exactly 50% of the Special Relationships falling into each category (Table 5).

I grouped the responses to the question measuring Personal Attraction (p. 14) according to the criteria used for Career Influence, High (6 or 7) and Low (5 and below). By this criterion, 60% of the Special Relationships fall into the High Personal Attraction category and 40% into the Low Personal Attraction category (Table 5).

Table 5 shows that 34% of the cases fall into the category

defined as Mentor relationships; 16% are Sponsor relationships; 26% are defined as Friendships; and 24% are defined as Neutral relationships.

Insert Table 5 about here

The association between Personal Attraction and Career Influence among Special Relationships (ϕ = .18) is clear from this table. If Career Influence is high, 69% of the relationships are also considered high in Personal Attraction (31 out of 45); if Career Influence is low, only 51% of the relationships are also considered high in Personal Attraction (23 out of 45). The respondents are more likely to like the individuals whose careers they influence. Similarly, if Personal Attraction is high, 57% of the relationships are also considered high in Career Influence (31 out of 54); if Personal Attraction is low, only 39% of the relationships are also considered high in Career Influence (14 out of 36). The respondents are more likely to influence the careers of individuals they like.

Thus, using the dimensions of Career Influence and Personal Attraction, we have classified the Special Relationships into the four types defined at the beginning. In the following section, the determinants of attraction shwon to be relevant in differentiating Special Relationships from Typical Subordinates (Similarity, Competence, and Rewards) will be used to compare types of Special Relationships in order to determine if these same dimensions are relevant in differentiating Mentor relationships from other types of Special Relationships.

Perceptions

Similarity. We have already seen that Special Relationships, who are liked better than the Typical Subordinates, are perceived as more similar to the respondents as well (Table 2). We can carry this line of reasoning further, to predict that Special Relationships high in Personal Attraction (Mentor and Friend) will be perceived as more similar to the respondents than Special Relationships low in Personal Attraction (Sponsor and Neutral). In fact, this is the case.

Insert Table 6 about here

As expected, individuals in Mentor relationships are perceived as more similar to the respondents than individuals in either Sponsor or Neutral relationships. Individuals in Mentor relationships are perceived as more similar to the respondent than individuals in Neutral relationships in every dimension of similarity, and all but two of these differences are statistically significant.

Individuals in Mentor relationships are perceived as more similar to the respondent than individuals in Sponsor relationships in all but one dimension of similarity, and four of these differences are statistically significant. Indeed, individuals in Sponsor relationships have the lowest rating for Total Similarity of all Special Relationships.

If Personal Attraction alone explained the differences in perceived similarity among types of Special Relationships, then individuals in Mentor and Friend relationships (both high in Personal Attraction) should be perceived exactly alike. This is not the case, however. The mean

similarity for individuals in Mentor relationships is higher than the mean similarity for individuals in Friend relationships in all but two dimensions of similarity, and three of the differences are statistically significant, indicating that Personal Attraction is not the only explaining factor.

When Special Relationships were compared with Typical Subordinates, the differences in perceived similarity were statistically significant in Total Similarity and in those dimensions in which the respondents saw both individuals as more similar to themselves, primarily work-related dimensions (See Table 2). However, when individuals in Mentor relationships are compared with individuals in other types of Special Relationships, individuals in Mentor relationships are perceived to be uniquely more similar to the respondents only in Personality and Total Similarity.

Competence. It will be recalled that there was a significant difference between Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates in how competent they were perceived to be. When Mentor relationships were compared to other Special Relationships, however, there were no statistically significant differences in perceived competence. Thus, perceived competence is important in differentiating between Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates, but not among types of Special Relationships.

Rewards. An analysis of the frequency of rewarding behavior by type of Special Relationship offers further insight into the differences between Mentor and other types of Special Relationships.

Insert Table 7 about here

An analysis of these responses reveals the following: 1) Respondents with Mentor relationships interact more frequently with their Special Relationships than respondents with either Sponsor or Neutral relationships. These differences are statistically significant for both Sponsor and Neutral relationships in interactions involving the careers of the respondents or their personal problems. (These same activities were significant in comparing Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates.) 2) However, the differences between Mentor relationships and Friend relationships are not statistically significant.

The actual frequency of interaction being described is low (1 = Never, 2 = Less than once a year, 3 = Once or twice a year, etc.). Because these activities occur infrequently, if at all, I dichotomized the activities according to whether or not the respondent ever did them, in order to understand these differences more fully.

Insert Table 8 about here

The proportion of respondents with Mentor relationships who say they never discuss their career plans, or personal or work-related problems with these individuals is much lower than the proportion of respondents with either Sponsor or Neutral relationships, a finding that supports the differences in mean frequency of interaction shown in Table 7. In this table, however, we can see more clearly the differences between Mentor and Friend relationships. The percentage of respondents with Friend relationships who say they never interact in these ways with these individuals represents a middle position between respondents with Mentor

relationships on the one hand and respondents with Sponsor or Neutral relationships on the other. Thus, a Mentor relationship is more rewarding than a Friend relationship, which is, in turn, more rewarding than Sponsor or Neutral relationships.

