

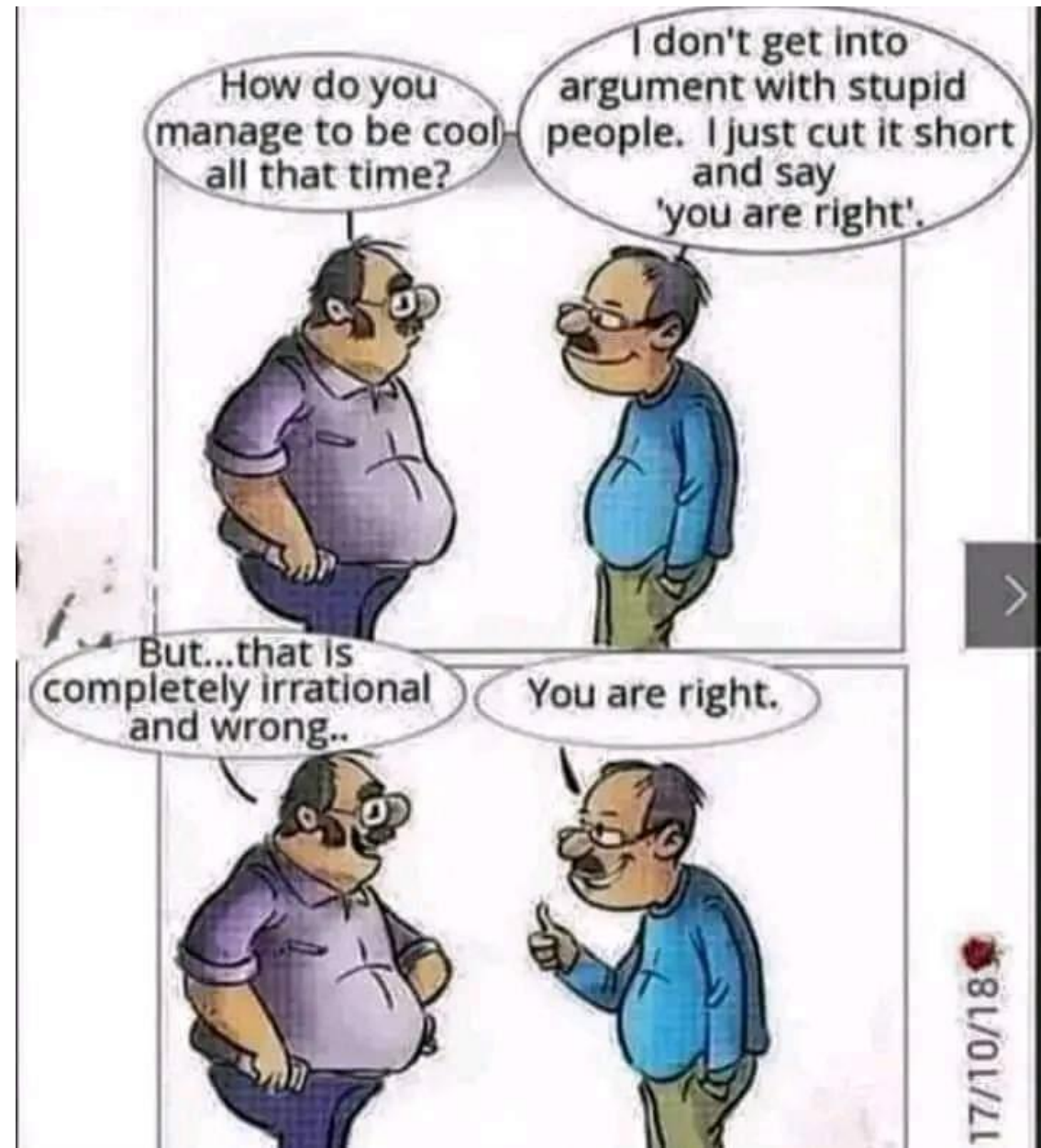
Winning Mentors – Tips on building a successful mentorship relationship

Refilwe Phaswana-Mafuya, Professor of Epidemiology & Public Health MA(SW), PGD(Epi), MSc(Epi), PhD

STEM MentHER NITheCs, 18 Sep 2023, 10h00-11h30



UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG



Purpose of the Presentation

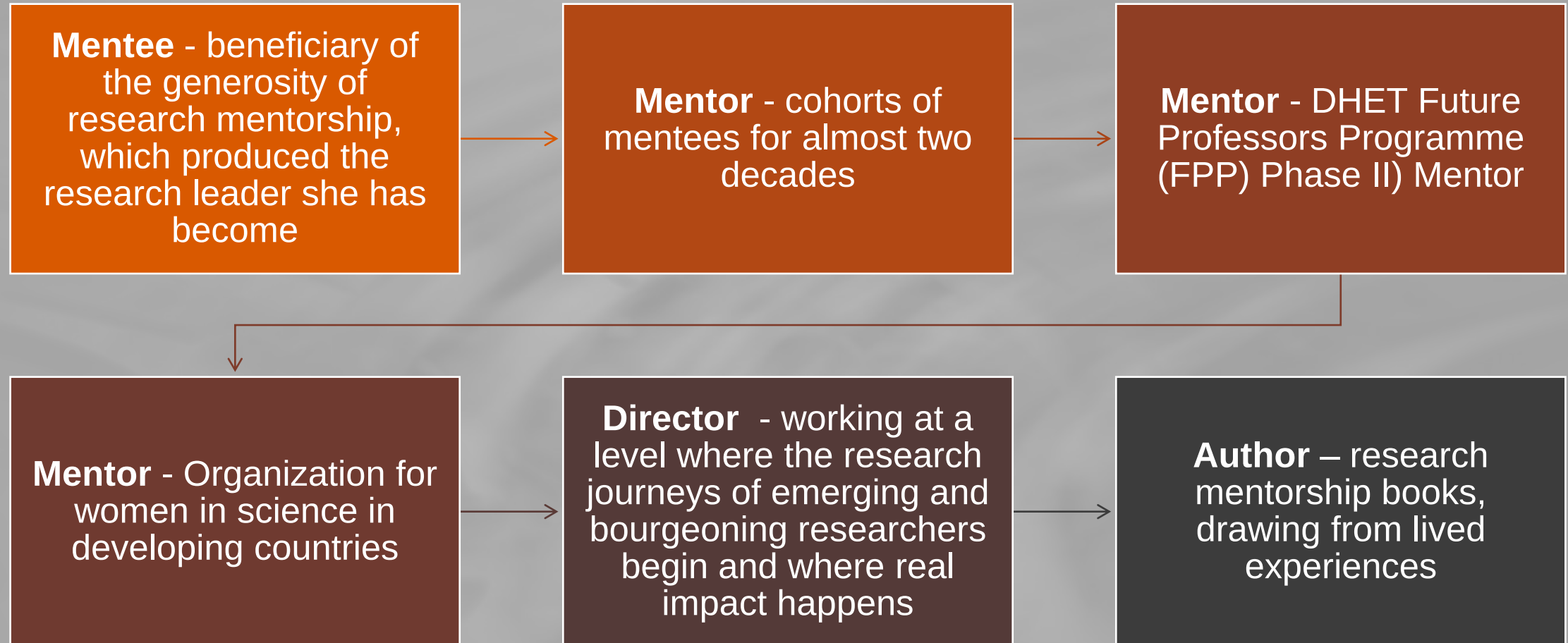


How to build a successful mentorship relationship

Do we need training on mentorship? What is a mentor? What is the importance of mentorship? What is a mentorship relationship? Who benefits from successful mentorship relationships? What are the tips, techniques, and tools for a successful mentorship relationship? What is the role of a mentor in a mentorship relationship? What mentorship skills a mentor should have? What mentorship techniques should a mentor use? What is the impact of a successful mentorship relationships? What are the common barriers to successful mentorship relationship?



Sources of presentation - lived experiences and homegrown knowledge for and contextual relevance – examples and testimonials



Will draw from my books and comparable literature:

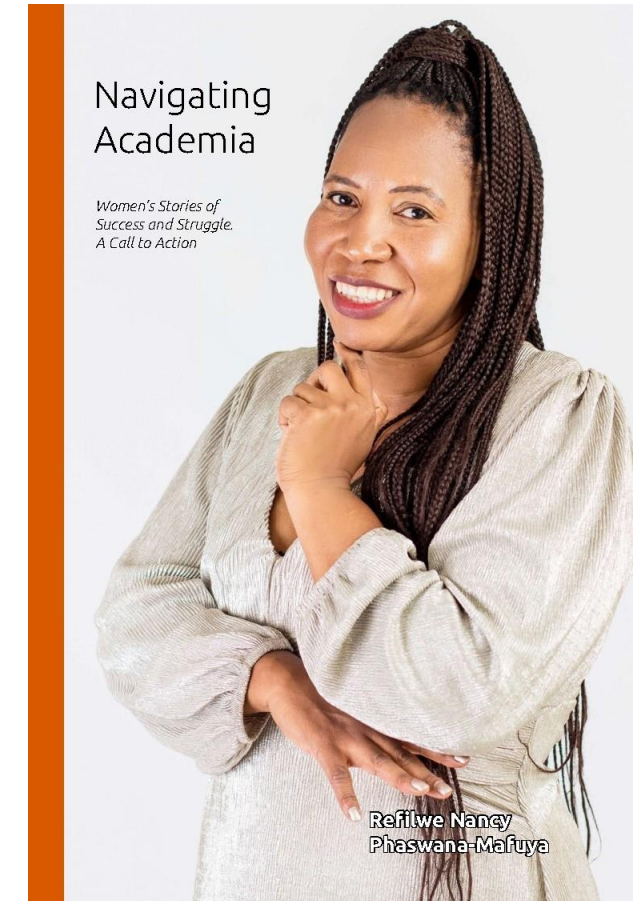
Mentorship is a labour of love



Mentorship is catalyst for career success



Mentorship aids in Navigating Academia



“ When I see young women, I see a goldmine of abilities waiting and ready to be mined to take the science enterprise forward for the betterment of society. ”

In this book, Prof Refilwe Phaswana-Mafuya, an award-winning scientist and fighter of pandemics, takes a retrospective look at how her career evolved. She shares her dynamic and exciting unpredictable career journey from humble, difficult beginnings to the success that she is today. Further, she shares how she used her deep-rooted passion for knowledge, creative personality, and inquiring mind in the service of her undying vision of changing, transforming and impacting lives. Refilwe presents her valuable insights and wisdom she gained along the way in the form of learning curves.

