

Is More Truly Merrier?: Mentoring and the Practice of Law

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Cet article examine deux questions sur le mentorat. D'abord, qui est le plus susceptible de bénéficier de services de mentorat au cours de sa carrière? Ensuite, comment le mentorat influence-t-il les carrières des professionnels? En utilisant une enquête longitudinale sur des avocats, les auteures évaluent l'incidence des postes et des aspirations en début de carrière sur les chances de bénéficier de services de mentorat. Elles mesurent les bénéfices du mentorat au moyen des récompenses de carrière intrinsèques et extrinsèques, pour découvrir que le contexte organisationnel et les attributs individuels constituent d'importants prédicteurs de qui bénéficiera de mentorat. Les professionnels ayant de multiples mentors se sont avérés les grands gagnants, en ce qu'ils obtiennent des récompenses de carrière plus importantes et plus diversifiées que ceux n'ayant pas de mentor.

This paper addresses two questions regarding mentoring: First, who is most likely to receive mentorship during their career? And second, how does mentorship shape the careers of professionals? Using a longitudinal survey of lawyers, we evaluate the impact of early career positions and aspirations on the chances for mentorship. We assess the benefits of mentorship across extrinsic and intrinsic career rewards. We find

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organizational context and individual attributes are important predictors of who receives mentorship. Professionals with multiple mentors were the big winners in that they obtain greater and more diverse career rewards over those with one or no mentors.

MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS ARE WIDELY APPLAUDED FOR their success at socializing and integrating junior professionals into their new organizational environment and professional roles and responsibilities. In recent years, a flurry of research activity, including several meta-analyses (Allen et al. 2004; Eby et al. 2008; Underhill 2006), has documented the benefits of mentoring relationships. The benefits of productive mentorship include: greater earnings (Murrell and Tangri 1999; Smith, Smith, and Markham 2000), career advancement (Scandura 1992), enhanced job satisfaction (Wallace 2001), and increased organizational commitment (Ashford and Saks 1996) together with reduced employee turnover (Laband and Lentz 1995; Viator and Scandura 1991). In addition to career rewards, protégés enjoy personal benefits through enhanced self-esteem (Fagenson 1994; Johnson 2007), positive work attitudes (Lankau and Scandura 2002), and increased motivation to seek out new experiences (Spencer 2007) and achievable goals (Ramaswami and Dreher 2007). Mentors stand to gain through the assistance on projects provided by protégés, reputational status for developing new talent within firms, and personal benefits of friendship, respect, and recognition for their senior status and expertise (Allen et al. 2004; Higgins and Thomas 2001; Kram 1985; Parise and Forret 2008).

Much of the research literature targets the benefits of mentoring, yet substantial gaps remain in our understanding about who receives mentorship and the different ways they may benefit from such relationships. We set out to address several gaps in the literature. First, past work tends to overlook individual and contextual variables that may be relevant in understanding who becomes mentored (Burke and McKeen 1997; Ragins and McFarlin 1990). We examine whether career-oriented attitudes and personality characteristics of individuals attract potential mentors, as well as how specific organizational contexts facilitate mentoring relationships. Our analysis contributes to the mentor literature through an examination of the personality antecedents of mentoring and the moderating influence of organizational context-related variables on career outcomes. Understanding the differential receipt of mentoring and the conditions under which mentoring leads to its demonstrated outcomes constitute important avenues for extending our understanding of mentoring as a career development tool. Second, the majority of studies focus on a narrow set of extrinsic outcomes as indicators of the benefits of mentoring, typically earnings and promotions. We consider a broader scope of career outcomes, including both *extrinsic* and *intrinsic* rewards. This more inclusive range of career benefits

represents the larger “package” of attributes highly prized by professionals (Koberg, Boss, and Goodman 1998; Ragins and Cotton 1999). Third, recent research suggests that having more than one mentor may be significantly more beneficial than having a sole mentor during one’s career (de Janasz and Sullivan 2004; Higgins 2000; Higgins, Dobrow, and Chandler 2008). We empirically investigate whether there are in fact enhanced and diverse career benefits derived from having a constellation of mentors.

Our paper seeks to address these gaps in the literature by answering two research questions using data collected from practicing lawyers. First, we ask: Who is most likely to receive mentorship over the course of their career? We answer this question by examining how certain individual characteristics and organizational contexts predict the probability of being mentored and of having single versus multiple mentors. Senior employees usually have considerable discretion in deciding whether they will mentor someone and who they will mentor (Allen, Poteet, and Russell 2000). In addition, not everyone who wants a mentor may obtain one (Allen 2004). It is important then to determine which individual characteristics are most attractive to potential mentors. In addition, many junior professionals will not have access to a senior person with whom to form a mentoring relationship because of the pyramid shape of many organizations. Therefore, the organizational size and context of the employment setting may also influence one’s chances of developing a mentoring relationship. This study employs a longitudinal panel survey that offers a unique opportunity to evaluate the relative impact of early career aspirations and organizational setting on the likelihood of receiving mentorship.