The interactions described above may be considered personally rewarding. When a career focus is placed on the rewards to the respondent, the unique nature of the Mentor relationship becomes even more clear. An open-ended question[14] was used to identify potential rewards not covered by the preceding questions.

Insert Table 9 about here

Mentors were significantly more likely to mention at least one way in which their own careers were positively affected by their Special Relationship, χ^2 (3) = 8.5, p = .04. In contrast, respondents in Friend relationships were least likely to mention any ways in which these individuals were helpful or useful to their careers. This supports the position that Friend relationships are not career focused, which is the critical distinction between Mentor and Friend relationships.

In summary, respondents discuss their personal and work-related problems as well as their career plans more frequently with Mentor relationships than with any other type of Special Relationship. These discussions occur infrequently in Mentor relationships and may <u>never</u> happen in other kinds of relationships. Furthermore, Mentor relationships are far more likely than other Special Relationships to be described by the respondents as having a positive effect on the respondents' careers.

Now that we have seen the similarities and differences in the ways

the respondents perceive the different types of Special Relationships, we shall compare their stated behaviors toward these individuals.

Work-related Behavior

The typologies of mentoring behavior (Davis & Garrison, 1979; Schein, 1978) provided an initial framework for considering the kind of work-related behavior that is frequently associated with mentoring. The following table presents a list of activities that might be perceived as mentoring behavior, and the frequency with which the respondents pursue these activities with both Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates.

Insert Table 10 about here

When the comparison includes the entire population of Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates, we see that the respondents engage in these work-related activities significantly more frequently with Typical Subordinates than with Special Relationships (only 35% of whom are current direct subordinates). This highlights the importance of organizational proximity in determining the frequency of interaction.

The two exceptions, that the respondents share details of the personal lives and personal problems of their Special Relationships more frequently than they do with their Typical Subordinates, are thus particularly notable, if not surprising. (The respondents also discuss their own personal lives and problems more frequently with their Special Relationships than with their Typical Subordinates (See Table 4)).

When the comparison is limited to relationships in which the Special Relationship and the Typical Subordinate are both direct subordinates, five activities show statistically significant differences in frequency of interaction. As with the previous comparison, the respondents share

details of the personal lives and problems of their Special Relationships more frequently than of their Typical Subordinates. In addition, the respondents interact more frequently with Special Relationships than with Typical Subordinates 1) in acting as a sounding board for the individual's new ideas, 2) in arranging for him/her to meet or work with people in the company who could be helpful to his/her career, and 3) in discussing this individual's next position. It is somewhat surprising, however, that there are only five activities with significant differences in frequency of interaction with Special Relationships and with Typical Subordinates, because there have been significant differences between these two groups in perceived similarity to the respondent, competence, and rewards to the respondent.

Similarly, there are few differences among types of Special Relationships in the perceived frequency of these activities. The following table presents the mean frequency of interaction by type of Special Relationship for those work-related interactions showing statistically significant differences between Mentor relationships and the other types of Special Relationships.

Insert Table 11 about here

Several differences between Mentor relationships and other types of Special Relationships stand out in this table:

1) Friend relationships receive less feedback, both positive and negative, from the respondents than the other Special Relationships, and significantly less feedback than the Mentor relationships. When

the respondents' liking for their Special Relationships is greater than their perceived influence on their careers, the result is less frequent feedback. This finding supports the folk wisdom proscribing friendship between supervisors and subordinates.

In addition, the respondents are less likely to arrange for Friend relationships to meet people outside the company who could be helpful to their careers. All three differences are consistent with the low career influence in these relationships.

2) Respondents with Neutral relationships talk less often to others in the company about the strengths of these individuals, and serve as confidant to them about personal problems less often than do respondents with Mentor relationships.

In contrast, there are no significant differences between Mentor relationships and Sponsor relationships in the reported frequency of work-related interaction. As shown earlier, individuals in Sponsor relationships are perceived as less similar to the respondent (Table 6), and as offering fewer rewards to the respondent (Tables 7, 8, and 9) than individuals in Mentor relationships. However, here we see that the respondents report interacting in work-related activities with similar frequency in both Mentor and Sponsor relationships.

Most striking, perhaps, is the similarity between Mentor relationships and other types of Special Relationships in described frequency of work-related interaction. These five activities are the only work-related activities with significant differences between Mentor relationships and any of the other Special Relationships. Let us now continue our analysis of these relationships by comparing their frequency of interaction in

more socially-oriented activities.

Social Behavior

Because the respondents discuss personal lives and problems more frequently with their Special Relationships than with their Typical Subordinates, one might expect the respondents to interact more frequently with Special Relationships on a social basis as well. In fact, this is the case.