Divided into learning curves, each curve is designed to help young and emerging scholars, scientists and researchers navigate their way through their education, studies and careers, and to help keep them motivated and fixed on the goal ahead, even when facing obstacles. Refilwe is a mentor to other visionary young women, and each of their stories are included in the book as well – how their paths crossed, how their passion was ignited, the learning curves experienced, the unwavering supports received and future career prospects in carrying the knowledge enterprise forward. Together, the career journeys in this book provide techniques, tools, and testimonials to inspire and empower EVERYONE in their own careers and lives.



VISION NEVER DIES: LEARNING CURVES FROM MY NON-LINEAR CAREER JOURNEY

VISION NEVER DIES



FROM RURAL
GIRL TO
AWARD-WINNING
FIGHTER OF
PANDEMICS

*Learning curves from my non-linear
career journey*

REFILWE PHASWANA-MAFUYA

Message from the book launch

By Prof Saurabh Sinha

Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation,
University of Johannesburg

I wish to heartily welcome you all, distinguished dignitaries, to the launch of Professor Refilwe Phaswana-Mafuya's book, *Vision Never Dies*, and to express appreciation on behalf of the University of Johannesburg for your being here to celebrate this wonderful achievement. There are journeys that have been travelled by many great people, but few of these are documented and thus, they remain unknown to the generations that follow.



We are excited that Refilwe took on the challenge of writing a book that is aimed at inspiring young scientists to reach greater heights, as well as demonstrating the value of mentorship in attracting and retaining emerging scientists in academic or research careers. She illustrates this through her own career in order to bring this closer to our people. In this regard, she has put herself in a vulnerable position

A note of congratulations

By Prof Sehaam Khan

Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences

I applaud Prof Phaswana-Mafuya for achieving this significant milestone of completing her much needed inspiring and empowering book: *Vision Never Dies: Learning Curves from my Non-Linear Career Journey*. We are absolutely thrilled as a faculty to have colleagues with such commitment to growing young talent. In this timeless, inspiring and empowering book, Prof Refilwe shares the wisdom she gained from the learning curves she went through during her non-linear career journey, in order to inspire motivation, excellence, and impact in others.



Prof Phaswana-Mafuya mentored young people in their studies, careers and personal lives, supported them in handling the occasional failures and rejections, enhanced their inclination to be rigorous, as well as strengthened their tenacity to pursue difficult problems. She taught them resilience to cope with various situations, including biased stereotypical views of women's abilities in male-dominated

15/22 Chapters on Research Mentors
showing that mentors

in Vision Never Dies Book
are the labor of love

Created positive work environment

Used their influence & authority to smoothen my path

Opened new possibilities

Broadened horizon

Built self-confidence

Changed career forever

Served as a research career lifeline

Catalyst for career success

inspired excellence

Enhanced career growth and direction

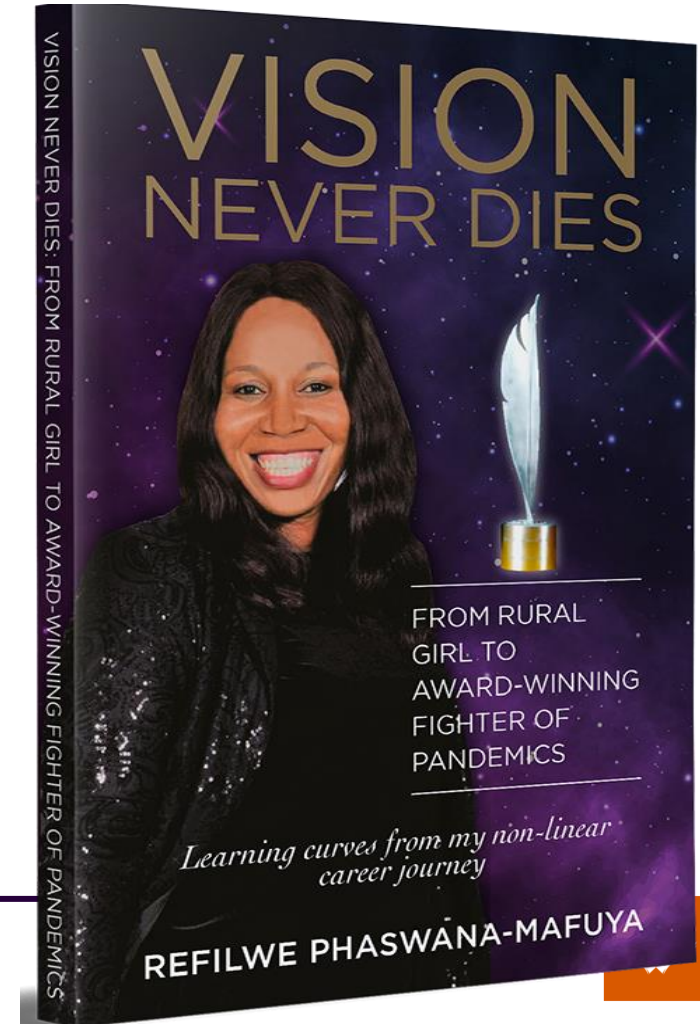
*Learning curves from my non-linear
career journey*

FROM RURAL
GIRL TO
AWARD-WINNING
FIGHTER OF
PANDEMICS

Learning curves from my non-linear



The book features 13 mentees including postgraduate students, early career academics, and supervisors across institutions - **15/22** chapters on mentorship





UJ Press

"The lessons drawn on in this book are clear: do not wait to reach some place or position in life where you feel like you are prepared to give back or pour into people; you are already prepared and positioned on some level!" Prof. Glenda Gray, President and CEO of the South African Medical Research Council.

There are barely any research mentorship books despite many conversations on it within academia and the role it can potentially play in the development and retention of academics in the pipeline. Academic institutions appear not to have any solid mentorship frameworks that can be used to guide academics in the provision of robust research mentorship programmes. This original book details how research mentorship helped the author, a black woman in a predominately male-dominated patriarchal environment and the 33 mentees whose expressions have been captured in the book, to reach the pinnacle of academia despite a severe shortage of African women who have ascended to leadership roles within academia. The book showcases the value of research mentorship in developing leadership and support to the next generation of academics as well as deduce lessons learnt that can help to carry the knowledge enterprise forward. Further, it illustrates how research mentorship aided African women researchers in navigating non-diverse environments, early career struggles, post-graduate studies, work-life challenges as well complexities of scientific productivity, professional visibility, scientific connectivity (networks and collaborations), and resource mobilization, among others. The book offers potential mentors and mentees context-specific guidelines for effective mentorship, and best practices to enable scale-up. It also demonstrates how mentorship can contribute towards inclusivity and diversity and thus aid in narrowing persistent disparities in research, science, and academia.

Professor Refilwe Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya (PhD, PGD (Epi), MSc (Epi)) is a qualified epidemiologist and public health scientist. She is the director of the South African Medical Research Council/University of Johannesburg Pan African Centre for Epidemics Research (PACER) Extramural Unit and a professor of epidemiology and public health, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Johannesburg. Prior to joining the University of Johannesburg, she served as the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation at North West University for three years. Professor Phaswana-Mafuya also worked as Acting Executive Director, Research Director, and Chief Research Manager at the Human Sciences Research Council for almost 13 years, among others.



Research Mentorship Refilwe Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya

Research Mentorship

A Developmental and Transformational Tool in Shaping and Sustaining African Women's Career Progression in Academia



Refilwe Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya

Early Career Struggles

Recognitions

Postgraduate studies

Networks

Co-authorships

Collaborations

Execution of projects

Track record

Nominations

Grant writing

Gender stereotypes

Professional development

Professional Visibility

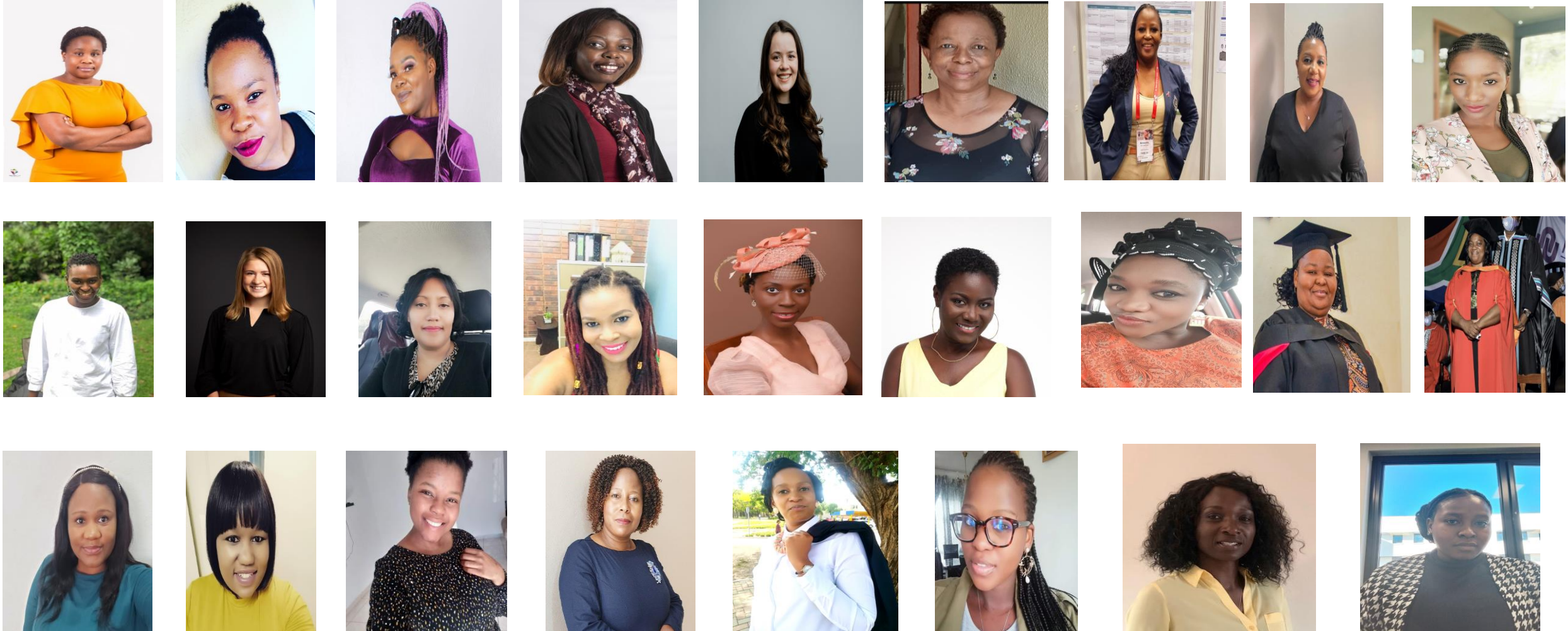
Personal development



The book has 22 chapters showing the critical role of mentorship in career advancement