Second, we ask: How does mentorship make a difference to the careers of professionals? In addressing this question, we assess the potential benefits of mentorship across a set of *intrinsic* (e.g., social value of work and job satisfaction) and *extrinsic* (e.g., earnings and perceived career success) career rewards. Based on previous studies, we expect that having a mentor will translate into elevated earnings and greater satisfaction with one’s career progress (Laband and Lentz 1995; Scandura 1992; Wallace 2001). In addition, we expect that lawyers who are mentored will feel that their work has more social value in that it is important or meaningful to society. Many lawyers report that they entered the practice of lawyer with the hopes of making a difference in society and with socialization by senior colleagues they internalize norms of altruism and belief in community service (Granfield and Koenig 1992; Wallace 1997). Professionals who are mentored are also more likely to feel capable performing daily work tasks and more satisfied with their job as they are continuously learning and advancing to accomplish objectives with a higher level of competence than their non-mentored colleagues (Wallace 2001). We examine how being mentored impacts on a diverse set of intrinsic and extrinsic career outcomes. We add a further layer, comparing developmental dynamics across single and multiple mentor relationships.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Mentor-Protégé Relationship and the Benefits of Mentoring

The term mentorship describes “relationships between a younger adult and an older, more experienced adult [who] helps the younger individual learn to navigate the adult world and the world of work” (Kram 1985:2). Mentors are generally more experienced individuals who have attained positions of hierarchical success within an organization and provide support and direction to less experienced individuals (Baugh, Lankau, and Scandura 1996). Mentoring in organizations is often referred to as a *developmental* relationship between a protégé and a more senior and influential manager or professional (mentor) (Dreher and Cox 1996). Mentors share knowledge from their advanced experience and prepare, even groom, junior-level colleagues for demanding work assignments and career progress. Pivotal to the idea of mentorship is the claim that mentors are committed to providing channels for upward mobility and support to their protégés’ careers (Ragins 1997:484).

A landmark study of the mentoring process was conducted by Kram (1983, 1985; Kram and Isabella 1985) who interviewed 25 middle managers and their mentors in a large public utility company. Kram (1985) described two types of behaviors imported through the mentoring relationship. The first is *career-related* support and includes those aspects of mentoring that prepare the protégé for career advancement. These functions refer to the sponsorship, coaching, protection, exposure and visibility, and challenging work assignments that are provided to protégés. Career functions should positively affect protégés’ careers as evidenced by higher compensation and career advancement (Ragins 1997). The career mentor function is possible because of the senior individual’s status, experience, and organizational influence and serves the career goals of the protégé by helping him or her to “learn the ropes” of the organization, providing opportunities for professional growth and achievement, and building pathways to promotion (Allen et al. 2004; Ragins 1989). The second type of support is *psychosocial*. This type of support addresses interpersonal aspects of the relationship and enhances the protégé’s sense of competence, self-image, and work-role effectiveness (Allen and Eby 2004; Kram 1985). The psychosocial functions include role modeling, counseling, and friendship that primarily serve to enhance protégés’ sense of competence, clarity, and sense of identity (Kram 1983:613–14). Through organizational and career socialization, psychosocial mentoring positively impacts on protégés by helping them form more realistic career expectations that contribute to enhanced job satisfaction and career commitment (Ragins 1997; Wallace 2001). The two mentor functions offer a stable foundation for the career development of protégés and illuminate the process through which mentoring enhances careers.

Hypothesis 1a: *Lawyers who are mentored will receive greater career rewards (earnings, perceived career success, social value of work, and job satisfaction) than those who do not receive mentorship.*

Single versus Multiple Mentors and the Benefits of Mentoring

Traditional definitions of the mentoring relationship usually refer to a single master-apprentice mentor model that may no longer be sufficient with recent changes in the workplace (de Janasz and Sullivan 2004; Higgins 2000). Rather, individuals may develop not one but multiple, diverse mentoring relationships over the course of their career to help them succeed professionally (Higgins 2000; Kram 1985). As the mentor and protégé grow and mature through their working relationship, it may become necessary for one or both members to move on to other developmental relationships (Baugh and Scandura 1999; Kram 1983). Mentors may take on new protégés as their early protégés move on to either full independence or to develop new relationships with different mentors. Over the course of one's career, an individual may have several mentors who are beneficial in terms of organizational assimilation and professional development at different career stages. Having several mentors can provide protégés with different perspectives, knowledge, and skills, as well as serve different mentoring functions that may further contribute to a protégé's career success (Baugh and Scandura 1999; de Janasz and Sullivan 2004; Higgins et al. 2008). Although the literature has recognized the existence of multiple mentors, few studies have empirically investigated why some individuals may have only one mentor whereas others have multiple mentors or the career outcomes for individuals with multiple mentors in comparison with those with a single mentor or none at all (Baugh and Scandura 1999; de Janasz and Sullivan 2004; Higgins and Thomas 2001).

Hypothesis 1b: *Lawyers who are mentored by multiple mentors will receive greater career rewards (earnings, perceived career success, social value of work, and job satisfaction) than those who are mentored by a single mentor or do not receive mentorship at all.*

Mentorship in the Context of Legal Settings and the Likelihood of Being Mentored

As Ragins notes "mentoring relationships do not occur in a vacuum" (1997:487) and we must take into account the contextual elements of the organizations where mentoring relationships may be formed. There is, however, a notable lack of research on the organizational contexts and cultures that may promote or deter the formation of mentoring relationships (Ragins 1997; Young, Cady, and Foxon 2006). We expect that the number of poten-

tial mentors in a professional's workplace is related to the chances of becoming a protégé. That is, large firms are likely to have more available mentors than smaller firms. A larger pool of potential mentors should also increase the likelihood of a successful match between an eligible protégé and an interested mentor. In the case of law, large law firms will have more lawyers compared to nonfirm settings (e.g., government, private corporations) where a variety of other professional workers may predominate or there are simply a very small number of lawyers employed (Laband and Lentz 1995; Wallace 1995).