The following table presents a list of activities that are not directly related to work, and the mean frequency of interaction between the respondents and their Special Relationships, by type, as well as the mean frequency of interaction between the respondents and their Typical Subordinates.

Insert Table 12 about here

The areas of significant difference between Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates lie primarily in those activities that include dinner and spouses. This is consistent with the earlier finding that the respondents share details of their personal lives more frequently with Special Relationships than with Typical Subordinates (Table 4). In contrast, the comparison of Mentor relationships with other types of Special Relationships reveals significant differences in frequency of interaction only between Mentor and Neutral relationships, and for only two of the social activities: participating in athletic or recreational activities and going out for dinner with spouses or dates.

The actual frequency of interaction being described is, however,

very low (1 = Never, 2 = Once or twice a year, 3 = Once every 3-6 months, etc.). Because these activities occur infrequently, if at all, I dichotomized the activities according to whether or not the respondent ever did them, in order to understand these differences more fully.

Insert Table 13 about here

In general, the same activities remain statistically significant, though the percentages make the differences a little clearer. It is particularly interesting to compare the percent of respondents with Mentor relationships who say they never interact with these individuals in this way with the responses for Typical Subordinates in general.

For all of the above comparisons, the frequencies compared are frequencies as perceived by the respondents, which may or may not represent actual frequencies. However, although actual frequencies may be difficult to recall, the respondents should be accurate in recalling whether or not they ever interacted with these individuals in these ways (Table 13).

Discussion and Conclusions

There are significant differences between Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates in how they are perceived by the respondents. The Special Relationships, who are by definition the individuals whose careers the respondents influenced most, are also liked better than the Typical Subordinates. Relative to the Typical Subordinates they are perceived as both more similar to the respondent, and more competent. These Special

Relationships also seem to be more rewarding for the respondents in that they are more likely to discuss their own personal lives and career plans with their Special Relationships.

The differences between Mentor relationships and other types of Special Relationships are more subtle. There are no significant differences among types of Special Relationships in perceived competence, for example. On the other hand, Mentor relationships do stand out from the other Special Relationships in offering both personal and career-focused rewards to the respondents. Friend relationships are perceived as similar to Mentor relationships in offering personal rewards to the respondents, but are not career-focused. Sponsor relationships are behaviorally similar to Mentor relationships along work-related dimensions, but do not offer the personal rewards of a Mentor relationship to the upper individual. Furthermore, Mentor relationships are perceived as uniquely different from other types of Special Relationships in that the respondents perceive individuals in Mentor relationships to be more similar to themselves in personality and overall similarity.

The important behavioral differences for both comparisons are not in frequency of interaction, but in the quality of that interaction. Mentor relationships involve more mutual sharing of personal lives and problems than do other types of Special Relationships, which in turn involve more mutual sharing of personal lives and problems than do Typical Subordinate relationships.

These behavioral differences are not the ones usually attributed to mentoring relationships, however. Mentoring, as it generally has been described, may be a myth. For the purposes of career advancement,

there may be no difference between having a mentor and having a good supervisor.

From the point of view of the higher status individual in these relationships, however, the personal and career-focused rewards of a Mentor relationship make it significantly different from other kinds of Special Relationships. Thus, while the myth of mentoring presumes the primary beneficiary of a mentoring relationship to be the protege, the results of this study highlight the possibility that the mentor may benefit as much or more.

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Footnotes

[1] Very little has been written about the possibility of negative effects from a mentoring relationship (Levinson, 1978; Schein, 1978).

[2] Not all movement in an organization is upward, however. Schein describes horizontal career growth, "moving toward the core of the organization along an inclusion, or membership dimension" (Schein, 1978, p. 38). In very flat organizations, e.g., police, or in occupations that have no organizational hierarchy, e.g., physicians, a mentor is expected to facilitate an individual's movement toward the core of the organization or occupation.

[3] Davis & Garrison (1979) expand this typology to 18 different roles: mentor, guardian, cheerleader, pioneer, role model, inspiration, confidant, master, teacher, counsellor, coach, griot, guru, seminal source, successful leader, developer of talent, opener-of-doors, and patron.

[4] A mentoring relationship usually involves high personal attraction on both parts; however, personal attraction on the part of the upper is the necessary condition.

[5] In a flat organization the mentor and protege may share the same hierarchical level, but the mentor has higher status because of greater knowledge, experience, ability, etc.

[6] Role modeling is frequently included in typologies of mentoring behaviors. The emphasis on the active role of mentoring precludes someone who is only a role model for another from being considered a mentor to that individual. A role model has no control over whether he or she is perceived as a role model by another. Indeed, it is possible to be a role model for another, and be completely unaware that the person exists. A woman who has been successful in climbing the corporate ladder may be perceived as a role model by many women in her company, some of whom know her only by reputation.

[7] The lower in a relationship has the same option not to participate in a mentor-protege relationship with an upper. A would-be mentor may offer advice; the unwilling protege does not have to follow it. However, the lower has no control over some mentoring behaviors, e.g., career recommendations concerning the lower made by the upper to others in the organization.