<https://doi.org/10.36615/9781776444632>

The book features 33 Mentees including postgraduate students, early career academics, and supervisors **across disciplines, institutions, and geographies**





UJ Press

"This book is a vital resource for promoting transformation and radical change in academia, offering perspectives, strategies and approaches that can be used in addressing persistent gender inequities in the field. Readers from all walks of life can glean valuable lessons from this remarkable work, allowing them to be inspired and empowered" Prof Olive Shisana, CEO of Evidence Based Solutions and Honorary Professor, University of Cape Town.

There are limited books on real-life experiences of women in the workplace let alone in academia for women, by women, with women. This book is the first of its kind as it contains a unique collection of 16 powerful and inspiring stories of success and struggle of women in academia across age groups, career stages, disciplines, and geographies, that will never leave you the same. It offers a platform for validating African women's experiences and heeding their voices which are hardly given any audience in many spaces. You will experience a mixed set of emotions as you celebrate women's resilience, contributions made, and valuable insights shared, but also realize the dehumanizing experiences that women had to go through, and the extraordinary effort it took for them to survive and thrive in non-diverse academic environments. The book offers multiple perspectives, diverse experiences, and rich lessons derived from challenges experienced, and strategies employed, to empower the next generation. Further, the book goes beyond simply highlighting women's struggles; it also calls for a bold and radical call to change the status quo so that future generations don't have to go through the same turmoil. The insights provided in this book have implications for attracting, advancing, and retaining African women in academia.

Professor Refilwe Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya (PhD, PGD (Epi), MSc (Epi)) is a qualified epidemiologist and public health scientist. She is the director of the South African Medical Research Council/University of Johannesburg Pan African Centre for Epidemics Research (PACER) Extramural Unit and a professor of epidemiology and public health, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Johannesburg. Prior to joining the University of Johannesburg, she served as the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation at North West University for three years. Professor Phaswana-Mafuya also worked as Acting Executive Director, Research Director, and Chief Research Manager at the Human Sciences Research Council for almost 13 years, among others.



Navigating Academia Refilwe Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya

Navigating Academia:

Women's Stories of Success and Struggle.
A Call to Action!

Refilwe Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya



Navigating Academia - The book demonstrates how mentorship aid women in addressing challenges they face in racialized and gendered academic work environments

Isolation

Stalled Promotions

Implicit Biases

Patriarchal Tendencies

Looked down upon

Harmful gender norms

Competing priorities

Racism & Sexism

Integrity Attacks

Lower Salaries

Rejection

Work-life challenges

Gender Stereotypes

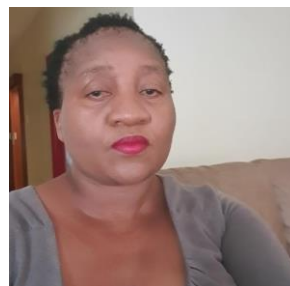
Undue criticisms

Unwelcoming work environments

Dehumanizing Experiences



The book features 16 mentees/women leaders from **six African countries, across different career stages**



What is the secret of your career success?

One young black woman asked me a series of questions. Please, tell me:

“How did you navigate your career journey from early-career research struggles to research leadership?”

How did you finish your PhD at the relatively young age of 29?

How did you transition all the way from being a research assistant to being a research director?

An extraordinary research professor?

Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation?

National science award winner?

Sophisticated science networker?

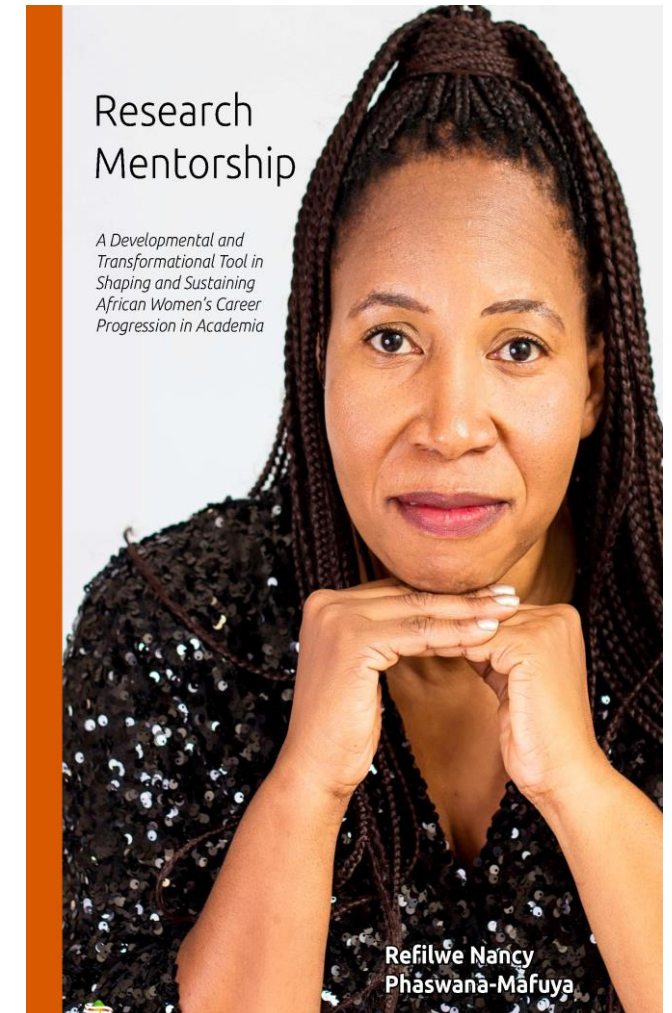
Socially- engaged scientist?

Queen Mother of research?” (Phaswana-Mafuya, 2023)



The simple and probably unexpected response

*“Alone, I could never have made it; it was through the unparalleled support given by remarkable mentors of virtue, stature, and influence that I made it. I was **developed, transformed, shaped, and sustained** in my science career progression through Research Mentorship. Through mentorship, I was elevated to bigger assignments, spaces, places, and platforms. Having such a support system has been pivotal in not only guiding and directing my career path but also in creating a sense of belonging, cohesion, and solidarity that kept me in the pipeline against all odds. It induced motivation to pursue a research career and ignited my passion for science” (Phaswana-Mafuya, 2023)*





I came from humble beginnings where Science Access and Science Success seemed delusional

"If someone had told me when I was a young girl growing up in my rural village in Limpopo that I would one day become an award-winning scientist, I never would have believed them. The prospects of becoming a daring scientist, or pursuing any prestigious science career, seemed delusional due to lack of a science-stimulating environment, facilities, and activities. Such is the case for many women who identify with me or see themselves in me. But through mentorship I made it " Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021



What worked? **Ongoing mentorship at early, mid, and advanced career stages sustains mentees in the pipeline.** It helps mentees understand the world around them, prevailing imperatives, priorities, and realities



“I prevailed on the shoulders of my mentors at every turn and every stage of my research career towards self-actualization. I moved from learning curve to learning curve, sometimes not even realizing how useful each learning curve would become in the future. I believe that it is the learning curves that separate an outstanding career journey from a mediocre career Journey” (Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021)





**Mentorship
is the key to
career
success**



Mentors are in demand given their importance in career advancement



AAS The African Academy of Sciences

AAS Mentorship Programme

Call for Mentors

The AAS invites experienced professionals to join its Mentorship Programme to support talented early-career researchers across Africa to thrive in their careers and, ultimately, become the next generation of research leaders.

Apply to join our Mentorship Programme
<https://aasciences.africa/Funding#6>

Deadline:
30 September 2023



WSD South Africa National Chapter

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A MENTOR?

We are looking for all emerging scientists who are looking to be mentored by one of our incredible OWSD SANC mentors.

WHAT WOULD THIS INCLUDE?
Being mentored through your work and/ or research journey and receiving guidance and support throughout the process

HOW WOULD THIS BENEFIT YOU?
Receive guidance and direction
Accelerate your learning in your chosen field
A networking opportunity
Receive constructive feedback and stay accountable & motivated
Build on your personal and professional skills
Get exposure to different perspectives

CLICK THE LINK TO SIGN-UP
<https://forms.office.com/r/SUWw3TmScG>

 science & innovation
Department of Science and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

 **WSD** South Africa National Chapter

 **ASSAf** Association of South African Scientists

<https://owsd.net/network/south-africa>



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HERS-SA INVITES
ALL MENTORS & MENTEEES

TO SUBMIT A
REFLECTIVE PAPER OF THEIR MENTORSHIP JOURNEY

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I Pay It Forward not only through being mentor, writing books on mentorship but through mentorship activism - **webinars, panels, and discussions on mentorship** (June-Sep 2023)

Youth Month Webinar

with QWSD SANC

June 29th
14:00PM - 15:30PM

JOIN US FOR

"Navigating Gender Disparities: Overcoming Challenges for Young Women in Science"

MODERATOR
Miss Ntsoako Mokoena
BSc (Agriculture & Pasture Sciences), MSc (Agricultural Science)
NWU PhD student

SPEAKER
Professor Refilwe Phaswana-Mafuya
MA (SW), PG (Ed), MSc (Epi), PhD
Director SAMRC/UJ PACER

SPEAKER
Miss Zinto Mfundo
MSc (Agricultural Economics)
ALX Software Engineering Fellow

CLICK THE LINK TO REGISTER
<https://assaf.org.za/room/us/meeting/register?i=3&id=90741024y.k3131.mh2h930PS>

<https://qwsd.net/network/south-africa>

SPEAKER ANNOUNCEMENT

EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAMME

A programme for women in higher education aspiring to be leaders and those at entry and middle level positions of leadership.