We also examine the extent to which the professional's first job setting affects the likelihood of being mentored. Because mentorship relationships are typically initiated early on in a person's career, we expect that their first work setting is most influential in determining access to potential mentors. Research suggests that in the legal profession, of all the different possible employment settings, law firms in particular emphasize apprentice-type relationships and therefore should be most conducive to the early development of mentoring relationships (Higgins 2000; Krakauer and Chen 2003; Ragins 1989). Law firms are expected to endorse the mentoring model more so than other settings because mentoring is consistent with the law firm's cultural ethos. The staffing of law firms is fundamentally based on the "Cavath System" (Dezalay and Garth 2004; Spangler 1986) where the first tenet is in-house, on-the-job training of younger lawyers by their senior colleagues. These associates train for a period of four to eight years under the close supervision of senior lawyers or partners of the firm. This extended probationary of employment leads to invitation to join the partnership circle (or being punted from the firm or stalled at mid-level as permanent associates or salaried partners) (Noonan and Corcoran 2004). This scenario suggests that law firms offer work arrangements highly conducive to fostering mentoring relationships.

Hypothesis 2: *Lawyers whose first job was working in a law firm, particularly a large law firm, are more likely to receive mentorship than lawyers whose first job was in a smaller firm or a nonfirm setting (e.g., government, private industry, solo practice).*

Individual Characteristics and the Likelihood of Being Mentored

Potential mentors size up the opportunities (Gentry, Weber, and Sadri 2008) and associated liabilities (Parise and Forret 2008) when taking on new protégés. Social exchange theory offers a theoretical footing for understanding the selection of protégés by mentors (Olian, Carroll, and Giannantonio 1993). Social exchange theory suggests that the formation of new relationships is rooted in an assessment of perceived costs of participating in the relationship compared with the perceived benefits (Thibault and Kelley 1959). If a relationship is believed to provide more benefits

than costs, the individual is more likely to enter into a relationship. Thus, mentors are more likely to select individuals as protégés whom they believe are most likely to be highly successful (Allen et al. 2000). For example, if an individual appears to have high potential, is an above average performer and highly motivated, he or she will be more attractive as a prospective protégé (Kram 1985; Noe 1988a; Olian et al. 1993). Mentors will choose individuals as protégés whom they believe possess aptitudes and competencies that increase the chances of the relationship being a mutually satisfying experience with potential rewards for mentors (Allen et al. 2000; Parise and Forret 2008). We aim to identify several of these attributes that indicate to possible mentors the potential of junior professionals as worthy protégés.

We examine three career-related variables and two personality characteristics that may signal potential protégés' aptitude. These characteristics may attract mentors because they identify individuals who appear eager to learn, enjoyable to work with, and achievement-oriented (Kram 1985). They may also reflect potential protégés' drive to invest in their human capital and to initiate mentoring with the goal of enhancing their career success (Turban and Dougherty 1994; Wallace 2001). The three career-related variables examined in this study include elite education, status achievement goals, and career salience and are based on measures collected early in the career history of each lawyer.¹ Two personality dimensions include locus of control and depression. These variables are discussed in greater detail below.

An individual's performance potential is a factor that may influence their attractiveness to prospective mentors (Allen, Poteet, and Burroughs 1997) and educational background may operate as a proxy for potential when making training allocation decisions (Whitely, Dougherty, and Dreher 1991). Educational background is often used to tap workers' investments in their general human capital (Becker 1964), but because lawyers have the same amount of education (e.g., a Bachelor of Laws or J.D. degree) their academic background is often examined in terms of whether they possess an elite education. Graduates from elite law schools are well-known commodities in the legal labor market and this information is likely available to and used by prospective mentors in their selection decisions (Dinovitzer and Garth 2007; Laband and Lentz 1995).

Individuals who have set goals for their careers are typically more aware of their own work-related abilities and interests and are more likely

¹ These three variables (elite education, status achievement goals, and career salience) were measured in the first wave of our survey (1990) when we began collecting detailed work history information from each lawyer. With each additional wave of the survey, we were able to build a cumulative work history of transitions in earnings, employment status, promotions, and areas of practice. The first wave (1990) offers the opportunity to tap lawyers' professional goals and their career plans (e.g., how central they expected their legal career to be in life, as full-time or less than full-time practice) at the point of early career progress. Questions about legal education were captured as well in this first survey.

to seek additional job-related information and skills to ensure success in achieving those goals (Noe 1988a). We examine the importance the individual attaches to obtaining a position of traditional high status within the legal profession (e.g., as a bencher, partner, leader in a corporation, or through financial rewards). Lawyers who have set out status achievement goals are likely to expend greater effort in networking as a means to advancing their careers (Wayne et al. 1999). In doing so, they are more likely to seek out mentoring relationships with senior lawyers to accelerate their career progress and they are more likely to be viewed as attractive potential protégés by senior colleagues.

Career salience is the degree to which an individual identifies psychologically with their career as a focal point of their self-image (Lodahl and Kejner 1965) and a central endeavor in life (Bielby and Bielby 1984). Those who are more committed to and enthusiastic about their career are more likely to invest in learning and acquiring skills to succeed in their career thereby enhancing their self-image. The career mentoring functions of gaining exposure and visibility and taking on challenging assignments are likely to be attractive to individuals who are highly committed to their careers. Potential protégés will be motivated to seek and obtain a mentor because being successful in their careers is so directly tied to their self-image (Noe 1988a). Similarly, senior individuals are more likely to view such individuals as attractive potential protégés as evidenced by their dedication and enthusiasm for hard work.