[8] This correlation between similarity and attraction has serious implications for minorities and women, given the relative scarcity of women and minorities at higher management levels.

[9] This group was chosen because all had participated in an exercise that permitted them to get to know me. It was assumed that this personal knowledge would increase the response rate.

[10] A higher percentage of the Special Relationships are former direct subordinates (73%) rather than current direct subordinates (35%). Possible explanations could be that 1) the individuals the respondents influenced most have moved on to new positions, or 2) the relationship is not perceived as special until there is some distance between the two, or both.

[11] A direct line subordinate is an individual on a lower hierarchical level for whom the respondent has direct line responsibility, but who is not a direct subordinate, i.e., a subordinate's subordinate.

[12] Physical proximity was measured through the responses to the following question:

Q-6 Where is this individual's office in relation to yours? (Circle number)

1 Adjacent to mine
2 On same floor as mine
3 In same building as mine, on different floor
4 In same city as mine, in different building
5 In different cities

[13] Managers' offices are more likely to be located near the offices of their direct subordinates than they are to be located near the offices of individuals for whom they have no reporting responsibility. Therefore, in order to keep the groups comparable, I compared only the Special Relationships who were current direct subordinates with the Typical Subordinates (who are by definition direct subordinates).

[14] Q-15 In what ways, if any, has this individual had a positive effect on your career, or been helpful or useful to you?

Table 1

Taxonomy of Status-differentiated Relationships

Considered Special by Upper Individual

	Low Career Influence	High Career Influence
High Personal Attraction	Friend	Mentor
Low Personal Attraction	Neutral	Sponsor

Table 2

Mean Perceived Similarity of Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates[a]

Q-20 How similar to yourself is this individual with respect to the following characteristics? (Circle number)

	Special Relationships[b]	Typical Subordinates[c]	
h. Ambition	5.5	4.7	***
b. Intelligence	5.4	4.8	***
i. Education	5.2	4.8	**
d. Approach to solving problems	5.1	4.4	***
c. Personality	4.1	3.8	
g. Family life style	4.0	3.9	
f. Activities pursued outside work	3.8	3.3	***
e. Background, personal history	3.6	3.6	
a. Physical appearance	2.8	2.8	
Q-20 Total Similarity[d]	4.4	4.0	***

Note. Ns are reduced, where necessary, by the number of people not answering a given question.

[a] The mean similarity ratings for Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates were compared using t-tests for dependent samples.

1 = Very dissimilar
7 = Very similar

[b] Special Relationships N = 90

[c] Typical Subordinates N = 90

[d] The responses to the nine individual characteristics were averaged to arrive at a measure of total similarity.

** $p < .05$
*** $p < .01$

Table 3

Mean Perceived Competence of Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates[a]

Q-9 What are the probabilities of the following events in this individual's career in the next ten years? (Circle number)

	Special Relationships[b]	Typical Subordinates[c]	
b. Being promoted at least one level	6.3	4.8	***
c. Being promoted at least two levels	4.7	3.3	***
d. Being promoted at least three levels	3.0	2.1	***
e. Being promoted more than three levels	2.2	1.6	***
Q-9 Total Competence[d]	4.0	2.9	***

Note. Ns are reduced, where necessary, by the number of people not answering a given question.

[a] The mean competence ratings for Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates were compared using t-tests for dependent samples.

1 = Not at all likely
7 = Nearly certain

[b] Special Relationships N = 90

[c] Typical Subordinates N = 90

[d] The responses to the four individual questions were averaged to arrive at a measure of total competence.

*** $p < .01$

Table 4

Mean Frequency of Rewarding Interaction with

Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates[a]

Q-7 The following is a list of activities that may occur between individuals at different hierarchical levels. We are interested in how frequently, if ever, each activity occurs in your working relationship with this person. Therefore, how often do you . . . (Circle number)

	Special Relationship		Typical
Confide in this individual?	Direct Sub (n=32)	Not Direct Sub[b] (n=58)	Subordinates (n=90)
s. Entrust him/her with confidential work-related information?	4.3 **	- 4.0 *	4.3
u. Use him/her as a sounding board for your new ideas?	4.3 **	- 3.8 *	4.0
t. Discuss your own work-related problems with him/her?	3.6 *	- 3.3 **	3.5
y. Share details of your own personal life with him/her?	3.0 ***	2.6	2.4 *
v. Ask him/her to preview your own presentations?	3.0 **	- 2.2 ***	2.6
z. Discuss your own personal problems with him/her?	2.1 ***	1.8	1.5 ***
w. Discuss your own next position with him/her?	2.0 **	1.9 ***	1.5 ***
x. Discuss your own long range career plans?	1.9 **	2.1 ***	1.6 ***

Note. Ns are reduced, where necessary, by the number of people not answering a given question.

[a] Because direct subordinates are more likely to have regular opportunities to interact with their supervisors than those who are not direct subordinates, I used three groupings to compare Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates.

