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# Mentoring and Coaching As a Means of Professional Development for Faculty at the National Outdoor Leadership School

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MENTORING AND COACHING AS A MEANS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
FOR FACULTY AT THE NATIONAL OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

by

Marco Johnson

A Research Project Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
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MENTORING AND COACHING AS A MEANS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
FOR FACULTY AT THE NATIONAL OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

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APPROVED:

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### ABSTRACT

#### Mentoring and Coaching as a Means of Professional Development for Faculty at the National Outdoor Leadership School

National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) faculty members are professional educators who work in small autonomous teams in remote wilderness settings with no direct supervision from program staff. Though there is a significant degree of autonomy from administrative oversight, the professional growth and development of NOLS faculty is an important institutional goal. Coaching and mentoring are strategies for engendering professional development of educators. Mentoring constitutes a long-term process utilizing formal and informal relationships for faculty development whereas coaching constitutes a formal relationship focusing on the coachee's growth and development in the immediate. Based on a review of the literature and the development of a specific coaching curriculum, this project examines peer coaching as a tool for professional development of NOLS faculty.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) is a non-profit outdoor experiential education school founded in 1965 with headquarters in Lander, Wyoming. From 13 worldwide bases (branch schools), NOLS runs outdoor experiential education courses in wilderness areas across the globe. NOLS' mission is "to be the leading source and teacher of wilderness skills and leadership that serve people and the environment" (NOLS, 2012). NOLS' guiding values are wilderness, education, leadership, safety, community, and excellence. NOLS employs approximately 1000 people worldwide, 600 of which are field instructors (faculty) educating students on field-based courses (i.e., courses in the wilderness).

As a non-profit, NOLS has a Board of Trustees responsible for long-term oversight of the school. The day-to-day and year-to-year responsibilities lie with the Executive Director (ED) and the five members of the Executive Director Team (EDT). Working with the EDT are 16 school-wide directors who oversee NOLS' major departments and locations. I am the Field Staffing Director and I lead the team that recruits, trains, develops, coaches, and mentors NOLS' field instructors.

NOLS courses range from two weeks to 180 days in length and focus on NOLS' core curriculum: leadership and teamwork, outdoor skills, environmental studies, and risk management. Students may earn undergraduate or graduate credit from their course work. An



appropriate analogy for NOLS and its various branch schools is a university system; NOLS as a whole is a university and each branch school is a college within the university system. Each of the branch schools is autonomous, to a point, and NOLS' headquarters operation is responsible for the financial, staffing, risk management, admissions and marketing, and operational oversight for the school as a whole.

Each branch school provides support for their field courses, students, and instructor teams. Program supervisors at the branch schools are tasked with overseeing and providing the logistical, educational, and developmental support and guidance for instructor teams preparing for their courses and students. When courses return to town, program supervisors provide closure, through de-brief and a review of formative and summary feedback provided by each of the instructors for one another. Program supervisors also use summary feedback provided by the students for each of the instructors.

The process of becoming a NOLS instructor is perhaps the most rigorous in the field of outdoor education. Candidates must apply for acceptance to a 35-day long Instructor Course (IC), successfully complete the IC, and then successfully work their first course to be considered a NOLS instructor. Applicants for the IC must submit a resume of backcountry skills (i.e., climbing, mountaineering, sea kayaking, or white water boating skills) personal expedition experience (defined as multi-week wilderness trips), professional expedition work experience, as well as background and experience in teaching, leadership, risk management, and environmental studies. On the IC, instructors focus on introducing potential instructors to NOLS' core curriculum, assessing each candidate's ability to manage student groups in wilderness environments, and ascertaining each candidate's ability to accept and incorporate growth-oriented feedback provided by peers and the IC instructors.

The educational environment in which NOLS instructors operate differs significantly from the environment of traditional educators. NOLS instructors work around the world in remote wilderness settings, in small teams (i.e., two to five instructors), autonomous from day-to-day program oversight while in the field, and are responsible for groups of between eight and 15 students. Though a leadership hierarchy within the instructor team exists, each course has a designated Course Leader (CL) with final authority for all decisions, NOLS instructor teams operate collaboratively regarding decision-making, risk management, and the educational and curricular progression of the course.

The NOLS faculty culture includes a strong awareness of personal strengths and weakness, introspection about how to become a better educator, and the active solicitation of feedback from peers in order to know and understand how to improve as an educator. This culture is supported by a robust requirement for feedback during and at the end of each course. NOLS faculty use feedback and evaluations during and after each course as a means to mature as educators and ensure they provide excellent student education in all curricular areas. The instructor team provides written and oral feedback evaluating each other's performance during the course. In addition, each student provides written and oral feedback for each instructor. The feedback occurs formally at distinct points during and at the end of each course and informally in ongoing dialogue created and nurtured by faculty. This entire feedback process is completed by the end of the course but prior to the course returning to town where program supervisors read and synthesize all of the feedback and provide an oral and written review of each instructor's performance.

### Problem Statement

That all of instructor team feedback is provided in a peer setting without the instructors' supervisor present is a significant difference between NOLS instructors and most other educators. The feedback provided is used primarily to evaluate the faculty member's teaching, leadership, risk management, and decision-making. This feedback also influences advancement decisions. Herein lies the importance of peer coaching for the professional development of NOLS instructors. The process of feedback, and hence professional development and growth of NOLS faculty, is continuous, evolving, and follows a circular pattern.

NOLS program supervisors review and de-brief feedback provided by and for each instructor on the course just worked. The review and de-brief is synthesized to the most salient points and then memorialized in a Staff Performance Evaluation (SPE) written for each instructor and uploaded to the staffing office database. This SPE becomes part of the permanent performance record for each faculty member and is the basis from which future coaching and mentoring occurs. On an instructor's next course his or her program supervisor will use historical SPEs as a means to assist in formulating the curricular and developmental goals for the course at hand. During their careers, instructors work at various locations around the world and interact with various program supervisors as well as the field staffing office thus well written and documented feedback plays a significant and consequential role in faculty development.

Mentorship of instructors by program supervisors and the field staffing office occurs over longer periods of time based on long-term relationships and the use of instructor SPEs. Because program supervisors and the field staffing office do not accompany instructors to the field, timely coaching by these two entities based on immediate course performance are problematic at best. Faculty growth and development does occur due to feedback provided by program

supervisors during course briefings and de-briefings, yet any coaching provided by program supervisors and the field staffing office is based on the peer feedback provided and recorded by the instructor team. It is the commitment to honest, specific, and growth oriented feedback that underpins the system. With so much time spent away from direct supervision, peer feedback provided by the instructor team while in the field and on the course is paramount for instructor's growth and development.

### Purpose of the Project

NOLS places great importance on mentoring and coaching as means of professional growth and development. Nakamura, Shernoff, and Hooker (2009) stated, "By influencing the next generation of practitioners, mentors can also shape the future of their profession" (p. 1). I believe that at NOLS we successfully practice mentoring both formally and informally through asking new faculty to observe what senior colleagues do, observe how senior colleagues teach, and seek guidance from senior faculty on executing and teaching skills and classes. However, mentoring is but one skill employed to engender professional growth and development in NOLS faculty.

Whitmore (2009) stated, "Coaching delivers results in large measure because of the supportive relationship between the coach and the coachee, and the means and style of communication used. The coachee does acquire the facts, not from the coach but from within himself, stimulated by the coach" (p. 9). Active, intentional, and specifically focused coaching is the other part of the growth and development process that must be refined and employed to provide for the professional growth and development of NOLS faculty.

Coaching produces excellent faculty because the coach engenders within his or her coachee a desire to learn and the coach empowers his or her coachee to take this learning and

grow and develop as an educator (Whitmore, 2009). The introduction and creation of a curriculum to improve peer-coaching skills at NOLS is the goal and purpose of this project. This project focuses on specific academic concepts, skills, and curriculum development for both program supervisors and faculty peers to employ when coaching and mentoring. Peer-coaching and mentoring allow the provision of timely, honest, and growth oriented feedback and is paramount for providing quality guidance and professional development for both the neophyte and seasoned NOLS faculty member.

#### List of Definitions

*NOLS Field Instructors* – Outdoor educators working field based courses for NOLS. Within the hierarchy of each NOLS instructor team there is a course leader (CL), patrol leader (PL), and instructor (Inst.). Regardless of how democratic decision making proceeds or how responsibilities are shared within the instructor team, the CL bears ultimate responsibility for what occurs on the course. The PL possesses significant experience and works to support the overall curricular and programmatic progression of the CL. The Inst. position is a training position and instructors in this position are quite new to work at NOLS or new to work in the particular skill type.

*NOLS Program Supervisors* – NOLS senior faculty members who oversee particular program areas at each NOLS location. Program supervisors brief and de-brief instructor teams, provide logistical, curricular, and risk management support and oversight for instructor teams. They summarize, review, and present to each instructor, the written and oral feedback gleaned from the course.

*Staff Performance Evaluations (SPE)* – SPEs are summary evaluations based on instructor and student written and oral feedback. These evaluations are written by the program supervisor and provide a digital record of each instructor’s performance on each course he or she has worked.

### Chapter Summary

NOLS and NOLS’ faculty members believe in high quality student learning as a foundational idea and goal. NOLS believes that providing feedback to instructors for their growth and development is important and integral for maintaining high quality student outcomes. Field instructors work in small, independent teams away from supervisory and programmatic oversight and rely on peer dialogue and input to provide the feedback for professional growth and development. Greater comfort with and understanding of peer coaching as well as mentoring will allow NOLS faculty to provide better feedback in order to engender and empower one another to grow and develop as educators. The foci of this project are understanding the academic concepts of coaching and mentoring, the use of various coaching and mentoring skills, and the creation of a curriculum to support the application of coaching and mentoring as a professional growth and development tool.

The following chapters provide a review of mentoring and coaching literature furnishing background and context regarding mentoring and coaching concepts, theories, and skills. This literature review allows for an understanding of mentoring and coaching as important strategies in the professional development of educators. Specific methods and procedures are introduced as a means to formulate a peer-coaching and mentoring curriculum allowing NOLS faculty to focus on the professional growth and development of their colleagues.

## Chapter 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to coach and mentor well one must possess a working knowledge of what is meant by these specific words for understanding the definitions allows for a basic grasp of their concepts. The Oxford American (2013) dictionary defines mentoring as “to advise” or “to train”, especially a younger colleague” and defines coaching as, “to train or instruct a team or player”. The dictionary definitions bring some clarity as mentoring is noted as advising or training a colleague and coaching is instructing a team or player, emphasizing its predominant use in sports. These definitions also create some ambiguity as both definitions note the idea of training people and given the popularity of coaching and mentoring within general society each person likely has his or her own definition and idea of a coach and mentor. At present individuals providing coaching and mentoring are highly sought after to work with students, educators, business people, and organizations in order to provide growth and development. This literature review examines theories and ideas of educational coaching and mentoring, discusses their effectiveness in providing for the growth and development of professional educators, and examines some of the challenges that exist with coaching and mentoring.

In conjunction with dictionary definitions, the views and interpretations of professionals within the field are also beneficial for understanding how the concepts of coaching and mentoring are interpreted. Concerning coaching, Luecke (2004) stated, “Coaching is an interactive process through which managers and supervisors aim to solve performance problems

or develop employee capabilities” (p. 3). Those thoughts are similar to, “Coaching is an individualized learning process. It focuses on individual growth (both personal and professional) and organizational effectiveness” (Joe Thomas, Ph.D., Professor of Leadership, United States Naval Academy, personal communication, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012). These definitions of coaching note an interactive process that focuses on an individual’s development and growth.

Looking more closely at the interpretation of mentoring, Luecke (2004) noted, “Mentoring, then, is the offering of advice, information, or guidance by a person with useful experience, skills, or expertise for another individual’s personal and professional development” (p. 76). This description fits well others’ interpretation, “Mentoring is a more active process and generally the mentor is working an agenda that they think will aid the mentee” (Sam Talucci, Ph.D. Principal of Talucci Consulting, personal communication, Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012). Similar to the thoughts on coaching noted above, mentoring is seen as an active process providing counsel and guidance for another.

Understanding the definitions of coaching and mentoring are good first steps towards providing quality coaching and mentoring. Though the nouns mentoring and coaching differ in some ways by definition, as verbs both words denote active and interactive work focused on growth and development. Perhaps of greater importance to those acting as coach or mentor is the understanding of specific theories and ideas addressing effective coaching and mentoring. The assimilation and mastery of the requisite tools are key to becoming an effective coach and mentor.

Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) spoke to this idea of possessing and using the correct tools noting, “If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail.” In creating one’s toolbox so that one does not see every problem as a nail, one can take various



routes to gain the needed tools and become an effective coach or mentor. One avenue leads to academia and an educational background in the skills and strategies of effective coaching and mentoring. Learning about theories and research is an excellent path for establishing a broad base of knowledge. However, while years of undergraduate and graduate studies steep an individual in many of the requisite academic tools needed to coach and mentor, academic knowledge alone fails to provide a complete education for aspirant coaches and mentors. The tool of experience must be addressed as well. Coaching and mentoring acumen based on both academic knowledge and experience forges the most useful tool.

