Advisor Roles by Dunkel & Shuh

-MENTOR-

Dunkel and Schuh (1998) describe mentoring as a one on one learning relationship between an older person and a younger person based on modeling behavior and an extended, shared dialogue. They identify five qualities that characterize good mentors:

• Good mentors have been successful in their own professional endeavors

• Good mentors behave in ways worthy of emulation

• Good mentors are supportive in their work with subordinates. They are patient, slow to criticize, and willing to work with those who are less well developed in their careers.

• Good mentors are not afraid to delegate tasks to colleagues and are not threatened by others who exhibit talent and initiative. They provide support for protégés who have been unsuccessful and provide plenty of praise for those who have been successful

• Good mentors provide periodic, detailed, and honest feedback to the protégé.

-SUPERVISOR-

There are many similarities between advising and supervising and many of the skills and styles are transferable. Dunkel identifies the components this style as a supervisory cycle many of which are transferable to effective advising. The six stages of the supervisory cycle are team building, performance planning, communication, recognition, self-assessment, and evaluation.

• Team Building – In team building, your role is to work with the president and executive board soon after their appointment or election. Team building establishes relationships that will enhance the ability of the organization's leadership, members, and adviser and to work together.

• Performance Planning – This includes writing position descriptions, determining and listing expectations, and setting goals.

• Communication – The third stage of supervision is regular communication which includes transferable knowledge and feedback. Keep in mind that communication comes in many forms and is both verbal and nonverbal.

• Recognition – As an advisor, you may participate in meetings with individual students. These students may express a wide range of emotions, and to respond effectively in unexpected situations, a working knowledge of these characteristics and backgrounds can be helpful. Some situations may require documenting the incident for your protection and the protection of the institution. Written documentation should include the specific nature of the exchange, the date and time, the individuals involved, and the outcome of the exchange.

• Evaluation – The sixth and final stage of supervision is formal evaluation. Some institutions, national organizations, or oversight bodies require students to complete various evaluations. You should know what

forms the students need complete as part of the duties of their office or in order to fulfill all of their requirements. A formal evaluation is an opportunity for you to provide feedback to the organization or to individual members. Your participation in the evaluation process should be understood early in your relationship with the organization so as not to come as a surprise to the students.

-TEACHER-

You should be aware of two considerations as you assist students in their success and the success of their organizations and communities. First, the greatest influence on student success on a campus is the level of involvement that the student has with faculty. Second, as Astin put it in 1993, "the lack of student community has stronger direct effects on student satisfaction with the overall college experience than any other environmental measure. Additionally, the lack of student community also produces negative indirect effects on satisfaction with faculty™"

-LEADER-

One reason many students get involved in groups and organizations is to develop their leadership skills and abilities. Clearly, leadership ability can be interpreted broadly. Numerous publications, tapes, conferences, and presentations are available on leadership development, organizational development and organizational skills. In Leadership Challenges, 2002, Woodward (1994, pp.96-97) recommends guidelines for the planning of leadership development opportunities including:

• Theory – exposing students to different organizational and leadership theories

• Values clarification – developing an understanding of the values needed to lead in society

• Skills development – developing such areas as social activism, conflict resolution, collaborative learning, decision making, judgment, and communication

• Societal issues – exposing students to major societal challenges

• Experience – providing students with opportunities to try their leadership You should understand that although the student leaders of your organization may possess a different set of motives for their involvement, they require guidance and direction as any student organization would for success.

-FOLLOWER-

The characteristics of followers are important for you to understand in your work with student organization leaders. If the followers in an organization choose not to follow, the leadership of the organization must take the problem seriously. Followers have expectations of their leaders. You can assist the student leadership in developing activities to identify follower expectations of them. Working with the executive board, you can assist organizational members in the development of a basic understanding of leaders and followers.

Material taken from:
Dunkel, N. W., & Schuh, J. H. (1998). Advising student groups and organizations. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.