Table 4 - Continued

1) In the first column are shown the mean frequencies of interaction with Special Relationships who are current direct subordinates of a respondent. These frequencies of interaction were compared with the frequencies of interaction with the Typical Subordinates of these respondents in t-tests for dependent samples.

2) In the second column are shown the mean frequencies of interaction with Special Relationships who are <u>not</u> current direct subordinates of a respondent. These frequencies of interaction were compared with the frequencies of interaction with the Typical Subordinates of <u>these</u> respondents in t-tests for dependent samples.

3) In the third column are shown the mean frequencies of interaction with the total sample of Typical Subordinates. These frequencies of interaction were compared with the frequencies of interaction with the total sample of Special Relationships in t-tests for dependent samples.

1 = Never
2 = Less than once a year
3 = Once or twice a year
4 = Once every 3-6 months
5 = Once a month
6 = Once every week or two
7 = Several times a week

[b] A minus sign indicates that the mean frequency of interaction was higher for Typical Subordinates than for Special Relationships.

* $p < .10$
** $p < .05$
*** $p < .01$

Table 5

Classification of Special Relationships

	Low Career Influence	High Career Influence	
High Personal Attraction	Friend 23 (26%)	Mentor 31 (34%)	54 (60%)
Low Personal Attraction	Neutral 22 (24%)	Sponsor 14 (16%)	36 (40%)
	45 (50%)	45 (50%)	90 (100%)

Table 6

Mean Perceived Similarity by Type of Special Relationship[a]

	Mentor (n=31)	Friend (n=23)	Sponsor (n=14)	Neutral (n=22)
Q-20 Total Similarity	4.8	4.4 *	4.0 ***	4.1 ***
Ambition	5.8	5.5	5.1	5.2 *
Intelligence	5.7	5.4	4.7 **	5.3 *
Approach to Solving Problems	5.4	5.4	4.7	4.7 *
Education	5.4	5.7	4.6	5.0
Personality	4.7	3.8 **	3.5 ***	4.0 *
Family Life Style	4.7	3.6 **	3.8	3.4 ***
Activities Outside Work	4.4	3.9	3.1 **	3.5 *
Background, Personal History	3.7	3.3	3.8	3.5
Physical Appearance	3.2	3.0	2.5	2.4 *

Note. Ns are reduced, where necessary, by the number of people not answering a given question.

[a] Mean responses for Mentors were compared with mean responses for each of the other Special Relationships in t-tests for independent samples.

1 = Very dissimilar
7 = Very similar

[b] The responses to the nine individual characteristics were averaged to arrive at a measure of total similarity.

* $p < .10$
** $p < .05$
*** $p < .01$

Table 7

Mean Frequency of Interaction by Type of Special Relationship[a]

Q-7 Rewarding interaction	Mentor (n=31)	Friend (n=23)	Sponsor (n=14)	Neutral (n=21)
Trust with confidential information	4.4	4.5	3.5 *	3.8
Use as a sounding board	4.1	4.2	3.4 *	3.8
Discuss work-related problems	3.7	3.6	2.7 **	3.1
Share details of personal life	3.1	2.7	2.4	2.3 *
Discuss long-range career plans	2.5	2.0	1.8 *	1.7 **
Preview your own presentations	2.4	2.8	2.1	2.5
Discuss your own next position	2.4	2.0	1.6 **	1.5 ***
Discuss personal problems	2.4	2.1	1.3 ***	1.4 ***

Note. Ns are reduced, where necessary, by the number of people not answering a given question.

[a] Mean responses for Mentors were compared with mean responses for each of the other Special Relationships in t-tests for independent samples.

1 = Never
2 = Less than once a year
3 = Once or twice a year
4 = Once every 3-6 months
5 = Once a month
6 = Once every week or two
7 = Several times a week

* $p < .10$
** $p < .05$
*** $p < .01$

Table 8

Percent of Respondents Saying They Never Interact With the Special Relationship in This Way, by Type of Special Relationship

	Mentor (n=31)	Friend (n=23)	Sponsor (n=14)	Neutral (n=21)	$\chi^2(3)$
Discuss your own work-related problems with him/her	0%	17%	21%	33%	11.1 ***
Use him/her as a sounding board for new ideas	3	0	0	10	3.7
Entrust him/her with confidential information	3	0	14	14	5.4
Share details of your own personal life	16	17	38	30	3.5
Discuss your own long range career plans	23	43	54	55	6.9 *
Discuss your own next position with him/her	32	43	64	65	7.1 *
Discuss your own personal problems with him/her	37	52	69	70	6.9 *
Ask him/her to preview your own presentations	39	35	50	43	.9

* $p < .10$
*** $p < .01$

Table 9

Percent of Respondents Identifying Ways in Which the Special Relationship Had Been Helpful or Useful, by Type of Special Relationship