The word “tool” derives from the Old English word *tōl* meaning “to prepare” (Oxford American Dictionary, 2013). A good deal of educational research advocates for the use of coaching and mentoring as tools to prepare educators for work with students and as important tools for the professional growth and development of educators.

The tools of coaching and mentoring come in myriad styles and are used in various ways. Two examples of these tools are the stereotypical model of the older and wiser elder counseling the younger neophyte and the peer-coaching collaboration of educators with varying experiences working within a cohort. The efficacy of the coach or mentor and the growth and development of the coachee or mentee are positively affected by the preparation of the coach and mentor and his or her use of a variety of tools.

Effective coaching and mentoring models and tools are debated across the literature. Some describe the mentoring relationship as having the character of a parent-child attachment or peer group alliance, but being neither (Merriam, Thomas, & Zeph, 1987). Another description of mentoring is the one-on-one pairing of a more experienced and knowledgeable practitioner with a neophyte, which allows for significant support of the neophyte during the learning process.

Within this relationship a mentor may also provide an introduction to the new context and culture the mentee is entering (Washburn-Moses, 2010). The mentor provides feedback and guidance regarding skills and personal development for the mentee (Paglis, Green, & Bauer, 2006). Such definitions may conjure images of a familial relationship between mentor and mentee with the mentor guiding in a gentle and sensitive manner or they may invoke the idea of a senior and subordinate dynamic between the two parties.

A different approach, peer coaching, intentionally involves individuals of relatively equal status but is done so to create and build relationships similar to those mentoring relationships noted above. Building trust in order to encourage self-disclosure as a means of professional growth is one of the goals behind this partnering of individuals of similar status and rank. While the mentoring relationship above evokes a hierarchical difference between mentor and mentee, trust is built between mentor and mentee through gentle and sensitive guidance. The peer coaching relationship evokes status similarity yet a close relationship is possible due to shared background. Both scenarios embrace the idea that one member of the relationship looks to the other for guidance and learning (Ladyshevsky, 2010).

Mentoring scenarios, much like coaching, do not rely solely upon one member of the learning relationship seeking guidance and learning from the other member of the relationship. While good mentoring often exhibits the sharing of expert knowledge and the giving of advice, good mentors ask good questions, exhibit excellent listening skills, and enable mentees to discover their own answers. All of these attributes are also typically associated with coaching skills. Being intentional and proactive marks the difference between coaches and mentors just sharing knowledge with their charges and empowering their coachees and mentees to find answers and learn from within (Garvey, 2010).

Research presented by O'Neil and Marsick (2009) reviewed the classic mentoring relationship of an older and more experienced mentor paired with a younger and newer protégé. The researchers noted this classic mentoring relationship prepared the protégé well for his or her new work as the mentor furnished the mentee with two classical products of this type of relationship, career guidance and psychosocial support. The research also highlighted the notion that each member of a successful mentor-mentee relationship was responsible and accountable to the other for the mutually agreed upon goals. In being accountable to one another both mentor and mentee were active participants in the relationship. This active participation and interchange between mentor and mentee increased the strength of the relationship by bringing the skills and abilities of both parties to the relationship.

These same authors put forth that productive mentoring relationships are also structured as active relationships, with conversations that involve small groups working with a coach (mentor). An important tenet of this type of mentoring is that the members of the group work to solve their own problems through collaborative engagement within their cohort using guidance from their coach. As noted by the authors, the coach's first objective is to engage the group and frame the challenges and goals to be faced. Next, the coach pushes the group forward through self-reflection and an examination of what is needed to continue towards a resolution of the problem. Finally, the coach moves the group to review and summarize what has occurred and what further work remains via the use of reflective questioning and critical self-examination (O'Neil & Marsick, 2009).

Ulrich and Johnson (2012) observed similar relationships in their work describing coaching archetypes. The classic wise mentor advising the neophyte mentee takes the form of expert coaching. In this relationship the expert coach may be part of the same organization as

the coachee thus some familiarity between coach and coachee might exist. The expert coach may also be from outside the coachee's organization and unknown to the coachee. In either scenario the coach fulfills the role of sage advisor to neophyte coachee.

The coaching and mentoring models examined by O'Neil and Marsick (2009) and Ulrich and Johnson (2012) are effective. One tool utilizes the classic mentoring and coaching relationships of learned coach or mentor working with a neophyte as a means to prepare educators. In this relationship the coach or mentor passes knowledge and advice on to his or her initiate. The small group relationship utilizes the strength of peer groups as means of preparation, learning, and development. In the end both tools rely on the mentor or coach, a specialist or expert, to help coachees and mentees reach their goals (O'Neil & Marsick, 2009; Ulrich and Johnson, 2012).

Cordingley (2005) presented research that compared the efficacy of mentoring and coaching that was provided by specialists versus the efficacy mentoring and coaching provided by one's peers. The author acknowledged that coaching and mentoring by specialists allows for the introduction to mentees of higher order knowledge to be used to improve skills, in this research specifically classroom-teaching skills, whereas peer coaches may not possess similar higher order knowledge. However, the author pointed out that peer coaching was an effective mentoring tool as improvement in teaching skills is shown to take place and peer coaching also piqued participant's interest in working with a specialist.

Cordingley (2005) noted that when setting up a coaching relationship, the use of specific, intentional, and principled tools allowed both specialists and peer coaches to be successful. These tools included conversations oriented towards learning, thoughtful relationships, setting challenging goals, using experimentation and observation, and the careful use of resources. Used

together these components create a successful and collaborative tool to be used by specialist and peer alike.

Asghar (2010) presented research on the efficacy of peer coaching used with first-year university students. Whereas Cordingley (2005) noted that working with a coach piqued the coachee's interest in further work with a specialist, Asghar (2010) related that a peer-coaching environment created an increase in problem solving, a willingness of each participant to explicitly share what he or she did or did not know, and the problem solving and developmental motivation came from within the cohort. Significant learning was attributed to the motivation peer members provided for one another.

The peer relationship created a familiar and cordial atmosphere in which to grow and develop thus creating the ability to honestly assess and appraise the knowledge the coachee possesses and the knowledge learned. The open and honest sharing and appraisal by both parties empowers both to use the relationship for growth and development of both coach and coachee (Asghar, 2010).

This particular peer coaching research further related an increase in students' ability to build success from failure, to build for success in stages, and noted the ability of a first-year student to test him or herself as he or she moved through the stages of failure to success. Overall the peer coaching analyzed in this study noted that rather than piquing a student's interest or desire to work with a specialist coach, peer coaching created a culture of autonomy in learning (Asghar, 2010).

In related research, Steinbacher-Reed and Powers (2012) also considered the power and efficacy of group coaching as a means of staff development. Regularly provided professional coaching created an excellent environment for faculty development. However there are myriad

reasons precluding the use of a professional coach as budgetary, locational, and logistical variables must be overcome in order to provide and sustain professional coaching for faculty.

The use of teacher-leaders and senior faculty as coaches is one strategy to continue the practice of coaching new faculty when variables keep professional coaching from occurring.

Many of the skills that teacher-leaders exhibit and use in their work are coaching skills. Senior faculty members are often chosen to mentor and coach new staff based on not only their accumulation of wisdom but also because these senior faculty have become excellent natural coaches. Most educational institutions provide for faculty gatherings and staff meetings. These forums provide an excellent venue for senior and newer faculty to congregate to coach and be coached. These less structured faculty gatherings allow faculty members to discuss and exchange thoughts and ideas regarding professional growth and development. This study noted that these informal gatherings allowed these nascent faculty relationships to evolve and led to the development of more structured meetings where designed and formal coaching takes place (Steinbacher-Reed & Powers, 2012).

Similar to research reported by Cordingley (2005), O'Neil and Marsick (2009), Asghar (2010), and Steinbacher-Reed and Powers (2012), research by Shank (2005) noted differences between the one-to-one mentoring tool and the use of a collaborative mentoring tool. Shank reported that one-to-one mentoring is a classic and highly successful tool that over half of U.S. states require as part of their teacher induction. The research also noted the limitations of this particular method, including the potential for mentors to stifle mentee creativity, by perpetuating the norm by not accepting new ideas and potentially reinforcing the notion that the mentor, as a seasoned educator, has little to learn within the relationship.

Shank (2005) analyzed a group of high school teachers, ranging from neophytes in their first year of teaching to senior faculty with 22 years of experience, who participated in a collaborative mentoring group. This mixed cohort met as a large group to discuss strategies for professional development and instructional improvement. While the senior faculty provided professional development in areas such as innovative teaching practices and educational inquiry, the novice faculty modeled the ability to be vulnerable and take risks while teaching. These newer faculty members also introduced recent advances in educational theory and practice they learned during their undergraduate and graduate school training.

The use of the formal cohort meant that all members of the group could meet and exchange thoughts, ideas, and strategies as a means of professional development. Interestingly, during these formal meetings, new and different one-on-one mentoring teams formed naturally within the larger cohort. These one-on-one teams allowed for more intimate mentoring and also led to the one-on-one teams bringing learning back to the larger group forum (Shank, 2005).

Lewis, Perry, Foster, Hurd, and Fisher (2011) submitted research focusing on a classic one-to-one mentoring method similar to that of O'Neil and Marsick (2009). Lewis et al. (2011) noted that use of a one-to-one mentoring model often led to the improvement of new teacher's abilities but not to an improvement in the broader community of new teachers. The authors further noted that when groups of novice and veteran teachers collaborated on lesson study there was a synergy that led to improvement for all of the teachers involved. This improvement was due to the building of relationships between neophytes and a variety of experienced staff that allowed the participants to learn different styles and protocols with which to approach problems.

The one-to-one mentoring and the collaborative peer group work advocated by Cordingley (2005), Shank (2005), and O'Neil and Marsick (2009) parallels the research of

Williams, Matthews, and Baugh (2004), though these earlier authors oriented their work towards educational administrators rather than teachers. Williams et al. (2004) submitted a practice that advocated for and promoted active learning and participation in the mentoring process between seasoned school principals and intern administrators. The goal of the practice was to link the intern administrator's academic course work to actual problems faced during internships.

To help realize the goal, specific tasks and problems of varying complexities were created. The intern administrators had to work through and solve these problems through working one-on-one with a mentor or through using small groups of intern administrators with their mentors as a supportive cohort. An overarching goal of this type of mentoring relationship was to bring the new intern administrators off of the sidelines and get them actively involved in solving problems, thus putting theory into practice. This style of mentoring further supports the efficacy of one-on-one mentoring and coaching as well as the power of small (peer) group problem solving (Williams, Matthews, & Baugh, 2004).

In a slightly different academic arena, Boyle and Boice (1998) researched the efficacy of intentionally designing a mentoring program for new faculty and graduate teaching assistants in the university setting. The authors first analyzed the spontaneously created mentoring relationship. This particular relationship was organic in nature and occurred as new graduate students and new faculty formed relationships with more senior graduate students and faculty they met upon entering the university setting. The authors felt this organically created mentoring relationship was ineffective due to the weak relationship bonds created between mentor and mentee. These relationships were also shorter in duration and thus less effective. This research by Boyle and Boice (1998) contrasts with that of Shank (2005) noted above.



After analyzing the organic relationships, Boyle and Boice (1998) intentionally created mentoring relationships that paired more senior faculty with newer faculty and paired graduate assistants with faculty or more senior graduate assistants. The authors posited that these mentoring relationships were successful due to the intentional pairing of mentor and mentee, the establishment of a formal meeting process, and the commitment of the mentor and mentee to meet regularly to make the relationship and process successful. The commitment to meet regularly was believed to be the most important factor in making the one-to-one mentoring successful. Mentoring pairs who met regularly over long periods showed significant collaboration on research, an indication of their successful mentoring partnership.

Boyle and Boice (1998) observed that while the long term pairs showed strong bonds, with strong and consistent learning for the mentees, the group meetings several of the mentor-mentee pairs attended were more highly favored as a learning tool. These group meetings led to a higher volume of communication given there were more individuals present. Though mentors did tend to speak more than mentees in this setting, mentees were more inclined share about themselves and their work. If other members of the group recognized stress within a mentorship pair, the group moved to lessen or remove the stress. These mentor pair meetings were also excellent venues for the mentors to teach their mentees about the social and political intricacies of their new academic environment (Boyle and Boice, 1998).

Other researchers have observed the use of the mentoring tool for social learning as well. Merriam, Thomas, and Zeph (1987) remarked that the mentoring relationship was beneficial in the psychosocial realm as mentored graduate students were more likely to have greater self confidence, risk taking skills, and comfort and awareness of the social and political aspects of their environments. Merriam et al. (1987) and Boyle and Boice (1998) noted that one of the

hallmarks of senior faculty mentoring new staff and students was the ability for mentors to provide both pertinent knowledge and information to mentees and to also provide social and cultural indoctrination and development to mentees.