Personal empowerment, a sense of confidence and self-belief, offers an important element in individuals' abilities to create mentoring opportunities and to take advantage of resources offered through mentoring relationships. Self-empowerment likely consists of a duality between strong inner drive and a positive, enthusiastic approach to one's professional work. This inner drive is commonly termed locus of control, which is a stable personality trait that may motivate individuals to invest in developmental activities, such as mentoring relationships (Noe 1988a). Locus of control reflects the extent to which individuals feel that rewards and outcomes are controlled by their own actions rather than by external forces in their environment (Spector 1982). Individuals with an internal locus of control tend to believe that their job performance and career success are the result of their own behavior and skills and under their own personal control (Rotter 1966). As a result, they are more likely to exert effort toward learning and acquiring more skills and information by participating in developmental activities, such as mentoring, which they anticipate will lead to tangible career rewards (Spector 1982; Turban and Dougherty 1994). In contrast, individuals with an external locus of control tend to believe that their personal success is beyond their control and instead due largely to luck, fate, or the actions of others (Noe 1988a, 1988b). It is individuals who possess a strong internal locus of control who will likely express a greater willingness to

learn and acquire new skills and will be more attractive to potential mentors (Allen 2004).

We also describe a positive, enthusiastic attitude toward one's professional work as integral to self-empowerment. Research generally focuses on the inverse of this optimism—negative affectivity, or depression, which likely poses a barrier against the initiation of mentoring relationships. Depressed individuals are recognized as less productive, less confident, less motivated to seek challenging assignments, and less enjoyable individuals with whom to work (Stewart et al. 2003; Turban and Dougherty 1994). A negative outlook on life in general, and one's legal career more specifically, may deter potential mentors from selecting depressed individuals as protégés. As well, depressed individuals perceive situations with cynicism and often despair and are thus less motivated to actively further their careers by seeking out potential mentors.

Hypothesis 3: *Individuals who are initially more career-oriented and possess a strong sense of self-empowerment are more likely to receive mentorship than lawyers who are less career-oriented and less self-empowered.*

Gender and Ethnicity and the Likelihood of Being Mentored

In the model predicting the likelihood of being mentored, potential protégés' gender and ethnicity are also included. The mentoring literature suggests that in professional or managerial occupations, because mentors are more likely to be white men, women and ethnic minorities encounter more barriers or difficulties in obtaining a mentor compared with their white male counterparts (Dreher and Cox 1996). Cross-gender and cross-racial mentoring relationships tend to be more complicated, which may act as a deterrent for both potential protégés and prospective mentors (Ensher and Murphy 1997; Noe 1988b; Ragins and McFarlin 1990). Even if women and minorities recognize the importance of having a mentor, they may not have the knowledge, skills, or networks necessary to obtain a mentor and they may feel they have less access to mentoring relationships than white men (Noe 1988b; Ragins and Cotton 1991). As a result, women and minorities may be excluded from the informal networks where potential protégés meet mentors and be less likely to obtain a mentor (Koberg et al. 1998). As well, white male mentors may not consider women and minorities as suitable candidates for protégés as they may be perceived to have less in common with, or to pose a greater risk of failure, than their white male counterparts (Blake-Beard 2001; Ragins and Cotton 1991).

Hypothesis 4: *Women and ethnic minorities are less likely to receive mentorship than lawyers who are majority group members.*

DATA AND METHODS

The Sample

The data for this paper are drawn from a longitudinal panel survey of Ontario lawyers collected in January 1990 and again in October 2002.² In 1990, we selected a disproportionately stratified random sample of Ontario lawyers from the membership records of the Law Society of Upper Canada. The sample was stratified by gender to include equal numbers of men and women called to the Ontario Bar between 1975 and 1990, a period in which the first sizable number of women entered law practice. Ontario is an ideal setting in which to study broader legal careers because the province is home to 41 percent of Canada's lawyers, with the largest concentration working in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) (Kay and Hagan 2005). The GTA is arguably Canada's legal capital with 48 percent of the province's lawyers (Kay, Masuch, and Curry 2004:22) and one-quarter of the nation's lawyers (Kay and Hagan 2005) based in this urban hub. Questionnaires were sent to a total of 2,358 randomly selected lawyers from the Law Society's membership records. The surveys received very favorable response rates. The 1990 survey yielded a 68 percent response rate and the 2002 survey received a response rate of 73 percent.³ The total number of cases included in the analysis ($N = 741$) is based on lawyers who responded to both waves (1990 and 2002) of the survey and continue to practice law. The lawyers in our sample are 12 to 27 years into their careers. These data allow us a unique opportunity to examine mentorship among lawyers through their work histories and retrospective reports on mentoring across their careers.

Analytic Strategy

The measurement of mentorship deserves special attention. The survey was designed to capture a broad range of mentoring experiences. Therefore, instructions directed lawyers to consider informal mentoring as well as formal mentoring programs and to consider mentoring (as help, assistance, or guidance) that they received at any point during their career (refer to Table 1 for the survey question). Our analyses consider three possible experiences: singular mentor, multiple mentors, and none whatsoever. The

² Note that in 1996 we also conducted another wave of data collection using this same sample yielding a 70 percent response rate. However, we draw information only from the first wave (1990) where demographics and early work histories are recorded and from the most recent panel (2002), which provides contemporary data on current professional positions and a retrospective on mentoring relationships.

³ A common problem plaguing longitudinal research designs is panel attrition—the loss of survey participants over time with successive waves of data collection (due to incorrect mailing addresses, inability to track respondents, death, and refusal to continue participation). The accuracy of longitudinal data depends on respectable response rates. Our combined average of 70 percent across the three waves of the panel survey provides some assurance of a representative sample across time.