# of responses per respondent	Mentor (n=31)	Friend (n=23)	Sponsor (n=14)	Neutral (n=22)
0 response, none	16%	52%	43%	41%
At least one response	84	48	57	59

Table 10

Mean Frequency of Work-related Interaction with Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates[a]

Q-7 The following is a list of activities that may occur between individuals at different hierarchical levels. We are interested in how frequently, if ever, each activity occurs in your working relationship with this person. Therefore, how often do you . . . (Circle number)

	Special Relationship		Typical Subordinates[b] (n=90)
	Direct Sub (n=32)	Not Direct Sub[b] (n=58)	
j. Act as a sounding board for his/her new ideas?	5.1 ***	- 4.3 ***	4.9
c. Give specific positive feedback?	4.7	- 3.9 ***	- 4.6 **
g. Review his/her written reports or memoranda?	4.2	- 3.3 ***	- 4.7 ***
d. Give specific negative feedback?	4.1	- 3.8 ***	- 4.4 ***
i. Discuss company politics?	3.8	4.0	3.8
k. Talk about his/her strengths to others in the company?	3.8	3.9	3.8
b. Informally discuss performance?	3.7	- 3.5 ***	- 4.1 ***
q. Share details of his/her personal life?	3.5 ***	3.4	3.1 *
m. Arrange for him/her to meet or work with people in the company who could be helpful to his/her career?	3.4 ***	2.9	3.0
l. Protect or defind him/her from difficult situations?	3.0	- 2.6 ***	- 3.2 ***
e. Discuss his/her next position?	2.9 *	2.7	2.8
f. Discuss his/her long range plans	2.9	- 2.7 *	2.8
r. Serve as confidant to him/her about personal problems?	2.9 ***	2.8	2.4 ***
o. Arrange for him/her to attend a business conference or convention?	2.8	- 2.3 ***	- 2.7 **

Table 10 - Continued

	Special Relationship		Typical Subordinates[b]
	Direct Sub (n=32)	Not Direct Sub[b] (n=58)	(n=90)
a. Conduct a formal performance review?	2.6	- 2.1 ***	- 2.8 ***
h. Rehearse his/her oral presentations?	2.6	- 2.6 ***	- 2.9 ***
n. Arrange for him/her to meet people outside the company who could be helpful to his/her career?	2.2	2.2	2.1
p. Arrange for him/her to attend a vendor-sponsored function?	2.1	2.0	2.1

Note. Ns are reduced, where necessary, by the number of people not answering a given question.

[a] Because direct subordinates are more likely to have regular opportunities to interact with their supervisors than those who are not direct subordinates, I used three groupings to compare Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates.

1) In the first column are shown the mean frequencies of interaction with Special Relationships who are current direct subordinates of a respondent. These frequencies of interaction were compared with the frequencies of interaction with the Typical Subordinates of these respondents in t-tests for dependent samples.

2) In the second column are shown the mean frequencies of interaction with Special Relationships who are <u>not</u> current direct subordinates of a respondent. These frequencies of interaction were compared with the frequencies of interaction with the Typical Subordinates of <u>these</u> respondents in t-tests for dependent samples.

3) In the third column are shown the mean frequencies of interaction with the total sample of Typical Subordinates. These frequencies of interaction were compared with the frequencies of interaction with the total sample of Special Relationships in t-tests for dependent samples.

1 = Never
2 = Less than once a year
3 = Once or twice a year
4 = Once every 3-6 months
5 = Once a month
6 = Once every week or two
7 = Several times a week

Table 10 - Continued

[b] A minus sign indicates that the mean frequency of interaction was higher for Typical Subordinates than for Special Relationships.

* $p < .10$
** $p < .05$
*** $p < .01$

Table 11

Mean Frequency of Work-related Interaction

by Type of Special Relationship[a]

Activity	Mentor (n=31)	Friend (n=23)	Sponsor (n=14)	Neutral (n=21)
c. Give specific positive feedback	4.7	3.8 *	4.2	4.0
d. Give specific negative feedback	4.4	3.4 **	4.0	3.7
k. Talk about his/her strengths to others in the company	4.0	4.2	3.8	3.4 **
r. Serve as confidant to him/her about personal problems	3.2	2.9	2.8	2.3 **
n. Arrange for him/her to meet people outside the company who could be hlepful to his/her career	2.5	1.9 *	2.1	2.2

Note. Ns are reduced, where necessary, by the number of people not answering a given question.

[a] Mean responses for Mentors were compared with mean responses for each of the other Special Relationships in t-tests for independent samples.