OUR GUEST SPEAKER
PROF REFILWE NANCY PHASWANA-MAFUYA

Director: SAMRC/UJ Pan African Centre for Epidemics Research (PACER) Extramural Unit & Professor Epidemiology & Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Johannesburg

23 - 26 JULY 2023

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Women's Month Webinar

Mentorship in the Science Space with Professor Refilwe Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya

Date: 17 August 2023
Time: 12:00 - 13:00

[Register Here](#)

14 AUGUST 9:30AM - 1:00PM

THEME: NON-LINEAR CAREER PATHS AND MENTORSHIP RISKS, SACRIFICES AND THE REWARDS OF PURSUING A PASSION

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SCI-BONO ANNUAL GIRL LEARNER PROGRAM

The Career Centre @Sci-Bono will be hosting its annual girl program to celebrate the accomplishments of women in science, their tenacity as well as their contribution to academic research and the development of society through mentorship and guidance.

The target audience consists of Grade 9 – 11 learners from disadvantaged communities around Gauteng.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Abby Wilton (Chairperson) | Dr Nandipha Mafika Eloyah (Chairperson)
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Prof Khulekani Shole | Doreen Tsoelike | Mafuza Mphahlele | Prof Mphahlele Pat Ntsele (CEO)

Online Webinar

WOMEN'S MONTH

RESEARCH MENTORSHIP: Advancement of Black Women's Careers with Professor Refilwe Phaswana-Mafuya

DATE: August 24, 2023
TIME: 12:00 - 13:00
PLATFORM: Zoom (link in bio)

COPPGES

Community of Practice for Postgraduate Education and Scholarship

Mentoring Early Career Academics: What makes mentoring successful?

REGISTER

Dear Colleague,

We invite you to join our upcoming meeting focusing on mentoring of early career academics. Our speakers will share their insights and expertise with us - JOIN the discussion and register today.

6 SEPTEMBER 10:00 AM - 13:00 PM Online - Link will be emailed

Speaker 1: PROFESSOR REFILWE PHASWANA-MAFUYA | UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Speaker 2: PROFESSOR LESLIE SWARTZ | UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH

HIGHER EDUCATION WOMEN LEADERS AWARDS

Awards

Date: 07 September 2023
Venue: DoubleTree by Hilton, Woodstock, Cape Town
Time: 17:30 for 18:00 - 22:30

STEM MentHER

COLLOQUIUM: Winning Mentors: Tips on building a successful mentorship relationship

Prof Refilwe Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya (SAMRC/UJ PACER)

Monday, 18 September 2023 | 10:00 – 11:30 SAST
Venue: online

ABSTRACT
This webinar focuses on navigating a mentorship relationship. It seeks to add value to academic and non-academic supervisors, managers, mentors, budding mentors and mentees.

BIOGRAPHY
Professor Refilwe Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya (PhD, PGD (Epi), MSc (Epi)) is a qualified epidemiologist and public health scientist. She studied at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and the University of Limpopo (UL). She is the director of the first and newly established SAMRC/UJ PACER EMU and a professor of epidemiology and public health, FHSS, UL. She is also the MSc reproductive biology and reproductive health lecturer (epidemiology) at PALEST, African Union. Furthermore, she serves as a mentor for South Africa's Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) Future Professors Programme (FPP), Phase II. Professor Phaswana-Mafuya was coronated as the Queen Mother of Research and Development by the Absentee Traditional Council of the Absentee State, Ghana, in August 2022 in recognition of her significant contribution to research and development that impacted communities. Preceding this, Professor Phaswana-Mafuya was the deputy vice-chancellor of research and innovation at the NWU (2017-2020), acting executive director, research director and chief research manager of the Research Council of the Human Sciences Research Programme of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) for nearly 15 years (2005-2017), as well as editor-in-chief and executive editor of the SAHARA Journal (2009-2018).

REGISTER TO ATTEND
Visit <https://tiny1.com/3mLdJ> or scan/click:

Disclaimer -There is no algorithm on building successful mentorship relationships but there are lessons learned to share

I believe that my learning curves, my mentees' learning curves, and our joint learning curves may serve as homegrown tips, techniques, and tools for building successful mentorship relationships irrespective of discipline, career stage or socio-demographic characteristics

Do we need training on mentorship? Not really, mentorship is a labour of love that often comes naturally!!!

Although learning is a life-long process and there is always a room for improvement, **mentorship is not so much a learned activity. It often happens naturally!!** Mentorship is about passion to shape lives, change lives, and impact lives – building the next generation. This is what an award-winning mentor had to say:

*“But mentoring, as we've heard, is often learned on the job. And this learning continues throughout your career, you can always improve. I'm sure that my mentoring can also be improved. **And if you care about it, it will come naturally.** And usually we all sit in departments and faculty and there are people that we know that would mentor or so we can always ask them advice and get feedback and we can only improve. **We just need to care. I think that the critical aspect is to care.**”*

Tal Pupko, award winning mentor

However, there is a need for networking with others, have conversations, exchange experiences and approaches on how to build successful mentorship relationships; share ideas, and resources

We need discuss actionable tips and techniques for ensuring effective mentorship relationships



Let's first understand - What is the role of a mentor in a mentorship relationship? The mentor should know his or her place in a mentorship relationship irrespective of the type of mentorship

- Emerging academics, postgraduate students and supervisors **cannot be left to their own self-help devices** in advancing their careers; they need to be supported holistically by someone experienced (Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021, 2023)
- Mentor's role in different mentorship relationships, formal or informal relationships, **is constant**
- Mentor's role in different mentorship approaches **is constant** - peer to peer mentoring, group mentoring, reverse mentoring, and speed mentoring
- A mentor is not a dictator – is an encourager, an advocate, a coach, a sponsor, a listening ear, a guide, a counselor, and much more.
- Mentees find a place to open-up, vent, discuss, brainstorm, innovate, create and problem-solve in a mentor



The background features a complex, abstract pattern of overlapping, colorful geometric shapes and paper-cut-like patterns. The colors include red, orange, yellow, green, teal, purple, and grey. The shapes are irregular and interlocking, creating a mosaic-like effect. The overall aesthetic is modern and artistic.

**What award-winning mentors
say about the role of a mentor**

Being a mentor is a natural phenomenon

Hannah Margalit, a bioinformatician and computational biologist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, a mentor to many researchers over the years, was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award for mentoring in 2020. She was recommended by some of her mentees for this award. And when asked why she mentors, she said:

“I never really thought about it. It’s so much built in me that I think this is one of the main tasks of a PI in the university. We are doing the research together with the students and we have a common aim, and one is more experienced than the other. So I make sure that they will get all the qualifications that they need in order to become independent researchers.”

“When my sister sees potential, she cannot help it, she nourishes it. She has supported and challenged me throughout my academic life from undergraduate degree to my doctorate. I dare say that it felt like she was pushing me too much at the time, but her efforts resulted in my passing some of my courses with distinctions. I must say she never doubted my abilities; she had confidence that I would excel with the various opportunities presented to me. I will forever be grateful for the role she played in my career journey.” Dr Motlatso Mlambo

What other award-winning mentors say about the role of a mentor

What I tell my students when they come to do a PhD in my lab is that they start as my students, but I want them to graduate as my peers because I want to be able to mentor them and provide them with these tools that can make them more successful. It's more than just how to plan an experiment, how to phrase a hypothesis. These are all obvious things that you need to learn to be a scientist. But there's so much more than that, that a good mentor should be able to give the people that they are mentoring” **Netta Erez, Award-Winning Mentor**

*“When you take on the role of being a group leader, or supervisor or PI, or any position where you have researchers working in your group, your focus should be on developing the people. **Mentorship is your way to provide means for your research students to grow up, both in science and at the personal level, so that they become better persons, better scientists, and better everything.** So, you don’t care so much about the science, because in science you care about them. You want them to become better scientists, you want them to become a better person, to think more critically about things, about improving their computational scale, writing skills, or their soft set of skills, and to enjoy it along the way. It's also super important that you want to see the spark in their eyes when they do science, and when they talk about science and to understand how science is done.”* **Tal Pupko, Award-winning mentor, Tel Aviv University**





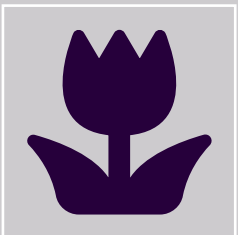
What mentees say about the role of a mentor



A mentor is a Destiny Helper and more who shares her knowledge, expertise, and experience with their mentees - Dr Edith Phalane, BSc; BSc honours; MSc; PhD



*"It humbles me beyond words that when I first saw Prof, **I knew she was my destiny helper.** It was a moment of confirmation and affirmation that I too can make it." (Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021)*



*"I am grateful to have **an advisor, nurturer, groomer, and enabler** who supports me holistically for my growth, development, and career advancement as a black woman in science and research." (Phaswana-Mafuya, 2023)*