Table 1

Description of Measures

Mentoring Lawyers were instructed to answer a series of questions about “informal or formal help, assistance or guidance” that they received during their career in law. The specific question read: “At any point in your legal career was there anyone who acted as your informal or formal advisor/mentor (someone who looks out for you or gives you advice)?” The response categories included: (1) yes, there was *one* person who acted as my advisor/mentor; (2) yes, there was *more than one* person who acted as my advisor/mentor; and (3) no. The responses were recoded into three separate variables: MENTOR: Lawyers with any mentor versus none; MENTOR1: Lawyers with one mentor versus other possibilities (more than one or none at all); and MULT-MENT: Lawyers with multiple mentors versus those with one or no mentors

Dependent variables

Earnings is measured by annual earnings after business deductions and before taxes in the year before the survey

Perceived career success is measured by two items from Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990) and Wallace (2001): This is the kind of position I expected to hold at this stage of my career; and I have made good progress toward meeting my overall career goals ($\alpha = .83$)

Social value of work is measured by three items that tap the importance respondents place on having the following in their job: influence in the community, helping people, and opportunity to be of service to society to respondents (1 = *not at all important* to 5 = *extremely important*) ($\alpha = .81$)

Job satisfaction is measured by 10 items adapted from Ducharme and Martin (2000) and (Hull 1999): The pay is good; I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job; The benefits are good; The job allows me to use my talents and legal skills; The work is intellectually challenging; The job gives me a feeling of accomplishment; I look forward to coming to work; I find real enjoyment in my work; I have stayed in this job because of financial necessity (Reverse-coded); The job security is good (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*) ($\alpha = .81$)

Organizational context is measured by a series of dummy coded variables that include: *Firm > 50* includes law firms of 50 or more lawyers; *Firm 20–49* includes law firms of 20–49 lawyers; *Firm 10–19* includes law firms of 10–19 lawyers; *Firm less than 10 lawyers* includes law firms of two to nine lawyers are coded 1 (comparison category); *Solo practice* includes sole practitioners; and *Other settings* includes practicing law in other settings (government, corporation, legal aid or law clinic, private industry, and other workplaces). Note that in Table 2 this measure reflects lawyers’ first job, whereas in Table 3 this measure taps their current job

Individual characteristics

Elite education is measured by the lawyer’s law school where University of Toronto is considered elite and coded 1 and all other law schools are coded 0 (measured in Wave 1 1990 survey)

Status achievement goals is measured by items developed by Kay and Hagan (1998, 2003) that tap the importance the respondent places on achieving the following goals for his or her professional advancement: benchner in law society, seniority in large law firm, seniority in medium or small law firm, leader in a corporation, and financial rewards (1 = *not important* to 4 = *very important*) (measured in Wave 1 1990 survey) ($\alpha = .60$)

Career salience is measured by a single item adapted from Bielby and Bielby (1984): In the long run, which of the following career patterns comes closest to what you would

Table 1. (Continued).

prefer? (1 = *not working*, 2 = *half-time or less*, 3 = *three-quarter time or full-time with numerous sabbaticals*, 4 = *full-time*) (measured in Wave 1 1990 survey)

Locus of control is measured by seven items adapted from Levenson (1973) and Hagan et al. (1999): I am responsible for my own success; I can do just about anything I really set my mind to; My misfortunes are the result of mistakes I have made; I am responsible for my failures; The really good things that happen to me are mostly luck (Reverse-coded); There is no sense to planning a lot—if something good is going to happen it will (Reverse-coded); Most of my problems are due to bad breaks (Reverse-coded) (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*) ($\alpha = .73$)

Depression is measured by Radloff's (1977) 16-item scale that asks: How many days in the past week (0–7) have you: felt you just couldn't get going; felt sad; had trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep; felt that everything was an effort; felt lonely; felt you couldn't shake the blues; had trouble keeping your mind on what you were doing; felt you were worrying a lot about little things; felt tense or anxious; felt restless; felt annoyed with things or people; felt angry; felt like yelling at someone; had aches and pains; had headaches; felt weak all over ($\alpha = .89$)

Gender and ethnicity

Gender (male) is coded 1 for males and 0 for females (measured in Wave 1 1990 survey)

Ethnic minority is coded 1 for self-identified ethnic minority and 0 for others (measured in Wave 1 1990 survey)

Control variables (for Table 3)

Marital status is coded 1 for lawyers who are married or cohabitating and 0 for others

Parental status is coded 1 for lawyers who are parents and 0 for those who are not

Prestige of field was computed following (Kay and Hagan 1998) by taking the mean average score accorded by respondents to each field of law (1 = *very low* to 10 = *very high prestige*). Scores were then assigned to field of law reported as area in which respondent practices most often (*range = 3.52 for landlord & tenant to 7.17 for taxation*)

Work experience was computed by subtracting the year the lawyer was called to the Bar from the year of the survey (2002)

Average weekly hours was computed by multiplying the self-reported number of hours worked each workday by 5 and adding the average hours worked on the weekends

Toronto was coded 1 if the lawyer worked in the GTA and 0 if they did not

measurement of all concepts and variables included in this analysis are detailed in Table 1.

It should also be noted that the measures of mentoring were reasonably independent. The correlation between single and multiple mentors was moderate ($r = -.45$). As well, the zero-order correlations among all of the other variables included in the analysis (available from authors) indicate that there are no multicollinearity problems, as none of the independent and control variables display unacceptably high correlations.