1 = Never
2 = Less than once a year
3 = Once or twice a year
4 = Once every 3-6 months
5 = Once a month
6 = Once every week or two
7 = Several times a week

* $p < .10$
** $p < .05$
*** $p < .01$

Table 12

Mean Frequency of Social Interaction

Activity	Special Relationships[a] Mentor (n=31)	Friend (n=23)	Sponsor (n=14)	Neutral (n=21)	Typical Subordinates[b] (n=90)
b. Have informal conversation in the office after work	3.8	4.2	3.4	3.4	3.9
a. Have lunch	3.8	4.0	3.2	3.7	4.0
e. Travel together on one-day business trips	2.5	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.5
d. Participate together in athletic or recreational activities	2.4	2.5	1.8	1.5 ***	2.2
g. Go out for dinner locally	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.0
f. Travel together on overnight business trips	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.3
c. Go out for a drink and/or conversation before going home	2.2	2.3	1.9	2.1	1.9 **
h. Go out for dinner with spouses or dates	2.1	2.0	1.8	1.7 *	1.7 **
l. Have dinner in your home as part of a small, intimate group	1.9	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.4 ***
j. Have dinner in his/her home as part of a small, intimate group	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.3 ***
k. Have dinner in your home as part of a large group	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.4 ***
i. Have dinner in his/her home as part of a large group	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.4 **

Note. Ns are reduced, where necessary, by the number of people not answering a given question.

Table 12 - Continued

[a] Mean responses for Mentors were compared with mean responses for each of the other Special Relationships in t-tests for independent samples.

1 = Never
2 = Once or twice a year
3 = Once every 3-6 months
4 = Once a month
5 = Once every week or two
6 = Two or three times a week
7 = Daily

[b] The total sample of Special Relationships was compared with the total sample of Typical Subordinates in t-tests for dependent samples. The mean frequency of interaction is shown for the Typical Subordinates only.

* $p < .10$
** $p < .05$
*** $p < .01$

Table 13

Percent of Respondents Saying They Never Interact with These Individuals in This Way

Activity	Special Relationships[a] Mentor (n=31)	Friend (n=23)	Sponsor (n=14)	Neutral (n=21)	Typical Subordinates[b] (n=90)
a. Have lunch	6%	4%	14%	4%	2%
b. Have informal conversation in the office after work	6	9	21	23	6 *
e. Travel together on one-day business trips	19	22	21	27	18
h. Go out for dinner with spouses or dates	24	27	36	52	48 **
f. Travel together on overnight business trips	26	26	21	38	22
g. Go out for dinner locally	26	26	29	45	39
d. Participate together in athletic or recreational activities	26 ***	35	57	68	40
c. Go out for a drink and/or conversation before going home	33	48	57	50	53
l. Have dinner in your home as part of a small, intimate group	35	57	36	57	64 **
j. Have dinner in his/her home as part of a small, intimate group	40	52	50	57	72 ***
k. Have dinner in your home as part of a large group	45	43	50	43	61 **
i. Have dinner in his/her home as part of a large group	48	45	57	57	65 *

Table 13 - Continued

Note. Ns are reduced, where necessary, by the number of people not answering a given question.

[a] The chi-square statistic was calculated for frequency of interaction (Never vs. At least once a year) by type of Special Relationship, χ^2 (3).

[b] The chi-square statistic was calculated for frequency of interaction (Never vs. At least once a year) by type of relationship (Special Relationship vs. Typical Subordinate), χ^2 (1).