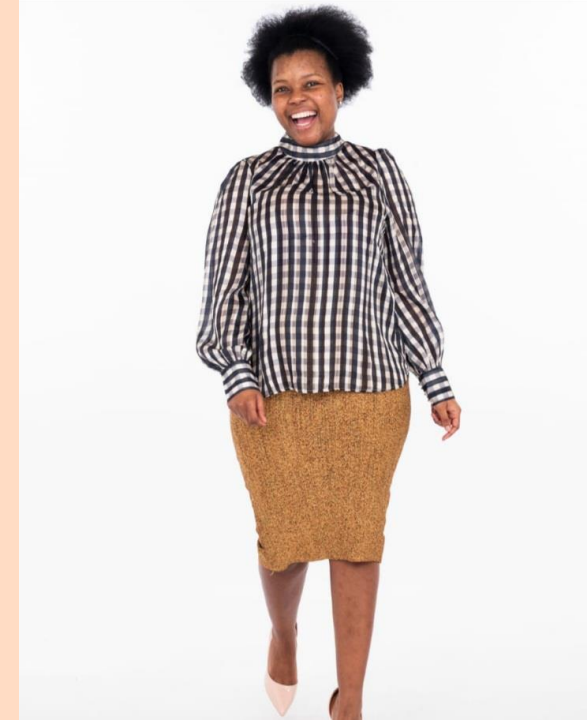
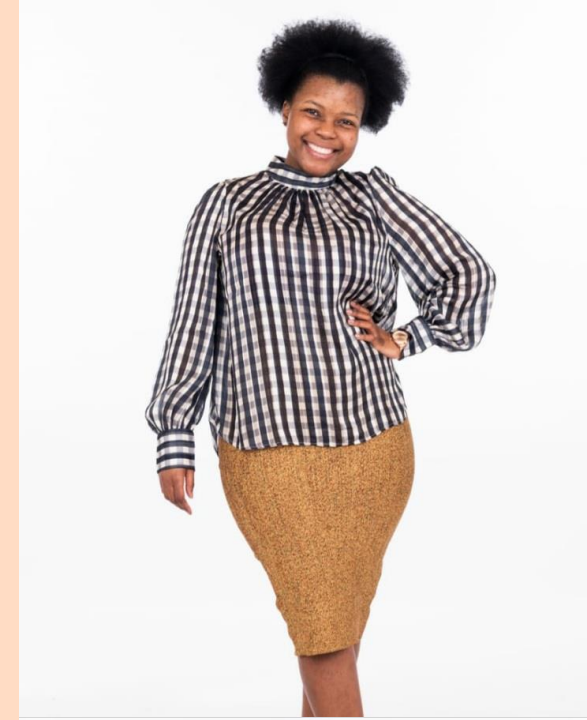


A mentor is a forerunner, Dr Motlatso Phaswana-Mlambo, PhD, Director of Institutional Research, DeptInstitutional Intelligence, UNISA and Hon Senior Researcher, School of Clinical Medicine, Dept of Family Medicine, Wits University

“My noblest dreams came to fruition because of the amazing support and guidance of my sister who has been my mentor. My educational journey and career path followed in her footprints and her successes made me aspire to be successful in life, just like her. It is through her incredible successes that my journey of footprints began.”

A mentor is a role model - Ms Ncumisa Msolo holds a BSc, MPH, Research coordinator, UCT, Groote Schuur Hospital in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

At first, I did not know what I wanted to do but as I watched my mentor it became clearer that I wanted to do what she was doing. I took my time to observe the studies done and I learnt lot of interesting things about Public Health researchers and what one can possibly become. I therefore enrolled and completed my MPH utilizing the knowledge I had gained from our research studies.



A mentor is a role model, guide, and sponsor -
Kagiso Phaswana, BSS, BSS Hons, MSW,
Managerial Specialist, ICAS in Phaswana-
Mafuya, 2021

“Among all of us as siblings, my sister has been a role model for all of us to follow in advancing research careers. Throughout my master’s degree I contacted my sister anytime, any day whenever I felt stuck, and she would make valuable input. She guided and supported me throughout my studies where I excelled in my performance; she has been my source of inspiration and role model; paved my path; encouraged me to pursue postgraduate studies; linked and alerted me to opportunities; and new developments.”



A mentor is a catalyst, Ms Zinhle Sokhela, Research Project Manager, Wits Reproductive Health Unit in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

“My mentor, has been a catalyst for my career success; she motivated, enabled, supported and facilitated my personal and professional development.”



Mentors are critical for career success in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2023

“A lack of mentors, occasionally overt discrimination, and the academy’s poor work-life balance are well-documented reasons for women’s lack of career progression”

Foreword by Prof Glenda Gray, CEO & President of the SAMRC in Research Mentorship Book (Phaswana-Mafuya, 2023)

The lack of mentorship has been cited as a **key reason for limited career advancement**, especially among black women (Beckwith, Carter & Peters, 2016; Bynum, 2015 cited in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2023)



Mentors should be recognized, celebrated and supported for the significant role they play in advancing careers of others

“Scientists spend many hours doing science. But many, many hours are spent on something else, something rewarding, fulfilling, and ultimately, for some, a lot more important. This something is called mentoring. And unfortunately, given the amount of time people spend on this, it is not as widely recognized as the scientific work. It's almost as if we talk about mentorship in the abstract, that of course we expect academics, lab heads, PIs, lecturers to be mentors. But in this abstract sense we don't necessarily talk to individuals about how to support mentors in that way when they face their own challenges. We all know that mentorship is important. And yet, we don't seem to value it appropriately. And indeed recognize individuals who devote time and energy and passion to mentoring.”

Magdalena Skipper, Award-winning mentor



Mentors, we appreciate you for the great work you do everyday !!!



This expression is more common among individuals who are not mentored. Those who are mentored may say it but they will not quit!

Mentorship is about nation-building, social justice, diversity, and inclusivity

Thank You!!



Who benefits from a mentorship relationship?

Mentorship is a win-win solution for mentors, mentees, and organizations – mutual interests, mutual benefits and mutual learning



The benefits of mentorship for organizations

The Monkey Workplace Happiness Survey conducted by SurveyMonkey from June 21–30, 2019 involving 8,000 working adults in the U.S.

- 90% of people with a workplace mentor said it's valuable.
- 89% of those who have been mentored will also go on to mentor others.
- 25% of employees who enrolled in a mentoring program had a salary grade change, compared to only 5% of workers who did not participate.
- 67% of businesses reported an increase in productivity due to mentoring.
- 40% of workers who don't have a mentor say they've considered quitting their job in the past 3 months – because they felt underpaid, undervalued and lacked opportunities for professional growth and promotion.
- 50% of workers have a mentor at work, and those who do are significantly more likely to be happy with their jobs,
- Similar benefits have been highlighted in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2023



The benefits of mentorship for mentees in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2023

People with mentors perform better, advance in their careers faster, and even experience more work-life satisfaction. Mentees benefit from the teaching, guidance, feedback, coaching, counseling, advice, support, prospective opportunities of mentors toward their career goals and aspirations

Figure 1: Potential support that mentors can provide to mentees

Smoothen	Smoothen mentees' path in non-diverse work environments
Link	Link mentees to opportunities for personal and professional growth
Involve	Involve mentees in their research projects for experiential learning
Connect	Connect mentees to networks and collaborators
Aid	Aid mentees with work-life balance issues
Cheer	Cheer mentees up to persevere when the road gets tough
Guide	Guide mentees on their growth areas
Initiate	Initiate mentees in grant applications
Introduce	Introduce mentees to scientific writing
Expose	Expose mentees to science communication



The benefits of mentorship for mentors in Phaswana-Mafuya 2023

Enables deeper reflection on the subject matter

Affords knowledge and skill sharing

Keeps mentors' skills up to date

Offers the opportunity to connect meaningfully with mentees in pursuit of their career aspirations

Builds influence and reputation as a leader who grooms talent

Enhances creativity, increases awareness and sharpens leadership skills

Gives a sense of purpose,

Provides personal satisfaction, and fulfillment

Mentees are a support system to the mentor

Mentor can learn from mentees - *"To teach is to learn twice."*





What is a mentor-mentee relationship?

A sustainable mentorship relationship or rapport is built on a foundation of passion, courage, hard work, social justice, a sense of purpose and responsibility. It is also built on respect, trust, openness, integrity, sincerity, and values (Phaswana-Mafuya 2023).

A mentor-mentee relationship described

- An effective relationship between the Mentor and the Mentee is where the rubber meets the road, without it, mentorship will never be successful
- It takes both the mentor and mentee to have a successful mentorship relationship; each party has a role to play – It is up to the mentor and mentee to develop a good rapport.
- The mentee is responsible for driving the mentorship relationship; leaving the mentorship relationship in the hands of a mentor is a huge risk
- Mentorship is voluntary, it can never be made a forced choice to the mentor or mentee
- Everyone needs mentoring but not everyone can be in a mentorship relationship – it requires certain qualities, skills, and attitudes
- Building a mentorship is not a herculean event – it is a process, it requires time, energy and effort

“What I found most valuable from mentorship was the time, resources and motivation invested in me to make sure I am the woman I am today.”Ms Boitshepo Gopane

As in all relationships, the relationship between a mentor and a mentee is a two-way process in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2023

A mentor-mentee relationship is not a teacher-student or a boss-subordinate relationship

A mentor listens carefully, empathises, validates, collaborates, challenges, and finds ways to develop a mentee towards becoming an independent

A mentee responds, appreciates, learns, and grows from the teachings given to advance his or her career



**A mentor-mentee relationship
is like a parent-child
relationship, Boitshepo Gopane
in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021**

“I have experienced the mentor-mentee relationship to be more like a “mother-daughter relationship” as it provided an opportunity for discussion about everything, academically, personally and socially.





What is a successful mentorship relationship?