We use logistic regression (Table 2) to predict the likelihood of being mentored as well as the odds of obtaining a single versus multiple mentors (Hypotheses 2–4). Logistic regression is appropriate because of the

Table 2

Logistic Regression Results Predicting the Probability of Having Any Mentor (Model 1) and Having Multiple Mentors versus One Mentor (Model 2)

Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	Had any mentor		Had multiple mentors	
	<i>b</i>	Exp(<i>b</i>)	<i>b</i>	Exp(<i>b</i>)
Organizational context (first job) ^a				
Firm > 50	1.026***	2.791	.592*	1.808
Firm 20–49	.778*	2.177	.639	1.894
Firm 10–19	.482	1.620	–.173	.841
Solo practice	.159	1.172	.140	1.150
Other settings	–.260	.771	.093	1.098
Individual characteristics				
Elite education	–.214	.808	.088	1.093
Status achievement goals	.023	1.023	–.193	.825
Career salience	.258*	1.294	.063	1.065
Internal locus of control	.261*	1.298	.052	1.053
Depression	.067	1.070	–.001	.999
Gender (male = 1)	–.534***	.586	.095	1.100
Ethnic minority	–.208	.812	.425	1.529
Constant	–1.263	.283	.410	1.507
– 2 log likelihood	931.857		606.392	
χ^2 (df)	43.46(12)***		9.14(12)***	

Note: Unstandardized regression coefficients and exponentiated coefficients are displayed.

^a Excluded category is small firms of two to nine lawyers.

* $p < .05$.

*** $p < .001$ (one-tailed test).

dichotomous nature of the dependent variable tapping protégé status. In Model 1, we predict whether (coded 1) or not (coded 0) the lawyer received mentoring during the course of his or her career. In Model 2, we predict whether protégés had multiple mentors (coded 1) or a single mentor (coded 0) in their mentoring experience in law.

It should be noted that particular exogenous variables were measured in the first wave (1990) of the survey, whereas the outcome variables (e.g., receiving mentorship in Table 2 and career rewards in Table 3) were measured in the later wave (2002) of the survey. This allows for stronger causal arguments, particularly in predicting who is more likely to be mentored during their career. In predicting the likelihood of being mentored, we rely on the first survey wave for lawyers' gender and ethnicity, characteristics of first jobs, elite legal education, status achievement goals, and career salience variables. These variables are expected to be most relevant at early career stages in shaping one's chances of receiving mentoring.

Table 3
OLS Regression Models of Career Rewards among Lawyers

	Earnings		Career progress		Social value		Job satisfaction	
	<i>b</i>	β	<i>b</i>	β	<i>b</i>	β	<i>b</i>	β
Single mentor ^a	6,886.902	.024	.127	.053	.161	.073*	.108	.074*
Multiple mentors ^a	34,690.243	.141***	.339	.164***	.239	.126***	.189	.150***
Organizational context (current job) ^b								
Firm > 50	178,409.470	.450***	.500	.150***	-.365	-.119**	.271	.133***
Firm 20-49	75,712.172	.109***	.187	.032	.344	.064*	.294	.083**
Firm 10-19	45,009.393	.062*	-.002	.000	-.219	-.039	-.063	-.017
Solo practice	-4,923.983	-.016	-.185	-.069*	.306	.125***	-.185	-.114**
Other settings	2,651.360	.011	.106	.050	.446	.230***	.251	.196***
Individual characteristics								
Elite education	28,205.206	.078**	.036	.012	.029	.010	.040	.022
Status achievement goals	8,248.112	.045	-.093	-.060*	-.119	-.084	-.073	-.077*
Career salience	18,055.337	.113***	.134	.100**	.034	.027	.082	.100**
Internal locus of control	9,324.105	.040	.261	.134***	.028	.015	.164	.138***
Depression	-386.938	-.003	-.207	-.188***	-.111	-.109***	-.156	-.233***
Gender (male = 1)	29,780.949	.122***	.031	.015	.030	.016	.055	.044
Ethnic minority	-11,066.972	-.022	-.252	-.068*	-.030	-.008	-.221	-.087**
Controls								
Marital status	-10,194.156	-.032	.015	.006	.187	.076*	.004	.002
Parental status	2,886.080	.009	-.090	-.035	-.138	-.058	-.114	-.073*
Prestige of field	10,211.931	.079**	-.082	-.075*	-.002	-.185***	-.021	-.031
Work experience	2,218.177	.073**	-.006	-.025	-.187	-.009	-.011	-.072**
Work hours	2,287.146	.196***	.012	.126***	.008	.08**	.005	.080**
Toronto	26,156.090	.108***	.025	.012	-.076	-.041	.032	.026
Constant	-229,526.300		2.057		4.026		3.031	
<i>R</i> ²	.506		.166		.181		.232	

Note: Unstandardized (*b*) and standardized (β) regression coefficients are displayed.

^a Excluded category is lawyers without mentors.

^b Excluded category is small law firms of less than 10 lawyers.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$ (one-tailed test).

We use ordinary least squares (OLS) regression (Table 3) to examine the impact of having any mentors (Hypothesis 1a) or multiple mentors (Hypothesis 1b) on the four career rewards. Each outcome variable is regressed on two indicators of protégé status, single mentor and multiple mentors, as well as the variables included in Table 2 that tap organizational context, career-related attitudes, gender, and ethnicity. In addition, six control variables were included so that the models for the career outcomes are properly specified. All variables were entered into the regression equations simultaneously. In the OLS results presented in Table 3, the variable *single mentor* is coded 1 for lawyers who had a single mentor and 0 for lawyers who were not mentored and the variable *multiple mentors* is coded 1 for lawyers who had multiple mentors and 0 for those who were not mentored (the omitted comparison category is lawyers without mentors).

