



'She's an Astronomer' Conference

Mentoring and MentorSET

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The way to advance your career in astronomy:

- ⦿ is **not** to keep your head down and quietly do a good job!
- ⦿ is **not** to diligently attend all departmental meetings and sit quietly listening to what others have to say!
- ⦿ is **not** to put **all** your time and effort into increasing your scientific knowledge and expertise!

You need to be seen to do a good job as well as do a good job!

- Publish
- Speak and become involved at meetings
- Ensure senior members of the department know what a 'fabulous' job you are doing!
- Don't let others take the credit for your work!

Invest some time improving your **personal and social skills**

Personal and Social Skills

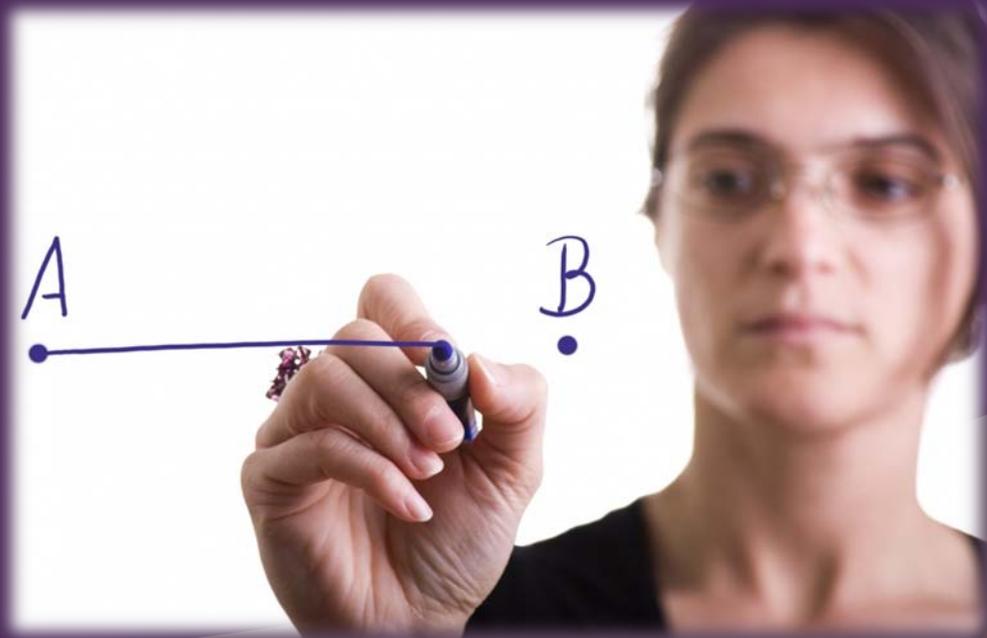
- Self confidence
- Self motivation
- Time management
- Political awareness
- Ability to influence others
- Communication skills
- Assertiveness
- Leadership skills

Networking is important

- ◎ The old saying ‘it isn’t what you know but who you know’, rings true.
- ◎ Statistics show that a staggering 70% of jobs are obtained through networking.

Create a Career Plan

- A Harvard study showed that those who did very well, had a career plan and knew where they were heading.



- **Do you have a career plan?**
- **Do you have good visibility within your profession?**
- **Do you think about your non- scientific skills?**
- **What can you do about all this?**

Get yourself a mentor AND become a mentor!

Mentoring can help you to:

- ⦿ plan your career
- ⦿ Become more self aware
- ⦿ provide networking opportunities
- ⦿ overcome issues at work
- ⦿ + more



What is Mentoring ?

An informal, voluntary, helpful relationship between two people – the mentor and mentee.



What is Mentoring ?



- A chance for the mentee to learn from the mentor's experiences
- An opportunity to think about career options and develop solutions to career issues
- A chance to explore new ideas in confidence
- A chance to think about skills that need developing

And if you already have a plan:

A mentor can be there to:

- remind you of your goals
- to encourage and motivate
- to keep you on track
- to help you to change your plan if necessary

You probably have already had unofficial mentors in your life

- ◎ An enthusiastic teacher who inspired you to follow your career path.
- ◎ A manager or tutor who encouraged you to aim higher.
- ◎ A supportive colleague who provided guidance about dealing with an issue at work.