It addresses vulnerabilities to produce positive career outcomes
and long-term career impacts (Ohaswana-Mafuya, 2023)

Successful mentorship relationships have positive career outcomes and long-term impacts

Career Vulnerabilities

Lack of skills to develop research networks;
Lack of profile to attract external funding;
Lack of collaborators;
Lack of academic writing skills
Lack of awareness of professional and career development opportunities
Lack of insights in the field
Self-concept issues – self-doubt
Lack of grant funding profile
Lonesome road
Negativism
Despondency

Career Outcomes

Promotions
Recognitions
Networks
Collaborations
Performance rewards
Excellence Awards
Assistantships
Nominations
Fellowships
Memberships
Scholarships
Higher academic qualifications
Awareness of new developments
Secured grants
Better salaries
Linkage to growth opportunities

Long-term Career Impacts

Better Scientists
Better Academics
Credibility
Reputation
Competitiveness
Influence
job satisfaction
Sense of belonging
Personal development
Well-being
Professional Development
Socially engaged scientist
Sophisticated networker
Acceptance by peers,
Improved work environment
Retention in the pipeline
More role models

The background of the slide is a complex network diagram. It consists of numerous circular nodes of varying sizes, colored in dark blue, light blue, and orange. These nodes are interconnected by a web of thin, dark grey lines, creating a dense, interconnected pattern that fills the entire frame. The overall aesthetic is modern and tech-oriented, suggesting themes of networking, communication, or global connectivity.

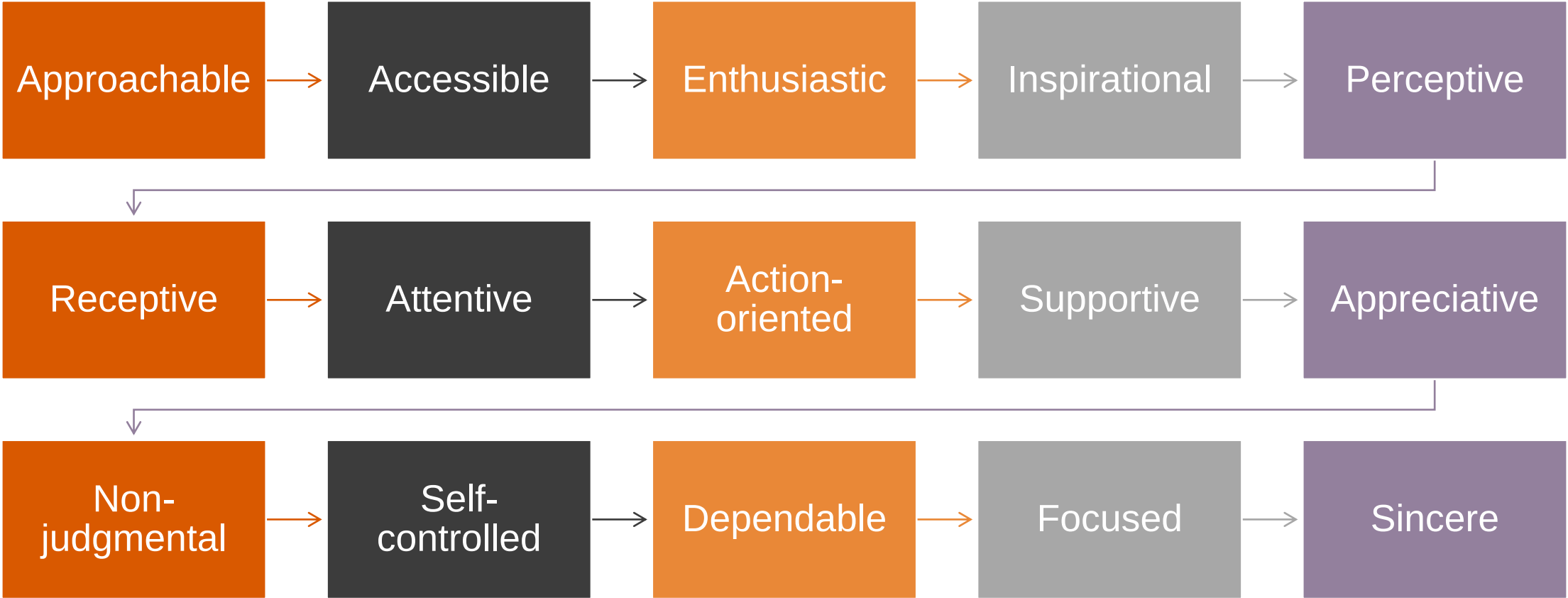
What skills, attributes, or qualities a mentor should have for a successful mentorship relationship?

“Mentorship is universal as a concept. There are fundamental values and principles that guide mentor-mentee relationships, which remain constant across cultures, institutions, individuals, geographies and contexts” Magdalena Skipper, an award-winning mentor, paraphrased

Some of the foundational skills a mentor should have

- Know your role – it is a skill
- Expertise - Experience and knowledge in the area that you are mentoring in
- Positivity – optimism, enthusiasm, positivity, supportive, motivational and inspirational
- Passion about own work - Fulfilled by own work
- Have willingness to learn – flexibility, open mindedness
- Emotional intelligence - ability to handle tough conversations
- Strong communication skills – effective communication to transfer own skills
- Passion for helping others – keen to transfer knowledge, experience and skills

Mentors' attributes that keep the mentorship relationship effective in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021,2023





Describing some of the attributes of a mentor, Ms Zinhle Sokhela, Research Project Manager, Wits Reproductive Health Unit in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

“I have been so fortunate to have such a passionate, knowledgeable, approachable and accessible mentor who is available to provide much-needed support. Each day my mentor was inspiring and gave me the energy to keep pushing and to be the best that I can be” Zinhle Sokhela, Mentee





Describing some of the attributes of a mentor, Lebogang Ramalepe Newton Study Research Coordinator, PhD candidate, UJ, NRF Bursary Holder, U21Scholarship

“I have loved the fact that my mentor is approachable, full of life, knowledgeable, and continues to learn and strive to be the pinnacle of black excellence. As an undergraduate student, I felt that senior academics such as professors were at times unapproachable and often inaccessible to students.”

Describing some of the attributes of a mentor, Ms Zamakayise Kose, Senior Specialist Researcher, NWU in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021



“I have to say my mentor is a natural groomer with a very soft spot for young people like me who are eager to learn! Without doubt, the mentorship of young people is very close to her heart”





Describing some of the attributes of a mentor, Odiwe Makaziwe Swana, Research Coordinator, Wits RHI

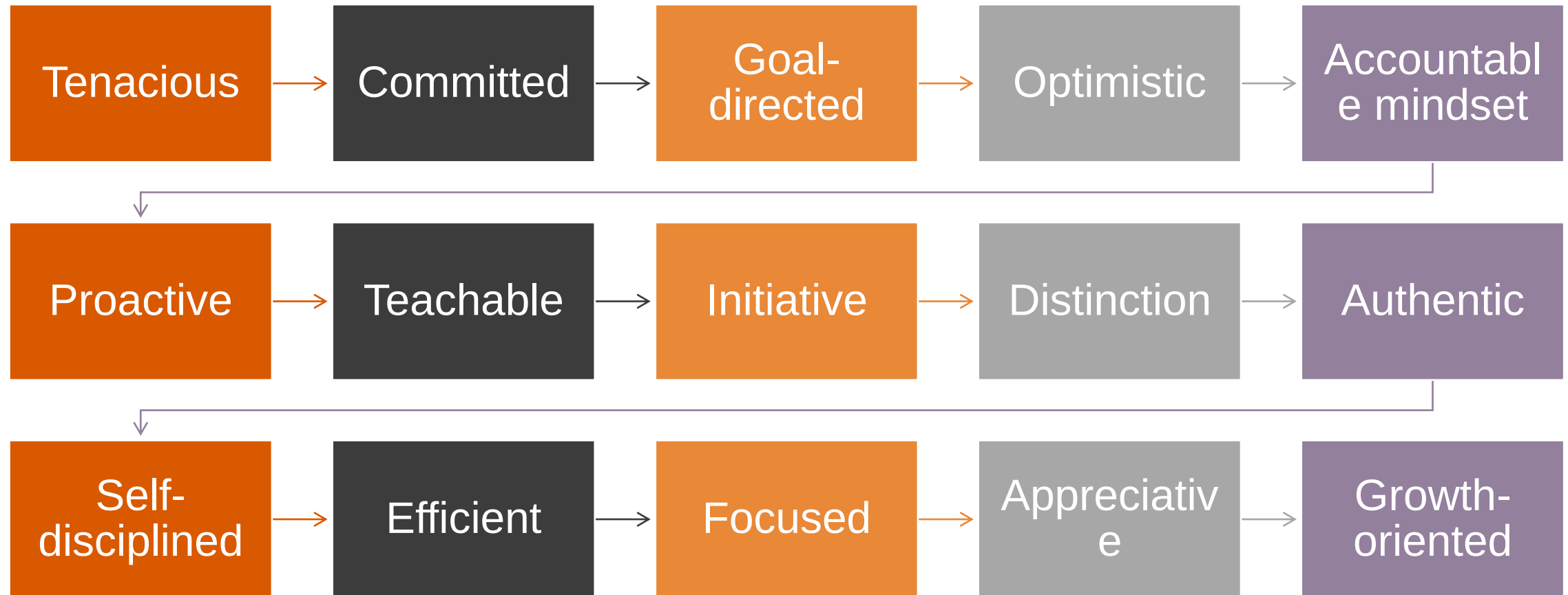
“My mentor was the first wind that blew beneath my career wings . My mentor has the most nurturing personality I have ever seen. Her natural grooming attributes brought out the best in me”



The background of the slide features a photograph of three rubber ducks floating in water. The ducks are purple, blue, and yellow. The water is a deep blue with visible ripples. The text is overlaid on this image in a large, white, sans-serif font. The text is centered and reads: "There is a part mentees should play, there is nothing for mahala".

**There is a part mentees should
play, there is nothing for
mahala**

Mentees' attributes that keep the mentorship relationship effective in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021,2023 – I have not provided expressions of mentees' attributes as this session focuses on mentors



Some of the attributes of mentees are bear on this slide

OWSD 2019 I ADMIRE Challenge

OWSD Secretariat Retweeted
Boitshepo @Boitshepogopane · 3d
[#IAdmire](#) Prof Refilwe Phaswana-Mafuya. She became my mentor & mother figure in a blink of an eye. Just to see her at the 1st NWU Biennial Research and Innovation Conference my life changed completely. It is mainly because of her the chance I got today.
[#Boso](#)
[@OwsdSecretariat](#)



Kagiso Phaswana @KagishoPhaswana
[#IAdmire](#) prof Phaswana-Mafuya. She is my my sister, my inspiration, my mentor. After mentoring our other sister who also obtained her PHD, I had no choice but to follow in her footsteps. I am currently finalizing my Masters degree and I hope to keep following through her mentoring.