Both unstandardized (*b*) and standardized (β) regression coefficients are presented in Table 3. The unstandardized coefficients measure the influence of an independent variable on the outcome variable in the actual untransformed metric units of the variables involved. This is particularly useful for the results for earnings thereby allowing us to assess the influence of the independent variables on the actual annual salaries of lawyers in dollar amounts. For example, lawyers who have had a mentor earn CDN\$6,887 more than lawyers who have been without a mentor, while lawyers with multiple mentors gained an impressive CDN\$34,690 more than lawyers without mentors. The standardized coefficients help us to compare the effects of different independent variables, which are measured in different units, on the outcome variables. This allows us to assess the relative influence of having one mentor ($\beta = .024$) or multiple mentors ($\beta = .141$) on earnings, for example, where multiple mentors have a considerably greater beneficial effect.

RESULTS

Who Is Most Likely to Receive Mentorship?

Table 2 presents the results of multivariate logistic regression that was used to estimate the probability that lawyers will receive any mentorship during their professional career (Model 1) and the probability of having multiple mentors versus a single mentor for those who received mentorship (Model 2). Table 2 also includes odds ratios to aid interpretation. We simultaneously regressed organizational context of first job, individual characteristics, gender, and ethnicity on the probability of receiving mentorship.

According to Model 1, organizational context makes a difference as to who is more likely to be mentored, consistent with Hypothesis 2. The odds of having had a mentor are better for lawyers whose first job was in a law firm of over 20 lawyers ($b = .778$, $e^b = 2.177$; $p < .05$), and even more so if they started their career in a large law firm with over 50 lawyers ($b = 1.026$,

$e^b = 2.791; p < .001$). For both settings, the odds of having a mentor are *more than double* those of lawyers who began their careers in small firms of less than 10 lawyers. This suggests that large law firms may best reflect an organizational culture that supports the mentoring model through their associate-to-partner tournaments and that firms with many lawyers have more potential mentors available to assist junior lawyers.

Turning next to the individual characteristics, two variables have statistically significant effects. Individuals who attach more salience to their professional careers, specifically with the idea of having law as a full-time and central occupation in their life, are significantly advantaged in their opportunities to have a mentor ($b = .258, e^b = 1.294; p < .05$). Professionals possessing a strong internal sense of control are more likely to receive mentoring ($b = .261, e^b = 1.298; p < .05$) as hypothesized (Hypothesis 3). This pattern of findings may indicate that individuals who demonstrate strong commitment to their chosen profession as a central focus in their life and exhibit determination and drive are more desirable to potential mentors. Individuals with these qualities at the start of their careers may also be more likely to seek out and enlist the support of mentors to further their professional careers.

Last, and counter to Hypothesis 4, the odds that a male lawyer will have a mentor are 41 percent *less* than that of a female lawyer ($b = -.534, e^b = .586; p < .001$). Interestingly, women are more successful than men in obtaining mentorship in law. The results also indicate that minority status has no statistically significant impact on the likelihood of being mentored.

Model 2 shows the extent to which the organizational context and individual characteristics differentiate between protégés who had multiple mentors in contrast to those who had a single mentor. Only one variable has a statistically significant effect at the .05 level and that is whether or not the protégé's first job was in a law firm of more than 50 lawyers ($b = .592, e^b = 1.808; p < .05$). Lawyers working in these large law firms are 81 percent more likely than lawyers in small firms (of less than 10 lawyers) to have experienced multiple mentors across the course of their careers. Given that this organizational context likely employs the largest number of lawyers in any legal work setting, it offers the largest network of potential lawyer-mentors. Moreover, these settings are more likely to have formal mentoring programs. However, overall, individual and organizational context characteristics that affect the *likelihood* of mentorship do not appear relevant to predicting the *number* of mentors protégés secure over the course of their careers.

Does Mentorship Make a Difference to the Careers of Professionals?

We examine the determinants of four career outcomes in Table 3 to assess the impact of mentorship for lawyers in their mid- to later career stages.

Recall that lawyers in our study are all 12 to 27 years along in their careers. We examine two extrinsic rewards (earnings and perceived career success) and two intrinsic rewards (social value of work and job satisfaction). Having a single mentor during one's career significantly improves overall job satisfaction ($\beta = .11$) and the amount of social importance individuals attribute to their legal work ($\beta = .07$). The impact of a single mentor on these intrinsic career rewards exists independently of the career rewards yielded from work context, years of experience, areas of law, weekly hours invested in law practice, elite law school education, and individual goals and personality characteristics. However, contrary to Hypothesis 1a, having a single mentor does not significantly increase earnings or professionals' perceptions of career progress. Thus, a single mentor enriches intrinsic career rewards, but is less effectual in shaping professionals' extrinsic career rewards.

The best resource overall appears to be not one, but multiple mentors. In fact, having multiple mentors significantly enriches lawyers' careers across *all* four career outcomes. More is better. By comparing the standardized coefficients we can see that having multiple mentors has approximately twice the beneficial effect to having a single mentor across all career rewards, independently of other variables in our model. The benefits of multiple mentors are particularly evident for the two extrinsic rewards; and in the case of earnings, having multiple mentors yields a sizable earnings advantage of approximately CDN\$35,000 annually, over and above one's years of experience, area of specialization, hours invested on a weekly basis, elite education, and organizational work context. Similarly, individuals with multiple mentors also achieve a satisfying level of career progress ($\beta = .16$), enjoy a sense of real social value to their legal work ($\beta = .13$), and report high levels of job satisfaction ($\beta = .15$), again controlling for the features of lawyers' work and personal traits. These results support Hypothesis 1b that multiple mentors deliver significant career rewards.