Research by Huston and Weaver (2007) noted similar attributes to those put forth above. These researchers asserted that experienced faculty involved in peer coaching relationships, like those involved in mentoring relationships, also benefited greatly from interactions with colleagues. The authors believed that benefits materialized because these coaching relationships evolved purposefully, were created with specific outcomes, and utilized both a one-way and reciprocal approach to coaching.

Peer-coaching programs, though typically oriented towards new faculty, also benefit senior faculty. Senior faculty members benefit from both the actual coaching that occurs as well as from exposure to senior colleagues who more typically concentrate on coaching new faculty. Thus the sharing of knowledge and experience takes place between senior faculty members as well as between senior and junior faculty members. The researchers also noted that faculty members became interested in a more nuanced questioning of tactics and techniques and in parsing out particular and specific details of the teaching and coaching taking place between faculty members (Huston & Weaver, 2007).

Research presented by Paglis, Green, and Bauer (2006) noted those who entered into a mentor-mentee relationship were more likely to succeed with their research in the near term. Though their work concentrated on graduate students, the researchers also noted that undergraduate students who were mentored had greater success in the amount of course work completed, grades earned, and graduation rates when they were in a mentoring relationship. Furthermore these researchers noted that the use of a mentoring relationship in the business

world, a senior colleague paired with a new employee, led to greater psychosocial success within the business community in general and greater success, including an increase in the likelihood of promotion within the specific company.

The work of Jowlett and Stead (1994) bolsters that of Paglis, Green, and Bauer (2006). Jowlett and Stead introduced how certain models worked for specific populations of people and they noted that some think of coaching and mentoring not just as a means of education, but also as a way of developing talent. One model seen in the business world was the pairing a senior executive with a new high performer; the goal of this pairing was to nurture the new high performer for more significant roles in the future. A second model was in coaching a new recruit in the psychosocial, as well as the business and professional, aspects of a new organization or group. A third model is a coaching or mentoring relationship targeted specifically towards individuals of disadvantaged groups who were being mentored as a way to overcome particular obstacles (Jowlett & Stead, 1994).

The model noted by Jowlett and Stead (1994) in which an identified or perceived high performer is paired with a coach in order to support and develop the coachee's perceived talent and create real talent is similar to models in the world of executive coaching. With executive coaching, the goal is to perpetuate a coachee's talent and work to change dysfunctional behavior (Luecke, 2004).

Jowlett and Stead (1994) and Luecke (2004) noted there are myriad models one can apply when establishing a coaching or mentoring relationship. Choosing a model is an important decision as different people and different goals necessitate different strategies. Successful coaching and mentoring takes into account why the relationship is important, the needs of the relationship, and the parties involved in the relationships.

Tjan (2011) posited three models of coaching and mentoring similar to those put forward by Jowlett and Stead (1994). The first mentoring model, buddy or peer mentoring, advances an example more closely akin to apprenticeship than to true coaching or mentoring. In this model, the mentoring comes early in the mentee's career when he or she is new to a job or position. The coach or mentor's primary goal is to guide the novice in how to function in his or her job and to help assimilate the novice into his or her new culture. Interaction between mentor and mentee in this situation is frequent and both formal and informal.

The second model Tjan (2011) put forward was that of career mentor. In this relationship the mentor works with their mentee to help the mentee realize how his or her contribution fits into the larger picture of their workplace. The mentee must know and understand how specific developmental initiatives link together in order for him or her to create the appropriate next steps for advancement within the organization. In this particular relationship the mentor is not necessarily the mentee's direct supervisor but might be someone within the mentee's organization who can advocate for the mentee.

The third model described by Tjan (2011) differs from the third model presented by Jowlett and Stead (1994). In this model the relationship has evolved to that of a life coach or mentor. Over time the coachee progresses from neophyte to the senior levels of an educational or business organization and thus there is need for less coaching specific to the immediate job. The life coach is an individual inside or outside of the coachee's organization and serves as a non-biased sounding board and reference point for the coachee as he or she reaches full maturity. Similar to the examples noted by Jewett and Stead, the models presented by Tjan provide a series of coaching and mentoring tools suitable for use by disparate individuals at varying points in a career.

Research by Tschannen-Moran and Tschannen-Moran (2011) reviewed studies regarding mentoring relationships. These authors noted that mentoring relationships were indeed important and effective instruments in the development of educators. Earlier work by Boyle and Boice (1998) had put forth the idea that establishing the mentoring partnership needed to be an intentional act. Tschannen-Moran and Tschannen-Moran corroborated this idea the mentoring relationship needs to be an intentional act with specific methods and strategies and focused on solution-oriented growth.

These authors espoused several strategies for use in the mentoring relationship. They remarked on the use of conscious connections between individuals to strengthen the relationships. Persons involved in the mentoring relationship must not only understand each other, they must understand themselves for through a true understanding of self and each other honest connections are made. The coaching and mentoring relationship is made stronger by focusing on the contribution that can be made to one another and through valuing each other's competence. By interacting from a place of mutual respect each member of the relationship believes they have something of importance to give to the other. Utilizing these specific strategies while participating in coaching and mentoring produces an effective tool that is centered on the individuals involved, based in the strengths of each person, and focused on development (Tschannen-Moran and Tschannen-Moran, 2011).

This focus on coach-coachee relationship, mutual respect, and understanding allows coaches to work on different and diverse levels with their coachees. This multi-layered coaching scenario focuses not just on a coachee's skills and performance or how the coachee develops over time. Through combining coaching work in the technical skills areas with coaching in the areas of inter and intra personal skills, coaches engender transformation in their coachees.

Transformational coaching empowers coachees to know and understand not only the facts but also how behaviors, personal feelings, assumptions, and values interact to affect how the coachee grows and develops (Hawkins & Smith, 2010).

Individuals and organizations continue to exhibit an increasing belief that coaching relationships reap positive benefits and with this increased belief in coaching a related rise in the amount of coaching has occurred. To build upon and maximize any coaching and mentoring relationship, a coaching and mentoring culture must be fostered within a group or organization. Combining a strong culture with strong relationships helps ensure coaching and mentoring are successful. Positive individual coaching and mentoring relationships help build and grow a culture of coaching and mentoring within an organization. As the culture of coaching and mentoring grows so does the desire for strong relationships and each piece adds to the synergy of successful coaching and mentoring overall (Whybrow & O’Riordan, 2012).

Though the literature presented speaks predominately about the coaching and mentoring relationship being designed as a tool to benefit the coachee and mentee, research does indicate there are benefits for the coach and mentor in these relationships. Schulz (1995), Boyle and Boice (1998), Shank (2005), and Huston and Weaver (2007) all acknowledged that coaching and mentoring relationships benefited coaches and mentors, as well as coachees and mentees, in a variety of ways. These authors posited that in relationships amongst teachers, the teacher as coach gained new knowledge from his or her coachee in part because the coachee recently completed his or her educational training. Exposure to the coachee allowed the coach access to the most recent academic theories and practices. Serving as a mentor also provided individuals with opportunities for personal growth. Due to their work with their mentees, mentors became more aware of their own competencies as well as those areas in which they needed to improve.

Literature by Schulz (1995), Boyle and Boice (1998), Shank (2005), and Huston and Weaver (2007) also noted that because coaching and mentoring is viewed as a worthwhile endeavor, individuals who acted as coaches and mentors gained a measure of respect and recognition for taking on these roles. As a result, assuming a coaching and mentoring role provided advancement opportunities as coaches and mentors were seen as leaders and experts in specific curriculum and skill areas.

The view of mentoring and coaching, the process, and the tools presented are incomplete without mention of some of the challenges that exist in the coaching and mentoring practice. Research notes there is disagreement on a common definition for mentoring and those definitions proffered vary from study to study. These myriad descriptions reduce the power and efficacy of mentoring and coaching simply due to the time and energy needed to learn and become comfortable with the information presented. Potential coaches and mentors need to sift through array of knowledge to first decide what particular method or style they will concentrate on and then train to master that method or style. Supporting the idea that a great deal of varied information exists on coaching and mentoring, some authors questioned whether mentoring should focus on specific strategies for specific goals or orient towards generalized strategies for comprehensive goals (Hawkins & Smith, 2006; Jowett & Steed, 1994; Merriman, Thomas, & Zeph, 1987).

Studies also noted that mentoring relationships can be established and a mentor chosen based not on the realized abilities of that mentor but rather because of the mentors' perceived reputation and status. While coaches or mentors possessing public acclaim might be seen as beneficial to coachees and mentees, if the coach's or mentor's actual skills and abilities do not

match his or her reputation it is the mentee who ultimately suffers (Merriman, Thomas, & Zeph, 1987).

Corroborating the research of Merriman, Thomas, and Zeph (1987), more recent studies noted that for mentoring to be at its most effective those mentors who do step forward must be good. A simple correlation was advanced that the better the mentor the better the mentoring relationship and the better the outcomes for the mentee. In conjunction with wanting and needing good people to create effective mentoring relationships, the commitment and preparation of mentors was also seen as being critically important to an effective mentor-mentee relationship (Williams, Matthews, & Baugh, 2004).

The literature also presents obstacles to the use of mentoring and coaching as a growth and development tool. Some research noted there are individuals who view and generalize mentoring and coaching relationships as remedial relationships rather than professional development relationships. Due to the potential stigma of providing remedial training rather than professional development, some individuals choose not to offer their services as coach or mentor. Others choose not to enter the position of mentee or coachee for fear of being seen as less qualified or needing special assistance (Boyle and Boice, 1998).

Further obstacles include other stigmas that may be attached to mentoring programs concentrating on disadvantaged groups. Some mentees that fall within the category of a disadvantaged group may be reluctant to participate for fear of being seen as less capable due to their association with a particular group (Boyle and Boice, 1998).

Cross gender mentoring, when the mentor is male, leaves the mentee in two historically subordinate roles, as a woman and a student. Cross gender mentoring may also open mentors to questions regarding ulterior motives in the relationship, thus creating a disinclination for mentors



of one particular gender to become a mentor to a mentee of a particular gender (Castro, Caldwell, and Salazer, 2005).

Other obstacles to effective coaching and mentoring noted in the literature included how personality differences between coaches and coachees created obstacles to effective relationships and that some faculty members prefer partnering with colleagues of equal stature rather than entering the hierarchy of a mentoring or coaching relationship. This particular activity stifles interaction and involvement between senior faculty and novices, the very interaction creating advantages and enhancing learning for mentees. Though coaching and mentoring for novices suffers in this particular system, the above are a variety of reasons keeping senior faculty from becoming involved in a mentoring relationship (Quinlan, 1996).

A variety of factors affect whether potential coaches or mentors commit to successful coaching and mentoring relationships. These factors include: prior commitments, time constraints, supervisors who deprioritize the coaching and mentoring relationships, beliefs by faculty that they do not have the expertise to offer as mentors, and research showing little significant correlation of coaching or mentoring relationships affecting the coachee or mentee decision to continue in a particular field (Jowett & Steed, 1994; McLeod & Steinert, 2009; Paglis, Green, and Bauer, 2006).

While obstacles exist so do strategies to overcome these obstacles. Recent research noted several strategies to overcome some of the impediments to coaching and mentoring. Examples of these tactics included: finding common ground as a coach's effectiveness increased when establishing common ground with a coachee, listening effectively and empathetically as this creates inclusion and shows support through active listening, and creating complimentary

opportunities for learning and acting intentionally (Jewett & MacPhee, 2012; Paglis, Green, and Bauer, 2006).

Next steps for mentoring research might include formulating common and consistent language regarding what coaching and mentoring are and what coaching and mentoring do, a key to the problem pointed out by Hawkins and Smith (2010) and Merriman, Thomas, and Zeph (1987). Similarly, Washburn-Moses (2010) observed there exist few agreed upon standards when working in the coaching and mentoring fields. Alleviating such discrepancies would allow a framework for researchers to build upon the work of one another.

Though there are some drawbacks and obstacles to the act of coaching and mentoring, the literature explored advocates for coaching and mentoring as a positive and effective strategy for empowering the growth and development of educators. Efficacious methods and positive effects have been explored and discussed regarding the coaching and mentoring relationship. The developmental process that educators undergo is extensive and intricate. As novice educators enter their new professional arena there are myriad challenges and obstacles they must overcome to become comfortable and effective in presenting basic educational progressions and instruction. Over time these neophytes mature and grow beyond the presentation of basic material. As journeyman educators they must work to develop a skill set that allows them to present more involved and in-depth instruction to their students in order to push their students to the next higher level. If time and effort allow, these once neophyte educators come to master not only their particular subject matter but also the manner and means by which to deliver this education and to do so in an intentional and effective manner. Coaching and mentoring, done well, are powerful tools that employ feedback, assessment, guidance, discussion, and instruction to grow and develop the educator from neophyte to master.