7:40 PM · Feb 8, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone





**What mentoring are the tips,
techniques, or tools for a
successful mentorship
relationship?**

Get to know your mentee – this is the *first commandment* of a *mentorship relationship*

Mentors set mentees on a path to self-discovery and self-mastery
self-knowledge, self-awareness, & self-determination

“My mentors recognized my potential at a time when I did not even
know I had any”

Get to know each other on an individual basis and meet mentee where s/he is

- Mentees tend to seek mentors that they see themselves in
- But still there are differences that should not be overlooked
- Mentors and mentees come from diverse backgrounds and experiences even if they may share similar socio-demographics
- Mentors should endeavour to know mentees on a personal level - individual basis.
- Mentors can meet with mentees informally, e.g. have a lunch date, breakfast meeting, watch a video together and then discuss it, take a walk in the park, attend a social event together, brainstorm ideas, joint meeting with another pair, agree on goals for the next meeting,



On being mentored by a person that mentees identified with in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

“I was excited to see a black female leader in a research institution and I instantly knew I was going to learn a lot from her. She immediately took me under her wing not only as her master’s intern but also as mentor in my studies, career and personal life. She inspired me with her work ethic, hard work and dedication in everything she did.





On being mentored by a person that mentees identified with in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

- *“I identify myself with and in her, as such I wanted to learn from and with her so that one day I can be like her and even better than her, i.e., an independent and sought-after black woman STEM scientist like her”.*
Dr Edith Phalane, Research
Manager/Specialist Scientist, SAMRC/UJ
PACER in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

Define needs, goals, and expectations to make the role much easier, have boundaries or limits, ensure proper planning, and areas of mutual interest

- Help mentees define concrete and abstract needs – SWOT Analysis of themselves
- Help mentees set realistic goals and expectations – short, medium, long-term -never decide goals for them
- Provide some actionable advice - SMART Objectives, development plan
- **Help mentees develop a personal mission statement to** crystallize their goals and stay focused
- encourage open communication, active participation and interaction of mentee on goals, needs, objectives so

that as mentee you know what mentee wants - reach a common ground



Defined her goals with the help of her mentor to operate in a focused manner, Dr Edith Phalane (PhD in Science), an orphan from gaMogoboya village, Limpopo Province, in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

“Reflecting on my career journey I am grateful for the mentorship I have received which has not only been inspirational, but it has been a refinement process that is producing excellence in me as I develop towards becoming an independent scientist. My research journey is on an upward trajectory. My mentor and I engaged and conversed intensively on my short, medium, and long-term goals and then together we strategized on how to achieve these goals. I know where I coming from; where I am now, and where I am going.”

Dr Edith Phalane, Research Manager/Specialist Scientist, PACER in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021



Be deliberate about introducing and connecting mentees to networks, people and opportunities

- Sponsorship is critical in mentorship; a mentor should connect a mentee to opportunities, i.e. serve as a sponsor
- Sponsorship can be linkage to include nominations (awards, boards), memberships, fellowships, scholarships, job opportunities, motivation for promotions, board nominations, etc.
- Mentors have developed networks that they can connect mentees to
- Link mentees to networking activities such as workshops, seminars, outreach, webinars, etc.
- This will help mentees grow and find more opportunities
- Mentees can learn from these networks and be empowered
- Mentor should be resourceful, innovative, creative, share advice and new ideas

"I am a young scientist for whom doors of opportunity were opened. I was exposed to networking opportunities that brought visibility to my work and enabled me to gain access to new opportunities and contacts that I tapped into. I have become a sophisticated science networker and a socially engaged emerging scientist." Ms Boitshepo Gopane, MSc Microbiology, an aspiring Mycologist from a rural village in NW Province in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

INNOVATIVE BUSINESS IDEA



For North-West University student Boitshepo Gopane, recycling is the future and her business, WeClean Recyclers, was the perfect way to make sure "we save the environment".

"I come from an underprivileged community in Mahikeng, where people have taken up recycling as a means of putting a roof over their heads and food on their tables," she said.



The three winners of the NWU's Leopard's Lair Competition are Olwethu Mvelo (second runner-up), Sydwell Sihlangu (runner-up) and Boitshepo Gopane (winner).

BLACK. GIRL. MAGIC. 🌟🌟

Congratulations to Boitshepo Gopane, MSc Microbiology student @theNWU who recently won an award at the Black Women in Science Conference.

@BWIS_SA promotes the participation & increases visibility of black women in science.



“Mentorship has helped me to realize enormous and immeasurable achievements that moved me from ordinary to extraordinary to become the best version of myself. Today, I am a young scientist with a string of awards under my belt.” Ms Boitshepo Gopane, MSc Microbiology, an aspiring Mycologist from a rural village in NW Province in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

- ❖ The NWU Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Most Promising Student Innovation Idea
- ❖ Leopards Lair Fair Entrepreneurship Competition Winner
- ❖ Black Women in Science fellow (2018-2019)
- ❖ Black Women in Science (BWIS) group award for best pitch presentation (Eazi Waste)
- ❖ Vice Chancellor’s Award for most promising student innovation idea for “WeClean Recycling Company”
- ❖ Top 18 North-West University Early-Career Women Scientists
- ❖ Award for the Best Research Poster- NWU Research Day
- ❖ National finalist for Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education
- ❖ Provincial finalist for Technology and Innovation Agency
- ❖ Forum delegate for Africa Women Innovation & Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF) sponsored by NEPAD-SANBIO
- ❖ Top 5 pitcher for Vodacom Youth connected roadshow
- ❖ Nominated as an Activate Change Driver for the North West Province
- ❖ Finalist for Boost Up Entrepreneurship Competition
- ❖ Mail & Guardian 200 Young South Africans Finalist & Inspiring Fifty South Africa Winner
- ❖ UK South Africa Tech Hub Express Expert Programme finalist
- ❖ Top seven pitcher- Startup Grind Cape Town



Dr Edith Phalane scooped Awards and recognitions – A Beacon of Hope – 1st PhD in her village, PDRF, Specialist Scientist

- Featured in the Vision Never Dies; Research Mentorship: A Developmental and Transformational Tool in Shaping and Sustaining African Women's Career Progression in Academia as well as Navigating Academia books
- Featured in the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings: South African Alumni Narratives
- Featured on the Forbes Online Science Magazine
- Featured on the Root of the Science Podcast
- Listed in the Mail and Guardian 200 South Africa, 2021, Science and Technology Category
- Inspiring Fifty South African Women Winner
- Selected to attend the 8th Global Young Scientist Summit
- One of the nine women selected to participate at the Soapbox Science
- Clinical Excellence Award for Best Oral Presentation at the 9th SA AIDS Conference
- Black Women in Science fellowship
- Best Poster Presentation at the 12th International Symposium on Molecular Diagnostics
- Selected to attend the 68th Lindau Nobel Laureates Meetings Germany, under physiology/medicine
- Listed as one of the top 5 successful South African woman and young scientist by the National Research Foundation/News24,
- TATA Doctoral Scholarship, South African Women in Science Awards
- NRF-DST Innovation Doctoral Scholarship
- National Research Foundation (NRF) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD): DAAD-NRF IN-Country Doctoral Scholarship



Be honest in giving feedback to build a mentor-mentee relationship that helps mentees grow

- Give honest feedback as it builds – feedback is not criticism even if it may be uncomfortable
- Be truthful in your evaluations, have hard talks, straight talks in love
- Do not sugarcoat things - when a mentee is doing things wrong or when you've made a mistake, allow mentees to learn from their mistakes, mentors may be blunt, Help set up a system to measure achievement.
- Help your mentees to realise that honest feedback is not an insult even if it may feel uncomfortable
- Mentees can look back at the tough feedback given and eventually see how they benefitted from it or how it helped them to improve
- Balance feedback - celebrate mentees successes and acknowledge mentees' progress - validations, nominations, delegations, assignments



Mentees enjoying an open and frank relationship, Ms Zamakayise Kose, Senior Specialist Researcher, NWU in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021



“I have enjoyed a very sincere relationship characterized by openness and frsnkness where if I did well, I would be applauded. If I did not do well, I would be told openly , no matter how uncomfortable it felt.





Open and frank mentor-mentee relationship, Ms Zinhle Sokhela, Research Project Manager, Wits Reproductive Health Unit in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

“I have been grateful for the transparent and open mentor-mentee relationship . My mentor is realness personified.” Zinhle Sokhela, Mentee



Be vulnerable as a mentor to become exemplary – share your successes, struggles and lessons learnt to strengthen the relationship IN Phaswana-Mafuya 2021

- Share the struggles you went through, areas you need to improve on, and ask mentees to share their successes and struggles
- Sharing your successes and struggles as a mentor is the most effective way to reach the mentee at their level; mentees tend to cite your failures or weaknesses whenever they speak about their mentor
- By sharing your story with all its ups and downs you can take a step towards being vulnerable with your mentee.
- it goes a long way to let them know that you aren't perfect and you've faced many of the challenges they may be going through. This teaches mentees that you are human, you make errors too
- In return, mentees fear of making errors will be allayed, they will realise that they too can make mistakes, they need not defend themselves; they should accept and learn from their mistakes



+



On mentor sharing lived experiences, Lebogang Ramalepe Newton Study Research Coordinator and a PhD candidate, UJ in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

“There is a need for more professors to bridge the gap. I often think about the life experiences and challenges that my mentor shared with me and derive strength from these.”