- Most of us benefit from having someone with whom we can discuss our hopes, plans and issues.
- Wanting a mentor is not a sign of weakness.
- Many people in top positions acknowledge the part of a mentor in achieving success.



Finding a mentor

- ⦿ Conferences are a great place to find a mentor!!
- ⦿ But it is sometimes not easy to find your own mentor. There are schemes which can find you a mentor, if unable to find one yourself.





MentorSET

- ◎ MentorSET is a **UK** national mentoring scheme which supports women working in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (and those wishing to return).
- ◎ A project of Women's Engineering Society (which despite its name has numerous scientist members)



MentorSET

- Started in 2002
- Government funded through the UKRC.
- Most of our mentors are women and so know what it is like to be a woman working in your particular field.
- Now worked with about **900 women**



MentorSET Mentoring is:

- ⦿ person focused
- ⦿ voluntary, mentee led
- ⦿ low-bureaucracy
- ⦿ a chance to explore new ideas
- ⦿ supportive
- ⦿ not sponsorship
- ⦿ FREE to mentees (at the present)



MentorSET

- ◎ We match mentees with mentors using the mentees own criteria – career progression, gaining a particular skill etc



Some of the issues that we have helped women to:

- progress their career
- break through the glass ceiling
- returning after a career break
- address work – life balance and juggling a career with home responsibilities
- overcome feeling isolation in all male orientated working environment
- deal with harassment in the work place!
- management skills
- improving interpersonal skills



Do you need a mentor?

- ⦿ Do you want to change something about your career and not sure how to go about it?
- ⦿ Do you want to progress your career?
- ⦿ Need someone to talk to about other issues at work?
- ⦿ Life is all work and no time for 'live'?

The cost:

- ◉ MentorSET is free to UK citizens
- ◉ BUT we ask mentees to give as much back, as they gain, by being a mentor either now or in the future.
- ◉ We ask women who are mid career or higher, with no major pressing issues, to sign up to be both a mentor and a mentee.



Could you be a mentor?

Requirements to be a MentorSET mentor:

- one year + experience in the STEM sector (no need to be at the top of your profession)
- can spare a couple of hours every few months
- is prepared to help someone else to progress their career



Why become a mentor?

- Mentoring is not one way. Mentors gain valuable skills (personal and social skills), make new contacts and gain a lot of satisfaction.
- Gain confidence and esteem
- Can mention being a mentor on your CV
- MentorSET is not magic – we need mentors to sign up! (Training is given)

MentorSET's recent evaluation

- Some fantastic outcomes:
- Oxford and Cambridge University now fighting over an academic who won a poster competition after her mentor had persuaded her to enter.
- A mentee who asked her company for a 'like position' after taking maternity leave and won with the support of her mentor.

More fantastic outcomes:

- Project leader who was able to manage a male colleague who had previously 'bullied' her at work and who she suddenly found working for her.
- A returner who settled into a new position after a career break. Her mentor made her realise that she didn't need to work exceptionally long hours to prove herself.

Case Studies

Karen (a physicist) has had two MentorSET mentors.

The 1st helped with work-life balance after a career break.

The 2nd then helped her set up her own business.



Go to www.mentorset.org.uk for the full story

Case Studies



Nicola (an academic scientist) was exhausted working 7 days a week.

With the help of her mentor, she has attained a better work-life balance.

Go to www.mentorset.org.uk for the full story

Case Studies



Sasha felt she role wasn't stretching her.

With the help of her mentor, she has a new position which is both challenging and enjoyable.

Go to www.mentorset.org.uk for the full story

Case Studies



'X' (a medical physicist) had had enough of the comments and treatment she was receiving from male colleagues.

With her mentor's help she regained her confidence and found a new position.



Finally....

- If you are to survive and flourish as a woman in science, it is essential to continually improve your knowledge and skills. Mentoring can help!
- Everyone needs a mentor **and can be a mentor!**
- If you would like to find out more, read more case studies or join, please go to the website: www.mentorset.org.uk

Thank you