### Chapter 3

#### METHOD

NOLS culture is steeped in feedback. NOLS faculty members live and work in an environment of receiving and providing feedback on a daily basis. Because feedback is so integral and important to NOLS as an institution and to the faculty who work for NOLS, the ability to provide the highest quality of coaching and mentoring is key to the successful growth and development of NOLS field instructors. The creation and implementation of new curriculum, the purpose of this project, provide tools for the provision of growth and developmentally oriented coaching and mentoring.

NOLS' field instructors use feedback and evaluations during and after each course as a means to grow and develop as educators and ensure excellent student outcomes in all curricular areas. NOLS faculty members possess a strong awareness of their own strengths and weakness and a desire to actively solicit feedback from peers, which is reinforced culturally at the school. Superior coaching and mentoring skills are required for NOLS faculty to present growth-oriented feedback to their peers. Appropriate, timely, and constructive feedback is paramount at NOLS as this feedback not only speaks to the faculty member's performance but it also has bearing on faculty rehire and advancement. In this chapter I introduce and provide an overview of the coaching and mentoring culture at NOLS as well as specific strategies and curriculum that, if implemented, may reinforce and amplify this professional growth and development processes at NOLS.

Once instructors begin working field courses, coaching and mentoring are ever present. This coaching and mentoring occurs before instructors leave for the field, while the instructors are in the field with their students, and when the course returns to town. Instructors and the instructor team are supported before leaving for the field and when they return through coaching and mentoring by program supervisors working at each NOLS location.

As noted in Chapter One, program supervisors provide logistical and educational support as well as professional and curricular guidance to instructor teams as they prepare for courses. Program supervisors also coach and mentors instructor teams to structure and build appropriate goals for themselves and for their courses. Overall program supervisors provide the support to enable individual instructors to become a successful team that provides excellent and inspired education for students.

When the instructor team is in the field, the course leader (CL) is responsible for the day-to-day and overall course coaching and mentoring of his or her junior staff, the patrol leader (PL) and instructor (I). Additionally, each instructor is responsible for providing his or her colleagues with growth oriented coaching on their course performance as well as completing a self-evaluation of himself or herself. Coaching within the instructor team occurs in formal and informal feedback sessions that take place both during the course and at the course's conclusion but before the course returns to town. The in-the-field feedback is based around the in-the-moment performance of the instructor on the goals and expectations the program supervisor established during the course briefing.

When the course returns, the program supervisor provides coaching and mentoring through a thorough de-briefing that includes reading all of the course paperwork and de-briefing both the students and instructors. The course paperwork includes written evaluations of the

instructors by the students, peer evaluations by each member of the instructor team, and self-evaluations by each instructor. The program supervisor also de-briefs the student group to flesh out any unwritten feedback and then he or she de-briefs the instructor team to ensure that learning, growth, and professional development occur and to bring closure to the course.

The program supervisor then synthesizes the course paperwork, evaluations, and de-brief notes into a staff performance evaluation (SPE) for each instructor. This SPE is the memorialized feedback provided for each faculty member and placed in his or her permanent file. SPEs are used as a starting point for future coaching and mentoring on professional growth and development as these SPEs document an instructor's strengths as well as areas that need development.

A faculty member's professional growth and development are assessed relative to documented NOLS accepted field practices, faculty performance expectations and qualifications, and curricula. Though NOLS practices, expectations and curricula are codified, NOLS has no set curriculum nor specific strategies for providing formal coaching and mentoring to faculty.

NOLS Program supervisors have used the SMART model (Whitmore, 2009) as a strategy to support instructor goal setting for at least a decade. Whitmore noted that SMART goals are, "specific, measurable, agreed, realistic, and time phased" (2009, p. 62). Using this model program supervisors help instructor teams establish institutional, personal, and team goals for each course. Established goals provide the place from which peer coaching and mentoring takes place during the instructors' time in the field and provides a reference point for the program supervisor when the course de-brief and summative coaching takes place.

The SMART model is simple, provides clear purpose, and has seen successful use at NOLS. However the SMART model makes up one part of the coaching strategy known as GROW (Whitmore, 2009). The GROW strategy includes:

- Goal setting for the session as well as short and long term.
- Reality checking to explore the current situation.
- Options and alternative strategies or courses of action.
- What is to be done, when, by whom, and the will to do it. (Whitmore, 2009, p.55)

The GROW blueprint creates a comprehensive platform for NOLS program supervisors to use in coaching faculty, provides a similar platform for faculty to coach peers while working courses, and supports a robust framework upon which to pin a variety of coaching strategies at NOLS.

The thoughts and ideas presented thus far relate to the act of coaching. As Whitmore stated, “Coaching delivers results in large measure because of the supportive relationship between coach and coachee, and the means and style of communication used” (2009, p. 9). Though coaching is important for an educator’s growth and maturation, mentoring is also important for the growth and maturation of a NOLS instructor. As Nakamura, Shernoff, and Hooker (2009) stated, “By influencing the next generation of practitioners, mentors can also shape the future of their profession” (p. 1).

Like coaching, mentoring is intentionally set-up and executed. An excellent mentoring model to employ at NOLS is the model posited by Zachary (2000). Zachary’s model comprised four phases when establishing a mentoring relationship: preparing, negotiating, enabling, and closing. Active mentoring, using Zachary’s model, can be utilized by program supervisors when preparing instructor teams for their courses as well as by instructors when working with colleagues during courses. Similar to the utilization of Whitmore’s (2009) GROW model this mentoring model works as an overarching framework for utilizing various mentoring strategies.

Five specific avenues will be utilized to present formalized coaching and mentoring strategies within the overarching frameworks espoused by Whitmore (2009) and Zachary (2000). The first approach will make use of the NOLS *Staff Newsletter*, the in-house quarterly digital publication written by and for NOLS staff. The *Staff Newsletter* articles focus on advances and changes in curriculum, NOLS research, and news updates from around the school, as well as commentary and creative writing. This publication presents an excellent opportunity to expose faculty to new coaching and mentoring methods and strategies providing them with curriculum pieces, teaching tips, and class outlines.

The NOLS faculty summit provides a second approach to provide information on coaching and mentoring. NOLS sponsors a faculty gathering each year to furnish staff with professional development and growth opportunities. Plenary sessions and workshops at this summit focus on a variety of curriculum topics. A workshop or session on coaching and mentoring techniques would allow for the presentation of academic information regarding specific coaching and mentoring techniques and methods as well as provide a rich opportunity to facilitate practice with these new techniques and methods.

Held in conjunction with the faculty summit is the program supervisor meeting. This annual meeting presents a forum where program supervisors from the different NOLS locations gather to share thoughts, ideas, successes, and solutions to the issues they face in providing logistical and curricular support for NOLS faculty. This meeting offers an excellent environment to introduce to this key group new information, techniques, and methods for coaching and mentoring. As noted earlier, these individuals are specifically tasked with coaching and mentoring faculty at their locations. Providing this cohort with enrichment in coaching and

mentoring skills serves the dual purpose of empowering them to coach and mentor better and to teach the faculty they supervise how to better coach and mentor.

The fourth avenue for presenting NOLS faculty with updated information could come from creating and publishing curricular resources specifically focused on coaching and mentoring. NOLS creates, publishes, and disseminates resources both internally and externally on various aspects of outdoor education. Internal NOLS publications focus on outdoor education curriculum in general while also concentrating on NOLS' specific curricular goals. The publication of a curriculum resource focused specifically on coaching and mentoring as it pertains to NOLS faculty would provide an excellent tool to aid in the professional growth and development of NOLS faculty.

The fifth avenue to introduce formalized coaching and mentoring curriculum would focus on the annual faculty plan (AFP) cohort. This cohort consists of 18 diverse senior faculty members who possess a wide variety of skills and who are recognized for the high quality of the work they provide for students and colleagues. While a great many NOLS instructors work only a course or two each year AFP instructors full-time faculty working throughout the year around the world in all NOLS course areas. The Field Staffing Director supervises and supports AFP instructors with coaching and mentoring. This relationship could facilitate an efficient transfer of new curriculum and information to this group of senior faculty. Given the quantity and quality of their work initiating new coaching and mentoring skills with AFP members creates a process to present new skills and strategies the general faculty body.

Several options exist to assess the efficacy of introducing new formal coaching and mentoring curriculum at NOLS. The easiest rubric for assessing the effectiveness of the *Staff Newsletter* articles is monitoring the number of visits to the article(s) sites on the web as each



view or visit is registered and counted. This allows one to at least know the number of times a curriculum article was viewed, which may indicate the significance of it to faculty.

The faculty summit and program supervisor meetings present opportunities for more in-depth and specific feedback on the presentation of coaching and feedback curriculum. At the end of each day of the NOLS faculty summit each participant is asked to complete an evaluation on the logistics details and presentations of that day. Along with this feedback, oral and written feedback will be requested of the participants of the coaching workshop at the end of the workshop. This feedback will provide timely input and critique of both the curriculum and its presentation.

Oral and written feedback is required from participants of the program supervisor meetings. This critique is valuable to review the current year's presentations and to inform participants on what presentations to include for future meetings. Program supervisor's acceptance and use of new coaching and mentoring curriculum provides one indication for the efficacy of these tools. Program supervisor's reporting on faculty use of these tools is a second and perhaps stronger indication of the efficacy of this new curriculum.

Perhaps the best means of evaluating the efficacy of new coaching and mentoring curriculum lies in whether faculty use the new curriculum and whether changes in coaching and mentoring behavior occur. Faculty members at NOLS are discerning users of curricular resources. Resources found to be effective are integrated with present curriculum, brought to the field, and utilized with students and peers. Knowledge and information that improves staff effectiveness is adapted and spreads within the faculty cohort. Recognizing acceptance and use of new coaching and mentoring information would denote a successful launch of curricular change. Recognizing changes in habits, behavior, and performance signals success.

### Chapter Summary

NOLS' mission, curricular goals, and expectations for faculty growth and development combine to create a culture wherein feedback, coaching, and mentoring are inherent. To provide for this growth and development, faculty members need effective tools, methods, and strategies to coach and mentor one another. The creation of new curriculum engendering instructor growth and development is the purpose of this project. Specific curriculum pieces to aid supervisors and peers in coaching and mentoring will be presented through the use of NOLS' in-house publication, the presentation of these new curricular tools, methods, and strategies at formal faculty and supervisor gatherings, as well as the introduction and use of these new tools and strategies to the AFP senior faculty cohort. Chapter four presents the constituent parts of this new curriculum.

## Chapter 4

### RESULTS

NOLS continually strives to grow and develop as an organization and this desire influences and informs how NOLS develops its faculty. The ambition and desire for continuing faculty development necessitates creating and implementing curriculum that provides the relevant stakeholders with appropriate tools to engender professional growth. The field staffing office, program supervisors, and faculty members themselves are the parties responsible for coaching and mentoring faculty members. Thus these stakeholders need the appropriate resources create and support professional growth and development in NOLS faculty members. This project focuses on creating relevant coaching and mentoring tools and curricula for the relevant stakeholders at NOLS.

#### Coaching and Mentoring Curriculum: Models

In order for one to coach and mentor well, he or she must possess a working knowledge of what is meant by these specific words because understanding definitions allows for a basic grasp of concepts. Among the many definitions that exist, the Oxford American dictionary defines mentoring as, “to advise or to train, especially a younger colleague” and defines coaching as, “to train or instruct a team or player” (2012). NOLS faculty and program supervisors can take a good first step towards providing quality coaching and mentoring through

understanding these definitions of coaching and mentoring. Faculty members and program supervisors become even better coaches and mentors through understanding specific theories and models that address and underpin effective coaching and mentoring skills. This paper examines three specific theories, or models, about coaching and mentoring and discusses some of their similarities and differences.

John Whitmore (2009) in his book, *Coaching for performance: GROWing Human Potential and Purpose*, presents his thoughts on his particular coaching model by stating,

Coaching delivers results in large measure because of the supportive relationship between the coach and the coachee, and the means and style of communication used. The coachee does acquire the facts, not from the coach but from within himself, stimulated by the coach (p. 9).