**On mentor sharing lived experiences,
Odiwe Makaziwe Swana, Research
Coordinator, Wits RHI**

“My mentor shared her experiences on balancing work and family life. I cannot forget her story on how she navigated through some of the struggles that we go through as women. I have been encouraged by her experiences, especially where she had to be at work while having morning sickness in her first term of pregnancy everyday for three months while being in a new job. She related how she felt guilty and how she never wanted to be seen to be making excuses”

Be committed, consistent, and reliable to build a strong trust relationship



Commitment is required on both mentor and mentee to build a strong mentorship relationship



Mentorship requires effort, time and energy – e.g. having meetings



sometimes you may not stick to commitments 100% because life happens



Do your best to be courteous and polite to indicate when you can no longer make the appointment



When you cannot meet up in person, find another mode of interaction to make up for the lost time



Ensure you respond to their emails – diversify mode of communication for flexibility



Provide advice, resources and guidance and answer questions even online – always try to find another means to touch base to keep the momentum going



Strong rapport reinforces work commitment, Research Project Manager, Wits RHI in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

“The opportunity to work side by side with my mentor made me to learn what hard work was about and how to keep pushing. The opportunity for involvement in multiple research projects challenged me to work hard and give my all”



Be mindful of power dynamics that may make the relationship scary and uncomfortable

- The relationship between a mentor and a mentee is not authority-based
- There are no power dynamics in a mentorship relationship as in performance reviews, salary negotiations, promotions
- Power dynamics can make engagements uncomfortable, stressful, anxious, fearful, and unproductive
- The engagements are relaxed, informal, flexible, active, and open allowing for a meaningful interaction
- The mentor does not tell mentees what to do – s/he invites them to share their ideas, listens to them, guides and supports them

The mentee can ask questions, experiment things, openly indicate if they don't understand something or have a differing opinion.

- Mentees often have brilliant ideas as they are not stupid. They have thoughts about solutions to some of the obstacles they are facing.
- Avoid being judgmental of mentees, always be empathetic





A mentor is like a mother,
Ms Zinhle Sokhela,
Research Project Manager,
Wits Reproductive Health
Unit in Phaswana-Mafuya,
2021



*“I discovered **that a mentor is like a mother as she becomes the go to person on anything.**”*
It was amazing to have found someone who was not a boss but a leader and wanted young people like myself to learn and better themselves in all that they did. I am so grateful to my mommy Prof.” Zinhle Sokhela,
Mentee



Common barriers to successful mentorship relationship - counter-productive and create feelings of frustration, resentment, rejection and feeling unwelcome: unwelcomeness

- Not defining the purpose or outcomes – unclear expectations or goals of the program
- Poor screening of mentors and mentees: qualities/attributes
- Misconceptions about the role of a mentor – knowledge and skills on how to be a mentor
- Insufficient support – mentorship takes energy and effort
- Wrong pairings/mismatch – maybe unproductive
- Poor expectation management: Bar should not be too high or too low
- Insufficient feedback – mentor/mentees to give each other ongoing and honest feedback for improvement
- Lack of respect for confidentiality – keep all discussed between mentor and mentee to safeguard trust
- Insufficient time/time constraints – it takes time and energy to grow
- Lack of communication skills
- Failure to monitor progress – absence of an evaluation plan,
- Lack of networking – to get new ideas, linkage to opportunities and support
- Resistance, resentment
- Lack of boundaries or limits
- Lack of commitment





What is the impact of a successful mentorship relationship – it has ripple effects, mentorship breeds mentorship

“The hallmark of mentorship is generational change, where an investment in one person leads to an investment in others” (Petro, 2023).



Mentees pay it forward by becoming mentors (Team Mentorpal, 2023).

Mentees can become catalysts for change, facilitating opportunities for other women to become co-creators of scientific knowledge needed for innovative solutions to societal problems (Luke, Baumann, Carothers, Landsverk & Proctor, 2016).

If you have been mentored; you will likely mentor others

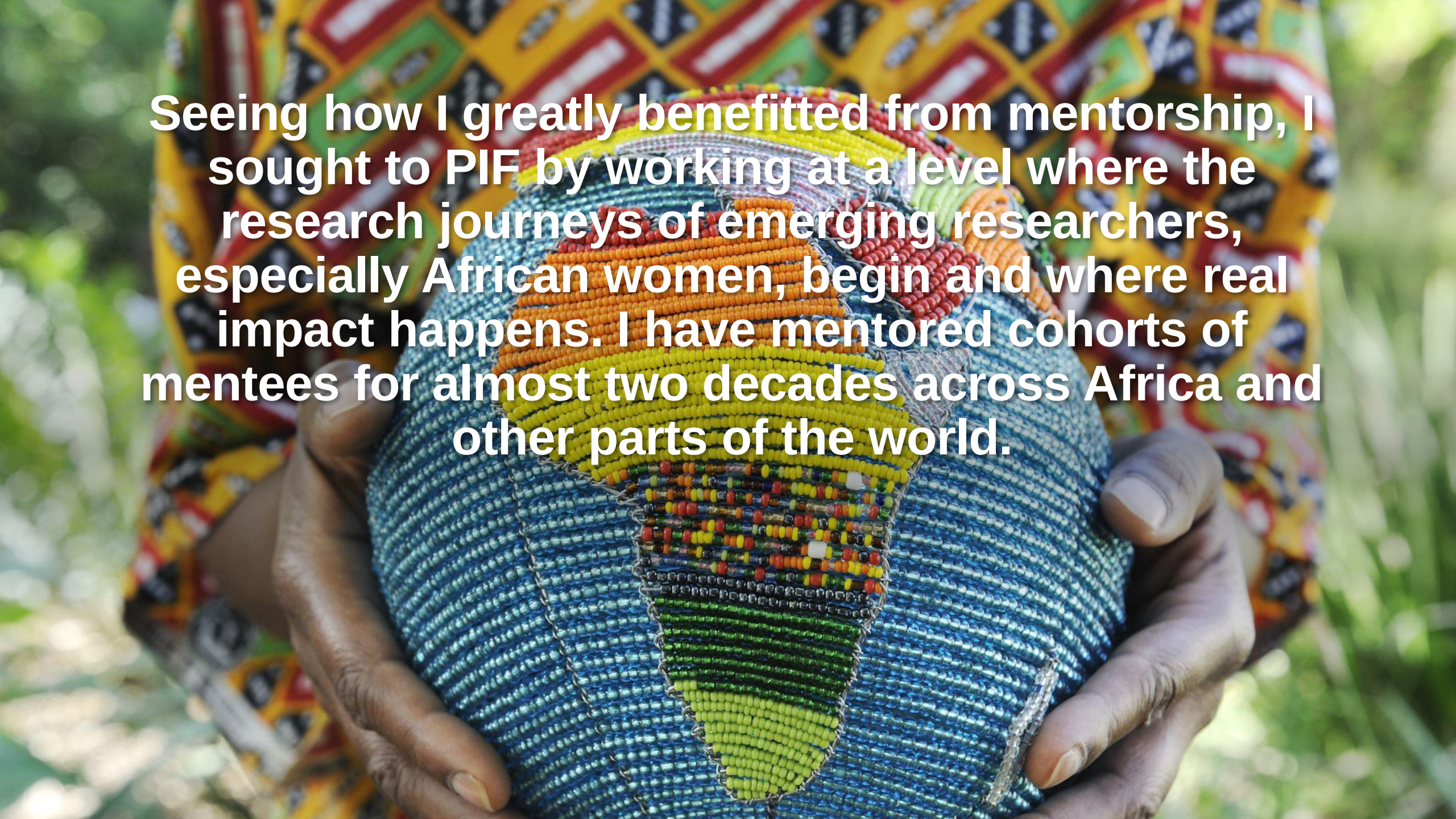


“We are kind of expected to pick them up as we go along. And when I became a PI, I realised that I was grateful for the mentors that did help me get to having my own lab. What I tell my students when they come to do a PhD in my lab is that they start as my students, but I want them to graduate as my peers because I want to be able to mentor them and provide them with these tools that can make them more successful. It's more than just how to plan an experiment, how to phrase a hypothesis. These are all obvious things that you need to learn to be a scientist. But there's so much more than that, that a good mentor should be able to give the people that they are mentoring” **Netta Erez, Award-Winning Mentor**



My mentorship experience has encouraged me to PIF by taking young people under my wing right at the beginning of their careers and assist them in their journeys





Seeing how I greatly benefitted from mentorship, I sought to PIF by working at a level where the research journeys of emerging researchers, especially African women, begin and where real impact happens. I have mentored cohorts of mentees for almost two decades across Africa and other parts of the world.

I always had the potential to become a great researcher. I just needed someone experienced to help me unleash it. I was able to discover my full potential as a researcher because I stood on the shoulders of a giant; gained hands-on experience that helped develop transferable skills to complete my Master's & Doctoral Degrees; got appointed as Lecturer/Senior Lecturer. I have now successfully mentored more than 30 Honours students and three Masters students on their research projects at my university. My mentor has inspired me to mentor other phenomenal young women alongside.” Dr Janell Le Roux, Senior Lecturer, University of Limpopo, (Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021)



“Being mentored by one of the best mentors I have ever had, I am now involved in peer mentorship, supporting peers in their research projects and papers, nominating them for opportunities, linking them with my networks. I am also co-supervising and mentoring several MPH as well as PhD students. Further, I mentor young scientists at Eskom Expo. I serve on committees of South African black women in science and South African postdoctoral fellows.” — Dr Edith Phalane, Project Manager/Specialist Scientist, SAMRC/UJ PACER in Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021



Looking back, I have learnt that it is the simplicity and humility of my humble beginnings that enabled me to become more empathetic and sympathetic towards others who needed support as I once did

“If I had been privileged materially, I probably would not have developed the resilience needed to endure some of the many struggles and ultimately to successfully carve my path for others to follow.”Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

“My background, which I had originally considered a hindrance, became the ideal sword to empower and inspire others who see themselves in me. “ Phaswana-Mafuya, 2021

“To add value to others, one must first value others.” — John C. Maxwell, coach, and trainer



I hope that this session has provided you with actionable tips, techniques, tools, principles, values and skills to build as successful mentorship relationship

Mentorship is not a silver bullet that automatically creates success. You have to work hard at it!!!

Be empowered, be inspired!!!