* $p < .10$
** $p < .05$
*** $p < .01$

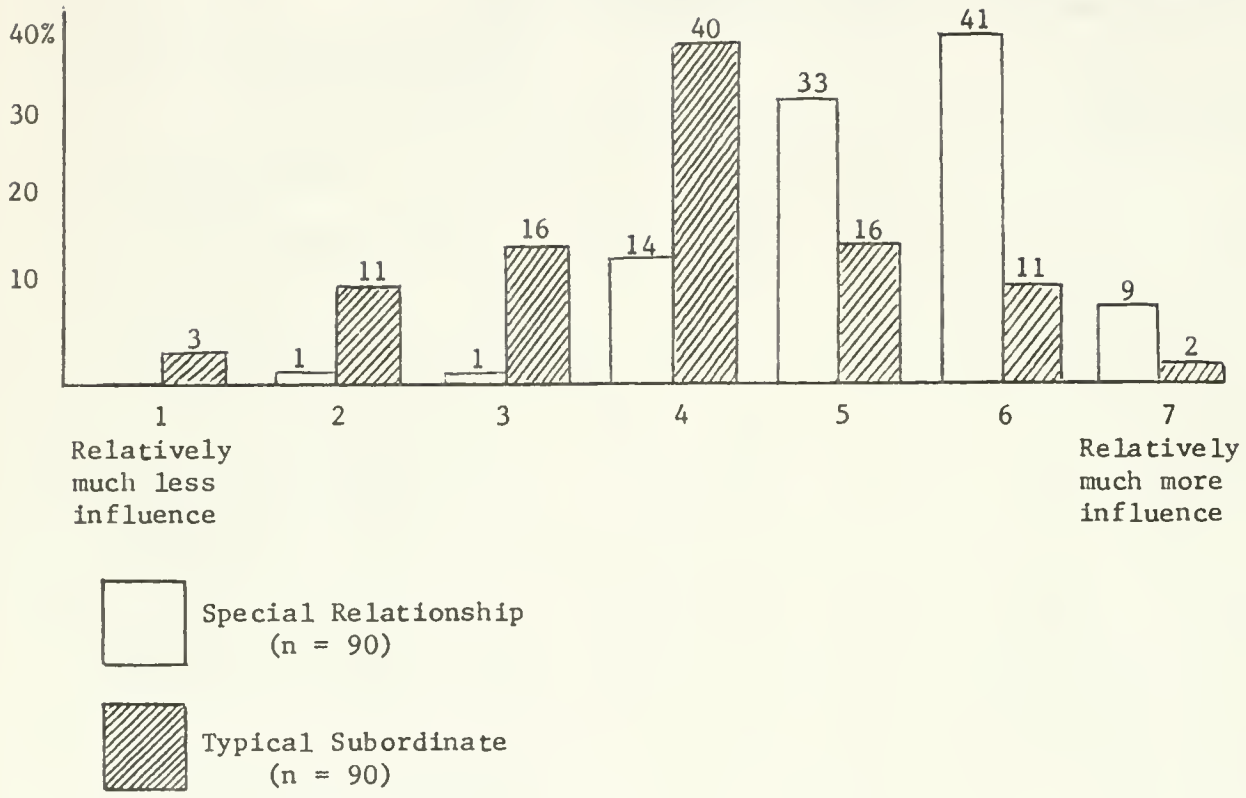

Figure 1. Career Influence. Percentage distribution of responses for Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates.

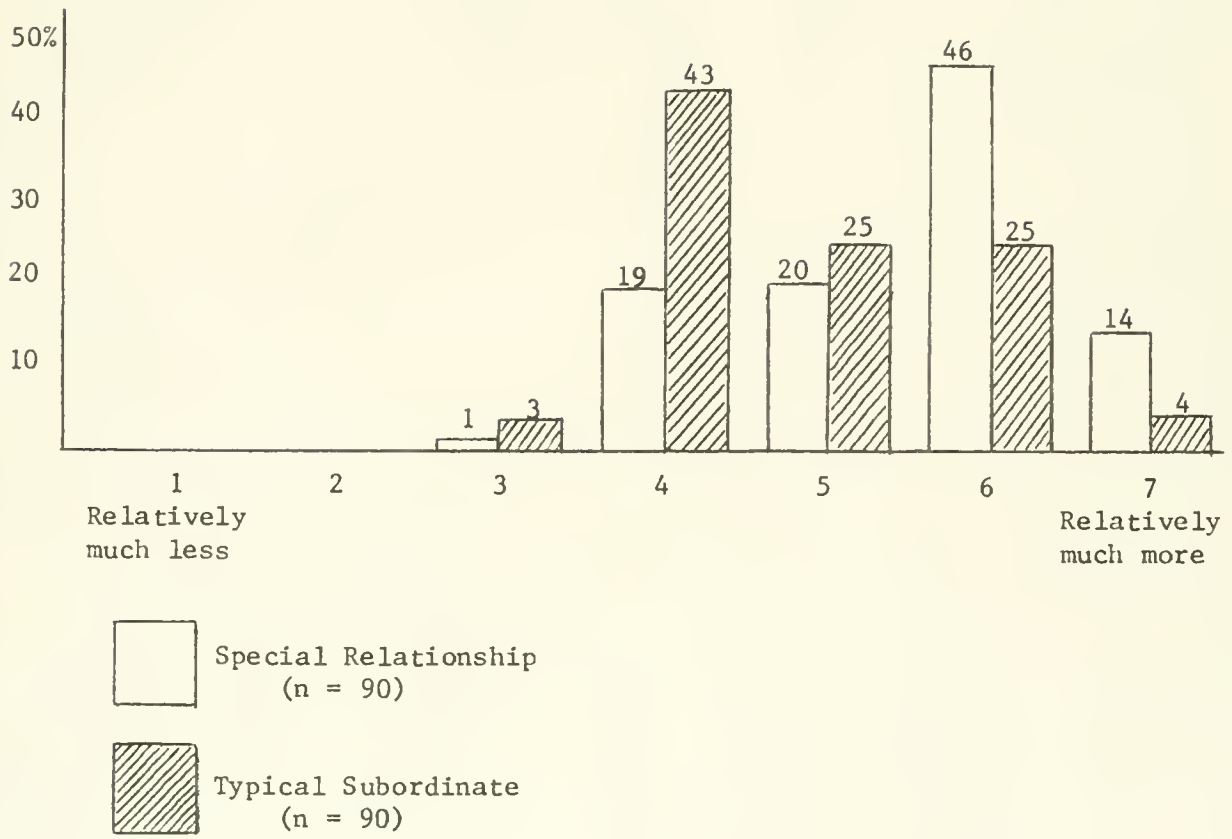

Figure 2. Personal Attraction. Percentage distribution of responses for Special Relationships and Typical Subordinates.