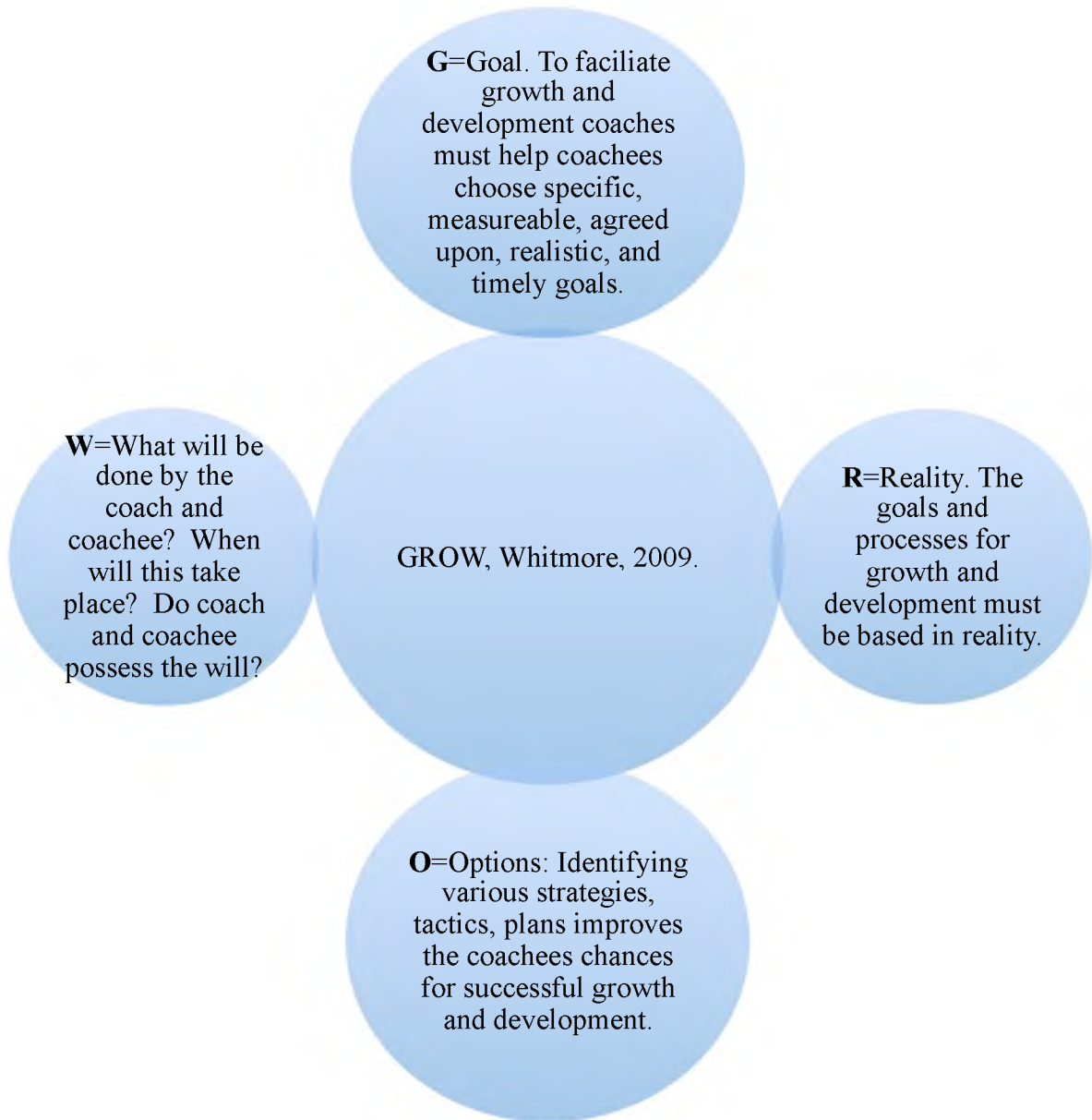
Whitmore broke his GROW model into four distinct phases or areas: establishing goals, understanding reality, identifying options, and focusing on what is needed to succeed. In setting out the goal phase, Whitmore noted that an end goal is not the only goal a coach and coachee must focus on in order to be successful. To attain his or her end goal, a coachee must identify specific, realistic, measurable, and timely performance goals that define the coachee's path and allow the coachee to realize the end goal. As Whitmore noted, end goals might inspire a coachee, but it is the performance goals that provide specificity along the path of growth and development (2009).

In describing the reality phase Whitmore returned to the coachee's need to objectively choose both a performance and an end goal. Performance goals allow the coachee to identify and measure progress along the way while end goals define the final objective. The goal setting process is based in reality when the coachee describes, via a coach's reality based questioning,

an objective and specific path that includes appropriate, distinct, and specifically detailed benchmarks. These actions enable both coach and coachee to know that the agreed upon path has been followed successfully and that the coachee has attained his or her end goals (2009).

In the options phase, the third phase of the GROW model, a coach questions the coachee in order to help him or her identify the appropriate options to concentrate on and use in attaining the coachee's goals. The coach employs this strategy because he or she wants the coachee to understand there are multiple possible options for attaining the coachee's goals and that the coachee is limiting him or herself by fixating on a believed best option. When the coachee steps back from a particular problem or issue and increases his or her options, he or she increases the chance for success (2009).

In the final phase of Whitmore's GROW model, the coach helps the coachee focus on what he or she specifically needs to attain the goals set forth. The coach focuses specific attention on questioning the coachee on what action he or she will take to attain his or her goals. The coach works to enable the coachee to understand how he or she will execute the needed actions for success and identify potential obstacles. The coach also empowers the coachee to identify the specific support required for successful completion of the goals. All of these actions and questions are designed to facilitate the coachee solving problems for him or herself (2009).



GROW Model, Whitmore, 2009.

Just like Whitmore (2009) identified the need for options and emphasized concentrating on those options that bring success, NOLS faculty and program supervisors must focus on similar principles when establishing and maintaining a coaching relationship. During the

briefing and preparation phase of a NOLS course, program supervisors invest energy and time working with the course instructors in team building and coaching. The GROW model provides both a visual cue and as well as a handrail for program supervisors to coach instructors in areas of growth and development. Program supervisors can walk instructors through each step of the model thus setting up an action plan for each for the course ahead. The action plan and model are transferable to the field setting, allowing faculty members to assess their own growth and development.

This model also serves as an outline and guide for faculty members coaching one another. Both new and seasoned faculty must identify options for moving forward and growing as educators. Successful growth as an educator hinges upon faculty and supervisors identifying what options exist in helping staff grow as professionals. Once the options have been identified faculty and program supervisors must prepare specific strategies for faculty to apply during their course work to promote successful professional development.

Nakamura, Shernoff, and Hooker (2009) introduced their work on good mentoring by noting Talcott Parsons' work on social survival as well as Parsons' idea of "Pattern Maintenance" (p. xi) and how this phenomenon worked to help younger members of society solve problems. The authors described this idea of pattern maintenance as one means of ensuring that the thoughts, ideas, and beliefs of individuals and groups were passed on to others. Nakamura et al. remarked, "[w]hen this takes place in an occupational setting we call it mentoring . . ." (pp. xi-xii).

Nakamura et al. (2009) observed senior research scientists working with and mentoring younger scientists over many years in order to analyze whether this mentoring proved useful and valuable over time. The authors believed that the senior scientists were able to imbue their

protégés with a number of positive memes (thoughts, ideas, and beliefs) that carried over for multiple generations. The authors noted four distinct ways in which the senior scientists mentored their protégés and transferred their positive memes: talk (conversation), active role modeling for the protégés, observation of senior scientists by their protégés, and actively creating a learning environment. These four strategies seem quite passive when juxtaposed against the more active coaching model espoused by Whitmore (2009).

As opposed to Whitmore's (2009) active goal setting by the coach and coachee, Nakamura et al. (2009) noted engagement in conversation as an important aspect of their meme mentoring model because mentees' goals came up naturally in these conversations. The authors' research noted that informal conversation such as the banter exchanged on long walks, friendly one-on-one conversations, and collaborative group conversations were all used as a significant and powerful means of mentor to mentee communication and learning. The absence of hectoring and other forms of belittling and abusive communication was an important factor as the dearth of this negative communication enabled positive communication to proliferate. This idea of creating a friendly and collaborative arena is a central goal of each NOLS course. Each instructor team works to create and maintain an environment steeped in positive communication, positive personal and group interactions, and harassment free.

The second strategy noted by Nakamura et al. (2009) was active modeling by the mentor. This active modeling is of interest as mentors noted they were not intentionally trying to set a good example or be on their best behavior, rather these mentors acted as they believed they should behave. The mentors carried themselves in a manner befitting what they believed was appropriate and their mentees noted and emulated this behavior. In the GROW model espoused by Whitmore (2009), the author advocated working with the reality of one's situation as the



second step or strategy. The research by Nakamura et al. seemed to demonstrate that the mentors created a reality for mentees to emulate and mimic. An interesting dichotomy noted by Nakamura et al. is that though mentees learned from both observing the real time modeling of mentors and absorbing learning due to simply being in close proximity to their mentors as their mentors modeled, both mentors and mentees noted the particular strategy of modeling proved more powerful than being in proximity to mentors in transmitting memes from mentor to mentee.

The idea that modeling may be either active in its intent or passive dovetails well into a third strategy noted by Nakamura et al. (2009). As noted above, the authors discussed a strategy where mentors alternated between active modeling and just being who they should be as individuals. This particular strategy holds significant appeal for coaching and mentoring in the NOLS context. NOLS faculty members spend multiple weeks working wilderness expeditions. This work environment provides senior NOLS instructors with significant amounts of time to actively model appropriate techniques, strategies, and ways of being to new instructors.

The third strategy posited by the authors was where a mentor's memes were transferred through observation of the mentor by his or her mentee. Many mentees noted that they simply watched their mentors and what their mentors did and did not do as a means of learning. This aspect of the work done by Nakamura et al. (2009) might be seen as providing the options that Whitmore (2009) speaks to in his GROW model. While this tactic seems similar to the modeling idea of just being as mentioned above, a significant difference exists. A coach or mentor just being who he or she is shows passive transmission of information by the mentor or coach. Mentees and coachees observing mentors and coaches actively engage in the process. Again, NOLS courses afford excellent opportunities for new instructors to observe their senior colleagues in formal teaching settings as well as during times of informal interactions. NOLS

faculty, whether presenting classes or leading activities, know students constantly observe what they are doing and how they go about doing it. NOLS faculty must also remain mindful that their colleagues also observe, as a means to learn, what takes place on the course.

The fourth strategy described by Nakamura et al. (2009) saw mentors actively create a learning environment within the confines their workspaces for their mentees. This learning environment allowed for an interactive and collaborative exchange of memes between mentor and mentee. Whereas Whitmore (2009) spoke of a coach's need to actively empower a coachee to seek out the what, when, how, and will of learning and growing, the mentors described in the research of Nakamura et al. (2009) created a learning space whereby their mentees could actively participate in the what, when, how, and will along side of their mentors.

The mentoring noted by Nakamura et al. (2009) takes place over long periods of time (multiple years). NOLS courses span weeks rather than years thus long-term mentoring and coaching of new faculty by senior faculty does not occur in the same way. Long-term mentoring can exist within NOLS when faculty members work at similar branch schools over several years. When this happens, the program supervisors at the location provide long-term mentoring and coaching.

The field staffing office (FSO) provides another avenue for long-term coaching and mentoring. The FSO provides long-term coaching and mentoring to faculty through tracking faculty member's work and performance evaluations over multiple seasons, years, and locations of work. A faculty member interacts with a particular program supervisor during a specific course during a specific season. At another location, during the next season, or on the next course, the faculty member may work with a different program supervisor. However, during the year faculty members communicate regularly with the FSO thus allowing the FSO to provide

longitudinal mentoring and coaching taking into account the faculty members overall performance, goals, growth, and development over a long period of time.

Zachary (2000) put forth a model of mentoring that noted four distinct phases for its application: preparing, negotiating, enabling, and coming to closure. Zachary's mentoring model contains a number of formal and intentional strategies that bear resemblance to Whitmore's GROW model as well as some of the more informal aspects, such as informal conversation, modeling, and observation, as noted by Nakamura et al. (2009)

Zachary (2000) likened the preparation phase to "[T]illing the Soil" (p. 65). In this phase the mentor actively and intentionally readies him or herself for the coming relationship. Zachary noted that those mentoring relationships that are formal in design and set-up provide some support in their establishment. However, many mentoring relationships are established informally and often in these informal relationships mentors fail to use prior planning to increase the chances for the relationships' success. Zachary noted that preparing well requires the mentor to spend time in honest self-reflection in order to understand his or her motivation for establishing the mentoring relationship. This reflection is similar to the conversational strategy put forth by Nakamura et al (2009) as Zachary noted that self-reflection meant engaging in conversation with one's self.

Zachary (2000) also noted that this preparation phase is when the mentor prepares and engages the mentee. The mentor must intentionally initiate conversations with his or her mentee in order to set goals and decide which specific strategies may work with the mentee as each prepares for the mentoring relationship ahead. This aspect of Zachary's work more closely relates to the goal-setting phase in Whitmore's (2009) GROW model as both authors advocate for the formal and intentional establishment of goals that will enable a successful mentoring

relationship. Within the NOLS context this phase takes place during the briefing and preparation phase of a course. Program supervisors must intentionally initiate conversations with the entire instructor team and individual instructors must intentionally initiate conversations amongst themselves.

After mentor and mentee have prepared for and entered into their relationship, Zachary (2000) noted that they engage in consensus and commitment building. Zachary identified this second phase as “negotiating” (p. 93). Here mentor and mentee continue the conversation begun at the start of the relationship. This conversation is more informal, free flowing, and ranges over myriad ideas. The mentor and mentee will come away from this conversation having solidified their goals, the avenue for attaining those goals, and having agreed upon how each are accountable within the relationship.

This particular phase of Zachary’s work is similar to the modeling phase in the work of Nakamura et al. (2009) as this negotiation allows both mentor and mentee to create the model for their mentoring relationship and does so in a relaxed and informal manner. At NOLS this phase occurs when the program supervisor spends time team building and establishing goals with the instructor team working a particular course. Within the instructor team this phase occurs when individual members of the instructor team create the coaching and mentoring model and goals each want to work on during the course.

Zachary (2000) defined her third phase as “enabling” (p. 117). The enabling Zachary described was not just the mentor passively allowing the mentee to move along in the relationship but rather an enabling that is an active and intentional empowerment of the mentee by the mentor. Zachary’s enabling phase brings aspects of the reality phase introduced by Whitmore (2009) in his GROW model. In this phase Zachary’s mentor actively builds, manages,

and supports the mentoring relationship thus steeping this relationship in reality. It is during this phase that Zachary's mentor concentrates on the specific aspects of the mentee's growth, the challenges faced in that growth, and the strategies to use to overcome the obstacles encountered.

During a NOLS course the enabling noted by Zachary (2000) occurs during the course briefing and de-briefing phases for the program supervisor and during field time for faculty members. Program supervisors not only must negotiate during course briefings, they must also enable. The program supervisor must use this time for building, managing, and supporting the mentoring relationship. Doing so allows the program supervisor to use the post-course debrief time to coach and mentor the instructor through the particular obstacles encountered on the course to enable growth for the next course.

This process occurs for individual faculty members as well but takes place during formal feedback and evaluative sessions in the field. Faculty members set aside formal time each seven to ten days, and at the end of the course, to provide coaching and mentoring for one another. Multiple feedback sessions during each NOLS course allows faculty to provide specific coaching and mentoring, to one another, regarding areas for growth or obstacles encountered during the course. These opportunities allow faculty members the chance to grow and develop in the moment during their present course.

Zachary (2000) called her fourth phase "coming to closure". Zachary described how closing a mentoring relationship might bring out a plethora of emotions and reactions from both mentor and mentee. Some mentoring relationships close naturally when goals are met and celebrated. Other relationships may close abruptly without any note of celebration or finality, leaving mentor, mentee, or both lacking a sense that goals were attained. As Zachary and Whitmore (2009) noted, planning for the closure and end of a mentoring or coaching relationship

is best done with intention. Whitmore posited that the coach needed to help the coachee understand that he or she had the ability to leave the coaching relationship and go forward and make his or her own decisions.

Zachary (2000) noted that preparing for closure allows both mentor and mentee to appropriately terminate the relationship at a suitable culmination point and plan for what comes next for the mentee. The appropriate and suitable time for closure during a NOLS course occurs during the debriefing. Once the course returns from the field and, the program supervisor reads through all of the course paperwork and written evaluations the debriefing takes place. An oral review of the course takes place with each member of the instructor team providing insight, thoughts, and feedback for themselves and each other. At this time, having read the paperwork, having de-briefed the student group, and having listened to the thoughts and insights of the instructors, the program supervisor provides his or her final oral and written feedback. This feedback becomes part of each instructor's permanent record and provides the starting point for mentoring and coaching on the next course.

NOLS faculty and program supervisors use similar processes to those described by Whitmore (2009) when establishing goals as they prepare, brief for, execute, and evaluate each course worked. Course faculty and program supervisors establish appropriate coaching and mentoring goals for each member of the instructor team based on stated course curriculum goals, NOLS' stated expectations for faculty and their development, and each faculty member's personal desire for growth and development. Anchoring these goals and expectations in institutional reality allows faculty members to grow, develop, and mature guided by NOLS' institutional expectations of faculty development.

NOLS also coaches and mentors faculty members in manners similar to those espoused by Zachary (2000) and Nakamura et al. (2009). New faculty members spend a great deal of time in formal and informal conversation with their more senior colleagues. These conversations till the soil by providing ample opportunities for formal and informal mentoring. New faculty members have the time and space to speak about goals and aspirations as well as seek advice from their more senior colleagues. NOLS courses and the expectations of new staff are structured so that new faculty members spend considerable time observing senior colleagues present curriculum in a variety of situations and environments. This structure allows new faculty time to grow and develop their instructional and leadership styles and negotiate their next steps

NOLS culture and tradition also accounts for active role modeling and creating an active learning environment as new faculty members observe senior faculty present curriculum and activities. During this observation time senior faculty strive to actively model excellent teaching techniques and portray course interactions in the manner expected of faculty by NOLS as an institution. This active role modeling enables and engenders a greater likelihood of success for new staff as they take on more responsibility. Each strategy used at NOLS, the conversational interchange, observational learning, and active role modeling, just like those put forth by Nakamura et al. (2009) engenders a learning environment.

Just as Nakamura et al. (2009) advocated for space where young scientists could collaborate and learn from their senior colleagues, NOLS values the establishment of open and positive learning environments on each course for all faculty members to learn and grow. Bringing all members of the course faculty together for this process mimics the idea of coming to closure noted by Zachary (2000). Here closure occurs in that the cycle of growth and development comes full circle from neophyte to senior faculty member.

Whitmore (2009), Nakamura et al. (2009), and Zachary (2000) all argued for coaching and mentoring as effective and powerful tools for the development and growth of individuals over time. These authors also argued coaching and mentoring are effective and powerful tools for the improvement of an individual's skills and performance in the near term. The work by these authors and NOLS' implementation of these models provides evidence that coaching and mentoring work grounded on intentional goals, steeped in reality, providing options for implementation, and establishing appropriate next steps provides for and supports the growth and development of educators.



### Coaching and Mentoring Curriculum: Skills

Gaining knowledge and proficiency of various models provides a good first step in coaching and mentoring. A logical and important next step is gaining knowledge and proficiency with coaching and mentoring skills. If the coaching and mentoring process works well, a coach or mentor utilizes specific and appropriate skills with mindfulness and intentionality. Academicians and practitioners have developed specific mentoring tools to overcome specific problems or to realize certain goals. The ability to use tools effectively in a certain circumstance or with a certain coachee or mentee is one of the hallmarks of a successful coach or mentor. This paper analyzes and presents skills good coaches and mentors employ.

Johnson (2007) introduced a set of skills mentors must learn, practice, and perfect in order to cultivate productive relationships with mentees. Successfully applying these skills comes from understanding them, becoming comfortable with their use, and employing them in the appropriate moment. NOLS program supervisors and faculty members must understand, practice, and employ these skills with students and fellow faculty.

Johnson (2007) describes mentoring abilities as a combination of cognitive, emotional, and relational skills used congruently to present effective mentoring. Coaches and mentors must not only understand the academic underpinnings of the mentoring work they embark upon, they must prove capable of communicating this information, and need the ability to relate to their coachees and mentees. In Johnson's model the mentor and coach's ability to apply his or her intellect and use his or her communication skills is critical for creating and sustaining a successful mentoring and coaching relationship.

NOLS subscribes to the same belief that mentors and coaches must exercise their intellectual skills and commit time and energy to learning communication skills in order to create a successful coaching and mentoring relationship. Successful coaching and mentoring at NOLS occurs through mindfully identifying the particular needs of the mentee or coachee and then utilizing the appropriate coaching and mentoring skills to help the coachee or mentee grow and develop.

The competencies Johnson (2007) included in his model represent skills enabling mentors to establish the structure for their relationships while monitoring the boundaries and phases of these relationships. Johnson's ideal mentors possess the expertise to understand their mentee's development, the ability to gauge when the mentoring relationship is functioning well, and the wherewithal to recognize a dysfunctional relationship. In order to provide appropriate professional mentoring for instructor development, NOLS program supervisors and faculty members must become learned in the competencies illustrated by Johnson's model.

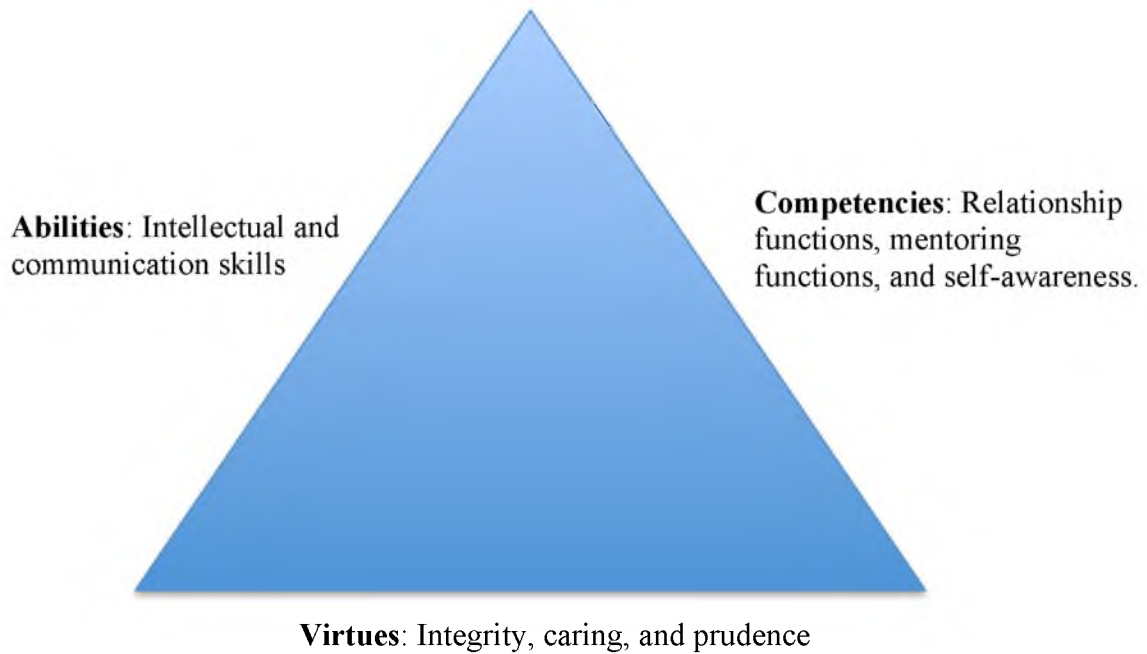
Program supervisors work with both new and senior faculty in mentoring and coaching relationships. Understanding a mentee or coachee's development requires understanding where different faculty members are in their career development and knowing when to coax and cajole, to question, to instruct, and to provide space. These same parameters exist for senior faculty mentoring and coaching new faculty. Just possessing knowledge and information does not a mentor make; effective mentoring and coaching occurs when the mentor or coach understand when to mentor and coach.

To support program supervisors and faculty members becoming better coaches, NOLS providing on-going training in leadership, coaching, and communication skills. Utilizing and subsidizing in-house seminars and conferences as well as providing training monies for attending

outside conferences and presentations allows NOLS program supervisors and faculty members to stay current in the requisite skill areas for coaching and mentoring. Being exposed to and learning how to apply various mentoring skills allows coaches and mentors to implement these skills in the relevant circumstances for the appropriate reasons.

Johnson (2007) included the virtues of integrity, caring, and prudence in his mentoring skills model. Some might be tempted to argue that virtues are inherent traits rather than learned skills, yet a counterargument can be made that mentors learn to express integrity, caring, and prudence. Integrity is expressed as trust and consistency in one's behavior. Mentors demonstrate caring through showing respect for their mentees as individuals. Mentors demonstrate prudence through the execution of good judgment during interactions with a mentee. If these virtues, as defined by Johnson, were solely inherent traits then parents would not need help in developing these skills in their children and individuals working to be good mentors would not need to spend a lifetime practicing the appropriate use of these traits in the mentoring relationship.

Johnson (2007) further noted that a virtuous mentor thinks not only about what he or she will do when acting as a mentor, but also about whom he or she will be. In continuing to define his thoughts on mentoring Johnson (2007) stated, "[v]irtuous mentors offer models of moral, ethical, and professional behavior for students, and they form relationships with protégés rooted in integrity, trust, and support" (p.74).



*A triangular model of mentor competence. Adapted from "On Being A Mentor" by W.B. Johnson, 2003.*

The idea virtuous mentoring exists at NOLS as well. Program supervisors and faculty members establish moral, ethical, and professional relationships with the faculty and students they seek to mentor. In order to accomplish the task of establishing these relationships, NOLS program supervisors and faculty members must accurately model who they are as individuals, transparently establish the standards they expect of their coachees and mentees, engender an open and honest dialogue between mentor and mentee, and show care for their coachee and mentee.

Work by Nakamura, Shernoff, and Hooker (2009) identified several skills for mentors to model in working with mentees. Like Johnson (2007), some of the skills presented by Nakamura et al. could be viewed as being inherent abilities rather than learned and practiced skills. However the dedicated practice of a skill allows a mentor to learn and then apply that skill to the mentoring relationship. Nakamura et al. identified as important skills the cultivation of self-

awareness, the ability to create appropriate matches, and the ability to understand the differences between individuals in the mentoring relationship. These skills closely resemble the competencies noted in Johnson's model.

Indeed, to be an effective mentor, one must have a strong self-awareness coupled with the ability to affect change in one's self when appropriate. A mentor's self-awareness comes from practiced introspection and allows the mentor to match his or her abilities and style to his or her mentee based on an awareness of how personalities and abilities affect mentoring relationships. NOLS expects program supervisors and faculty to show competence in the areas noted in the preceding paragraph. Whether coaching and mentoring or presenting leadership and communication curriculum, self-awareness, flexibility, and adaptability prove significant to imparting knowledge to coachees, mentees, and students.

Nakamura et al. (2009) noted that appropriate matching of mentor to mentee means a greater likelihood for a constructive and successful relationship with both parties. Though both mentor and mentee work to make the relationship work, the coach or mentor, for reasons of age, seniority, or appreciable knowledge, possesses the greater capacity to ascertain which matches might work and which matches might not. As a coach or mentor works to assess the appropriateness of the relationship, he or she evaluates the differences between mentor and mentee and how these differences might impact the relationship.

Each individual's professional goals, teaching and learning styles, and personality differences impact matching a coach and coachee or mentor and mentee appropriately. NOLS works to match program supervisors with particular instructor teams during course briefings and debriefings. Factors taken into account include skill expertise and background, communication styles and personality, and the ability to mentor and coach over the long term. As instructor

teams brief and team build for the upcoming course, the program supervisor and each faculty member must evaluate how best to interact with, and provide feedback for, each member of the instructor team.

Along with excellent self-awareness, the ability to assess and address differences, and the capacity to judge the appropriateness of a mentoring match, good mentors possess other important qualities and skills. Nakamura et al. (2009) noted that when a mentor processes his or her thoughts externally, the mentee is able to better able to make sense of the mentor's actions and thought processes. Along this external processing, a mentor who shares his or her personal values and ethics openly reinforces these values and ethics in his or her mentee. This sharing helps create a community within the relationship that helps move the relationship forward in a constructive manner. A mentor or coach modeling the skills of self-awareness, open communication, and a willingness to own one's values and ethics creates a positive atmosphere in which his or coachee or mentee learns and thrives.

At NOLS, the coach or mentor wishing to use and model the above skills must also be aware of their pitfalls and traps. Honest, open, and solution-oriented communication is paramount as NOLS faculty work together in extremely dynamic situations where going home at the end of the day is not an option and sometimes not an option for weeks or months. Faculty must provide feedback to one another for in-the-moment short-term growth as well as coach and mentor for long-term growth and development.

Successful mentoring skills and traits identified by Zachary (2000) fall into the principal categories of communication skills used to convey information from mentor to mentee and empowerment skills used to actively enable a mentee to succeed in learning what the mentor has communicated. Zachary's communication skills include the process of building and maintaining

mentoring relationships. At NOLS these mentoring attributes occur during course briefings and debriefings. Program supervisors spend time building trust and creating positive relationships with the faculty members in the instructor team.

Program supervisors expand this trust and relationship building through using communication skills to prepare faculty members to coach and mentor one another during their course. This ability to empower faculty to coach and mentor while in the field utilizes the mentoring skills noted by Zachary (2000). To coach well in the present and mentor well for the future, coaches and mentors must communicate well with coachees and mentee. To prepare mentees for long-term mentoring, mentors must possess vision in order to guide their mentee towards the set out goals and mentors must show action in aiding their mentees in attaining those goals.

Trust and positive relationships allow supervisors to provide coaching and mentoring for faculty before they leave for their course and sets the stage for continued coaching and mentoring when the instructor team returns. Applying energy at the start of the relationship might be the easiest aspect of the relationship. Providing up-front effort coupled with quality end-of-course follow through allow program supervisors to set these mentoring relationships up for long-term success. This longer duration work allows mentor and mentee to successfully cultivate the relationship into something that endures and creates a foundation for the mentee to network with others.

Timely and growth-oriented feedback provided by the mentor to his or her mentee regarding the mentee's performance is a powerful communication tool to enable a mentee to attain his or her goals. Zachary (2000) noted this feedback is forward looking and solution oriented so that the mentee remains focused on what must be done to be successful. These skills

show alignment with the NOLS (2012) skills of vision and action. The ability for a mentor to understand and execute needed feedback and mentoring provides the mentee the best chance to grow and develop over the long-term. At NOLS to optimize these interactions, a mentor must set goals for his or her mentee and then encourage and empower his or her mentor to attain the established goals over the long-term.

Enduring mentorships networked with others within NOLS provides greater long-term success for faculty. Though faculty coach and mentor one another during their time on courses, program supervisors and the field staffing office (FSO) provide long-term mentoring for field faculty. Program supervisors interact with faculty over the season or seasons these faculty members work at a specific location. The FSO supervises, coaches, and mentors faculty for the duration of the faculty member's career at NOLS. A foundation for networking created between faculty, program supervisors, and the FSO provides professional contacts, enhancing a mentee's development for the duration of their career.

In congruence with her thoughts on communication, Zachary (2000) noted a mentee would be successful in attaining his or her goals when he or she was actively encouraged and empowered to succeed. The mentoring skill of facilitation allows a mentor to create a positive learning environment in which his or her mentee can thrive. NOLS (2012) creates and fosters positive learning environments at first by stating these environments are integral parts of the culture, values, and ethics of the school. Secondly, providing leadership and communication tools and curriculum aiding program supervisors and faculty in building and strengthening these relationships shows support for these relationships. Finally, soliciting and acknowledging feedback regarding the progress and effectiveness of positive learning environments denotes



their significance within the school. This positive learning environment creates space thus allowing mentees to be active participants in planning and executing the mentoring relationship.

Coaching skills allow mentors to focus on specific pieces within the mentoring relationship identified, by either mentor or mentee, as important. Effective and efficient mentors actively coach and guide mentees towards these important pieces. After the mentor and mentee have communicated, active coaching and guidance have occurred, and feedback has been provided, both mentor and mentee need to reflect on what transpired. Reflection allows mentor and mentee to take stock and evaluate the efficacy of the relationship that just took place. Once this reflection and evaluation has taken place, both mentor and mentee look to the future to formulate a vision of what comes next in the relationship (Zachary, 2000). Successful mentoring relationships are those where both mentor and mentee not only understand the need to work through the full process but also know that in doing so growth, maturation, and appropriate next steps occur.

Coaching and mentoring models present coaches and mentors with a framework from which to operate. Coaching and mentoring skills provide the tools with which coaches and mentors do their work. Within NOLS, the field staffing office, program supervisors, and faculty members themselves coach and mentor for professional growth and development. To do so successfully all of these individuals must possess myriad skills to lead, educate, coach, and mentor. These skills are mastered through understanding, gaining proficiency, and practicing the constituent parts and implementing the complete tool. This effort creates mastery of skills allowing coaches and mentors to pass on their knowledge and support their coachees and mentees. Paramount in creating a successful process, the coach and mentor must strive to improve his or her skills so that the coachee and mentee benefits.

## Coaching Workshop Proposal, NOLS Faculty Summit

Title: Coaching for Growth

Format: Workshop

Presenter: Marco Johnson

Description: NOLS places great importance on mentoring and coaching faculty for professional growth and development. Often the concepts of mentoring and coaching are used interchangeably, yet there is significant and meaningful difference between them.

Nakamura, Shernoff, and Hooker (2009) stated, "By influencing the next generation of practitioners, mentors can also shape the future of their profession" (p. 1). I believe that at NOLS we informally and successfully practice this mentoring style by asking newer field faculty to observe what senior colleagues do and teach or by having new faculty seek guidance from senior faculty on how to execute or teach a skill or class. However, mentoring is but one skill that can be employed to engender professional growth and development in NOLS faculty.

Whitmore (2009) stated, "Coaching delivers results in large measure because of the supportive relationship between the coach and the coachee, and the means and style of communication used. The coachee does acquire the facts, not from the coach but from within himself, stimulated by the coach" (p. 9). Active, intentional, and specifically focused coaching is the other part of the process that must be developed and employed to provide for the professional growth and development of NOLS faculty.

Outline:

- 1) Provide an overview of the differences between coaching and mentoring.

- 2) Introduce ideas and concepts of coaching as a tool for faculty growth and development. This workshop focuses specifically on Skills and Performance Coaching from the work of Tschannen-Moran (2010).
- 3) Provide time for small group practice and interaction.
- 4) Summation time to allow participants to share best thoughts and ideas.

Outcomes: Provide faculty with specific tools enabling them to comfortably and proactively coach their colleagues for positive professional growth and development.

## Coaching Workshop Outline

Skills and Performance Coaching: Marco Johnson, Field Staffing Director,

NOLS Faculty Summit

Overview:

90-minute coaching workshop presented at the 2013 NOLS Faculty Summit.

Objectives:

Affirm that feedback through mentoring and coaching creates professional growth in educators.

Present the goals, tasks, roles, and processes of Skills and Performance Coaching.

Practice using Skills and Performance Coaching.

Introduction:

Welcome, 10 minutes for greetings, overview of workshop, and provide handouts.

Activities:

25 minutes for presentation of feedback and coaching material using a Prezi tool.

Introduce the need for professional growth as an educator, how feedback fulfills this need, and why coaching is a useful and powerful tool in engendering professional growth.

Visual presentation used for noting pertinent information and to facilitate questions and discussion. (Slides used as prompts.)

One-on-one coaching sessions. Three 15-minute scenario based sessions to practice basic strategies of the Skills and Performance Coaching model.

Wrap-up:

Questions, key learning points, sharing of “ah hah” moments, and next steps. 15 minute conclusion and appreciation to the workshop participants.

Materials Needed:

Computer, digital projector, screen, white board, and markers

Handouts:

Workshop notes on coaching goals, strategies, and questions.

Facilitator Notes: (slides used as prompts)

Slide 1: Introduction

Slide 2-4: Relating mentoring and coaching to NOLS and the development of NOLS faculty.

Slide 5-6: What is Mentoring? (Discussion point)

Slide 7-8: What is Coaching? (Discussion point)

Slide 9: How academics and professionals define coaching.

Slide 10: Our stereotype of coaching.

Slide 11: We regularly coach even if we do not recognize that we do.

Slide 12-15: Introduce goals, tasks, and processes of Skills and Performance Coaching to set stage for practice. (Introduction, discussion point, and set-up for one-on-one practice.)

## Coaching Workshop Handout: SPC Tasks and Processes

Skills and Performance Coaching (SPC) Tschannen-Moran (2010):

Perhaps the most common type of coaching and one that focuses on improving the coachees' skills and performance in a specific area of his or her work or life. Skills and Performance Coaching (SPC) works best when coachees desire improvement and growth due to their own intrinsic values as well their enthusiasm to meet the requirements and stipulations of the particular job or task.

Coaching Tasks for SPC:

Cultivate motivation: Assisting coachees to focus on attractive motivators. What works? What is wanted? What will create improvements?

Expand awareness: Assist coachees to focus on what is happening in the here and now rather than on is not happening. What does success look, feel, and sound like?

Build self-efficacy: Coaches engender confidence in coachees to initiate and sustain change and growth.

Frame opportunities: SPC coaches assist coachees in understanding and developing opportunities for change and growth.

Design experiments: SPC encourages coachees to generate and test myriad ideas and ways to improve skills and performance.

Structure repetition: Mastery of new skills takes practice and perseverance is paramount for engraining newly learned skills. SPC helps coachees maintain focus when implementing new behaviors.

Savor success: Celebrating mastery of new skills creates self-efficacy and builds long-term success.

Processes and Roles of SPC:

Identify a learning need with intrinsic value: Coachees must want to learn for their own good reasons. Using SPC, coaches must know what and how a coachee wants to learn.

Listen to understand and support: Coaches must truly listen to and hear the coachee's story! Empathy and support are crucial.

Discover capacities, strengths, and resources: Coachees need to build on assets and strengths for more effective and enjoyable development.

Observe examples of successful accomplishments: In SPC, coaches empower coachees to improve their performance through understanding and exploring their successes.

Brainstorm innovative designs and strategies: Coaches encourage coachees to experiment with a variety of approaches to the issues and problems at hand.

Practice and refine new behaviors: SPC focuses coachees on sustaining and advancing new behaviors and not dwelling on setbacks.

Celebrate Improvements: SPC assists coachees to appreciate what they accomplished before moving on to what is next.

Repeat for continued improvement: Improvement and success are not linear or terminal. SPC enables coachees to view their work as ongoing and dynamic.

SPC Model- Story, Empathy, Inquiry, and Strategy:

**SPC Model**  
**Story, Empathy, Inquiry, and Strategy.**  
**Definitions and Coaching Questions.**



## SPC: Story

To begin coaching, coachees must share their stories. The story is the coachee's understanding, beliefs, and value(s) of his or her experience.

Coaches must listen and understand.

What is the theme? Have opportunities been presented?

Where is the locus of control? Does it lie with the coachee or with others?

How was the problem defined?

What values have been described and are they being honored?

What needs have been described and are they being met or denied?

## SPC: Empathy

Coaches must listen to the coachee's story in a respectful, non-judgmental, and empathic manner.

Empathetic listening helps coaches guide coachees from focusing on the minute details of their issues to understanding the overarching needs for solving the issue.

## SPC: Inquiry:

Coachees who feel safe and heard when telling their story begin to explore avenues for change and growth.

Coaches must capitalize on this openness through open-ended questions focused on positive growth and change.

Example inquiry questions:

What does success look like for you?

What are the different ways this success might manifest?

What aspects of your approach to change are working?

What abilities serve you well?

What resources do you have to reach this goal?

At this time what strategies are working well? What other strategies might you use?

What is your ultimate goal or ideal situation? What is the path to this goal or situation?

What is the first step towards this goal?

What resources do you want or need?



What assistance do you believe you need?

SPC: Strategy

Coaches who listen empathetically and respond with sincere and genuine inquiry enable a coachee to search for his or her own strategies for improvement.

Coaches help facilitate this development by empowering a coachee to brainstorm as he or she seeks his or her own answers.

Coaches help set parameters on the possibilities, keep the process moving forward towards success, withhold judgment, encourage outside the box thinking, and help build on ideas already put forth.

## Coaching Workshop Handout: Coaching Questions

Possible Coaching Questions:

If you knew the answer, what would it be?

What would the consequences of that be for you? For others?

What criteria are you using?

What is the most challenging part of this for you?

What advice would you give to a friend in this situation?

Imagine having a dialogue with the wisest person you know. What would she/he say about this?

What would you gain/lose by doing/saying that?

If someone did that to you, how would you react? What would you feel/say/do?

How much are you willing to invest in the process?

What do you think you are afraid of?

What actions have you taken so far?

What were the results of those actions?

What are you going to do?

When are you going to do it?

How will this action meet your goal?

What obstacles may you encounter along the way?

What support do you need?

How and when are you going to gain that support?

What are the other considerations?

What about that is important to you?

What did you learn?

What do you make of it?

What will you commit to doing?

What do you think is best?

How do you feel when...?

How do you think...?

What does that look like?

What does that feel like?

### Chapter Summary

The field staffing office, program supervisors, and faculty members themselves bear responsibility for providing coaching and mentoring and engendering growth and development of NOLS faculty. This chapter's theses focus on the coaching and mentoring models and skills that providing for background knowledge and comprehension of these subjects. The chapter theses also focus on the active practice of coaching and mentoring. These models, skills, and practice allow the relevant stakeholders within NOLS to create and support professional growth and development of all NOLS faculty members.

## Chapter 5

### DISCUSSION

The foci of this project are the academic concepts, skills, and curriculum of coaching and mentoring and how these concepts, skills, and curriculum can be employed at NOLS. The information presented allows program supervisors and faculty members to effectively coach and mentor their colleagues at NOLS. A culture of peer coaching and mentoring creates an environment from which to provide timely, honest, and growth oriented feedback, feedback that is paramount for providing quality guidance and professional development for the both the neophyte and the seasoned NOLS faculty member.

Overall this project reviews and presents a variety of concepts and curriculum to foster both a greater understanding of and a heightened ability to provide coaching and mentoring. The literature review satisfies the objective of introducing the relevant academic concepts supporting various coaching and mentoring concepts. The review of literature also introduces a variety of techniques, methods, and styles for coaching and mentoring. Two overarching approaches exist within the myriad techniques, methods, and styles.

Luecke (2004) noted, “[c]oaching is an interactive process through which managers and supervisors aim to solve performance problems or develop employee capabilities” (p. 3) and went on later to describe mentoring as “the offering of advice, information, or guidance by a person with useful experience, skills, or expertise for another individual’s personal and

professional development” (p. 76). This idea that coaches and mentors highlight for coachees and mentees what needs to occur represents the first approach. Coaches and mentors subscribing to this approach focus effort and time on providing feedback to coachees and mentees on how and why to improve their coachees’ and mentees’ abilities and performance.

The ideas of Kimsey-House, Kimsey-House, Sandahl, and Whitworth (2011) represent a second approach. These authors noted coaching and mentoring empowers and enables the coachee and mentee to discover the abilities he or she possesses and to find his or her own answers. Whitmore (2009) corroborated this approach positing the idea that the supportive relationship between the coach and coachees empowers the coachees to find, within themselves, the ability to succeed. Within this second approach coaches and mentors focus on coachees and mentees by asking questions of and guiding coachees and mentees through self-assessment and exploration.

The two approaches noted above represent disparate ways of enacting coaching and mentoring. The first approach represents teaching in the classic sense. The word “teach” comes from the Old English word “tæcan” meaning “to show”, “present”, or “point out” (Oxford American Dictionary, 2013). The coaching and mentoring of Luecke (2004) sees coaches and mentors showing and pointing out to their coachees and mentees behaviors that must be changed in order to promote positive growth and development.

The second approach lies more in the realm of education. The word “educate” comes from the Latin verb “educere” meaning “to lead out” (Oxford American Dictionary, 2013). The coaching and mentoring ideas presented by Kimsey-House et al. (2011) and Whitmore (2009) align with the ideas of educating coachees and mentees as defined above. The support and

questioning provided to the coachee and mentee by the coach and mentor empowers the coachee and mentee to lead themselves through their own growth and development as a professional.

Whereas providing coaching and mentoring by pointing out feedback works well for creating immediate change and growth in coachees and mentees, the foci of providing active-questioning coaching and mentoring leads coachees and mentees to own the feedback they are providing themselves. Empowering coachees and mentees to create their own professional growth and development allows them to own the long-term professional growth and development they create.

In presenting myriad academic concepts, practical models, and skills, this project enables coaches and mentors to choose an approach best suited for their personality, their abilities, the situation, and the individual he or she coaches or mentors. Presenting varying ideas on coaching and mentoring provides greater overall learning and proffers choices for those who coach and mentor.

In conjunction with introducing academic concepts of coaching and mentoring, this paper presents curriculum resources for use by coaches and mentors to engender professional growth and development. These curriculum pieces, used in conjunction with the academic concepts presented in this paper, empower NOLS program supervisors and faculty to aid one another in the process of coaching and mentoring. Two approaches stood out when discussing the academic concepts in the review of literature, teaching and educating. The curriculum pieces presented in this paper also lend themselves to being used in either of these two approaches; the individual coach and mentor must decide how he or she will proceed in using the introduced skills.

The sections on coaching and mentoring models and skills presented specific templates from Johnson (2007), Nakamura, Shernoff, and Hooker (2009), Tschannen-Moran (2010), Whitmore (2007), and Zachary (2000). The models and skills presented in this project establish framework and content allowing coaches and mentors to more effectively work with their coachees and mentees. Coaches and mentors must choose how to implement the frameworks when coaching and mentoring.

Coaches and mentors may choose to use these models and skills and provide coaching and mentoring through presenting, or pointing out, to coachees and mentees what needs to be, or must be, done for professional growth and development. Alternatively, coaches and mentors may use these models and skills to empower coachees and mentees to take ownership in their own growth and development. This empowerment occurs through using the presented coaching and mentoring models and skills to lead coachees and mentees in self-assessment and self-analysis. The work of identifying areas of growth then lies with the coachees and mentees. Regardless of whether the coach or mentor identifies the areas of growth or the coachee or mentee makes the determination himself or herself, the coachee or mentee must do the actual work of change.

Overall this project satisfies its primary objective, producing curriculum that enhances the skills and abilities of program supervisors and faculty members to coach and mentor for professional growth and development. Similar to the various styles and approaches noted in the review of literature, various coaching and mentoring models and skills are presented. The myriad examples and competencies noted provide a robust base from which to provide effective coaching and mentoring. While an exhaustive rendering of all the relevant literature would provide for greater understanding of the subject and a presentation of all the pertinent models

and skills would provide a more robust platform from which to work, what is most important at this time is to provide for professional growth and development through actively coaching and mentoring.

A main limitation of this project is that it does not present quantitative data or analysis supporting different coaching and mentoring models, skills, or approaches. The use of longitudinal studies measuring the effectiveness of particular styles or models, relative to particular groups of coachees and mentees, may provide answers as to whether certain styles are more effective with particular groups or in particular situations.

A second limitation of this project is that outdoor educators as a sub-set of educators are under represented as a study group in the coaching and mentoring literature. Coaching and mentoring studies targeting outdoor educators are obvious and important next steps for research. These future studies should focus on illustrating how outdoor educators are affected by coaching and mentoring and should address what specific models and skills are most effective when coaching and mentoring outdoor educators.

Presently, coaching and mentoring at NOLS occurs both through the more teaching-centered approach and through the approach that mirrors education. Program supervisors and faculty peers coach and mentor by pointing out to peers those skills and behaviors must change for growth and development to occur. This is the default approach used for informal and formal feedback sessions between faculty members during a course and the approach used by program supervisors providing feedback to faculty members during the post course de-brief.

In these situations the foci of coaching and mentoring concerns a faculty member's teaching, risk management, leadership, and communication skills and abilities on the present



course. The coaching and mentoring goal revolves around improving the faculty member's skills and abilities in the immediate and for the next course.

NOLS program supervisors and faculty also use an active-questioning approach when coaching and mentoring as means to both support an individual's involvement in his or her feedback and engender ownership by the individual in the feedback. This is the preferred approach for program supervisors when coaching and mentoring faculty over multiple courses and is the preferred approach of the field staffing office when coaching and mentoring faculty in long-term professional growth and development.

Though under represented within the coaching and mentoring literature, outdoor educators in general, and NOLS faculty in particular, benefit from the work of this project. The literature presented proffers powerful and convincing arguments that coaching and mentoring affect positive growth and development in NOLS faculty. As described above, NOLS faculty and administrators already practice coaching and mentoring. The models and skills presented in this project bolster the literature and create a framework from which more effective coaching and mentoring of NOLS faculty can occur. The obvious next step must be to enact effective coaching and mentoring and realize the goals of coaching and mentoring, professional growth and development of NOLS faculty.

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APPENDIX A

[http://prezi.com/bwz3msmrtrnrn/coaching/?auth\\_key=690e1762ea5f438c9bc1e2f702a710581409481c&kw=view-bwz3msmrtrnrn&rc=ref-3488552](http://prezi.com/bwz3msmrtrnrn/coaching/?auth_key=690e1762ea5f438c9bc1e2f702a710581409481c&kw=view-bwz3msmrtrnrn&rc=ref-3488552)

## APPENDIX B

## Notes on Coaching and Mentoring Prezi

The following notes pertain to and elucidate the coaching and mentoring Prezi and the “slides” or movements within the presentation. All photos taken by the author except where noted. This presentation underpins the theories and practical aspect of the workshop.

This workshop’s visual aids follow the presentation theories of Reynolds (2012). These of behind the presentation is Simple visual presentation that does create some Unexpectedness. My examples are Concrete. They pertain to who we are and what we do. This presentation and training are Credible as I have both a practical and academic background in both what we do at NOLS and with the information I am presenting. At the same time I do not hold myself out as the expert in the field. Through using visuals, examples, and stories that are connected with NOLS I present the Emotional importance of this training. This entire presentation is a Story of who we are, what we do, and how we will continue to grow and develop.

1. Introduction.
2. These photos introduce and remind us of who we are and what we do as educators.
3. This slide will be used as the jumping off point for talking about developing as professional educators.
4. How do we develop and what are the main feedback mechanisms that we use? The goal here is to engender discussion from the audience
5. The goal is to elicit discussion amongst the group regarding mentoring before I give my thoughts and thoughts of others.

6. Here I want to talk about how NOLS has traditionally used mentoring or what is believed to be mentoring as a main development strategy for faculty.
7. I want folks to begin to think about coaching and the coaching we do with colleagues as important 1 on 1 interactions.
8. Here I wanted to include what some of the academicians and researchers thought of coaching but wanted folks to key in on certain concepts and thus I used different colors.
9. I use stereotypical business photos in this spot as many outdoor educators equate coaching to being in the business world.
10. I now want to bring the idea of coaching back to what we do because we do coach a great deal in our jobs.
11. To this point I have been providing an overview. Now I get specific with what we will concentrate on and practice again using colors to focus on specific ideas to cover rather than having folks attempt to concentrate on all of it. The goal is to introduce a couple of specific ideas that will set folks up for successful practice.
12. The next series of slides introduces and defines skills and performance coaching and leads towards the practice that will occur in break out sessions. Break out sessions consist of one coach and one coachee working with an observer to provide feedback at the end of the session. Session timing is structured to allow each participant to work as coach, coachee, and observer.