In addition, several other patterns of findings are worth noting. First, working in larger firms is related to higher earnings, greater perceived career progress and greater job satisfaction, whereas working in smaller firms, solo practice, and other settings tends to be correlated with labor that is perceived to make more of a contribution to society. Second, several of the individual characteristics, particularly career salience, internal locus of control, and depression, are significantly related to career rewards, suggesting the salience of personality and individual agency to our understanding of how career rewards are distributed within organizations. Third, those who work longer hours report more of all four of the career outcomes—a greater investment in time spent of work appears to result in a career that is more rewarding both intrinsically and extrinsically. Last, the regression equations presented in Table 3 explain an impressive amount of variation in earnings (51 percent), while less variance explained among the other career rewards (e.g., ranging from 17 to 23 percent).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper set out to ask two key questions regarding mentoring. First, who is most likely to receive mentorship over the course of their career? And second, how does mentorship make a difference to the careers of professionals? In doing so, we also examined whether different factors are related to having a single mentor versus multiple mentors and whether there are greater benefits to having more mentors.

The results of this study show that organizational context is important to understanding who is more likely to receive a mentoring relationship. As predicted, mid- to large-sized law firms of 20 or more lawyers offer superior mentoring opportunities, with the larger firms of over 50 lawyers proving optimum for facilitating mentoring relationships. Lawyers working in these settings are twice as likely to receive mentorship compared with lawyers working in small firms. As suggested earlier, law firms are more apt to offer mentoring programs (formal or informal) because their structure and culture are reminiscent of the Cravath System where senior members train junior lawyers in the ways of the firm and law practice. While there have been changes to hiring and promotion practices in law firms in recent years (Heinz et al. 2005; Noonan and Corcoran 2004), it appears that the tradition of the Cravath system of mentoring promising lawyers remains intact. In contrast, other organizational settings, such as private industry or in-house counsel for corporations, are perhaps not as concerned with the professional development of junior members (at least not through mentorship, *per se*) in their legal departments where lawyers often represent a small minority of the organization's employees. Meanwhile, lawyers working in solo practice may face their own challenges of seeking mentors outside their offices, ideally other sole practitioners who could offer financial and management advice and friendship and social support.

Future research might consider examining which specific organizational characteristics associated with different work settings facilitate or hinder the initiation and cultivation of mentoring relationships. That is, are there specific structural features or cultural workplace norms that are better suited for promoting developmental relationships among professionals? To what extent does mentoring occur interorganizationally versus intraorganizationally (Thomas and Higgins 1996) or interoccupationally versus intraoccupationally? Researchers need to explore mentoring outside organizations and across professional designations. In addition, two individual characteristics, career salience and internal locus of control, are attributes of individuals that encourage mentoring relationships. We argued that individuals who place greater emphasis on full-time, long-term commitment to their careers are more likely to be sought after by prospective mentors and/or more likely to seek out mentors. Similarly, individuals with a strong internal locus of control are more driven to take advantage of developmental opportunities, such as mentoring that will enhance their job performance

and contribute to their career success. Career salience and locus of control may reflect the protégé's ambition to initiate a mentoring relationship and these characteristics may also signal the individual as a potentially productive and hard-working professional to possible mentors (Allen et al. 2000; Young and Perrewé 2000).

In this study, we did not examine who initiated or sanctioned the mentoring relationship. As a result, we still know little about how individual characteristics and personality attributes affect who seeks a mentor versus who is selected for mentorship (Chao 1997). It is important to recognize both sides of the decision-making process involved in determining which individuals receive mentoring (Olian et al. 1988) That is, while potential protégés with certain characteristics and traits may search for an appropriate mentor, this does not necessarily guarantee that they will be mentored as the prospective mentor also has a say in the formation of the relationship. Several conditions must be met whereby the potential protégé wishes to be mentored by a particular mentor and the prospective mentor is interested to assist that specific individual with his or her career (Laband and Lentz 1995). While certain individual characteristics and personality traits might be important in predicting which individuals attempt to initiate mentoring relationships, these attributes may not be easily or accurately observable to potential mentors who are also key to this matching process. The individual characteristics examined in this study may better reflect which junior professionals seek a mentor, rather than which particular traits are identified by and attractive to prospective mentors. The self-reported attributes are just that, and not necessarily easily observable by colleagues working on a day-to-day basis with potential protégés. This might explain why several of the individual characteristics failed to significantly affect the likelihood of being mentored, especially mentoring by several colleagues. Future research might examine more directly how mentors assess junior colleagues in terms of their attractiveness and potential as protégés (see, e.g., Kalbfleisch 2000; Michinov and Monteil 2002).

A surprising twist in this story of mentorship is that women, rather than men, are more likely to receive mentorship during their legal careers (see also Mobley et al. 1994). This finding is curious given an impressive volume of literature that documents women's marginalization within, and at times full out exclusion from, traditionally male-dominated professions, such as law (see, e.g., Brockman 2001; Kay and Hagan 1995; Leiper 2006). How is it then that women are more often the recipients of mentoring in the legal profession? Are women more likely to actively seek out mentors as they begin their careers, perhaps out of a sense of being "outsiders" in a profession once argued to be too combative and ill-suited for women's temperament (Mossman 2006)? Or is it that other members of the profession are inclined to approach women, as recent entrants to the profession, in an attempt to ease their integration or even perceiving of them as in greater need of mentorship? Future research needs to explore what encourages the

development of mentoring, especially mentoring of traditionally excluded or minority groups within occupations (see, e.g., Murrell et al. 1999; Wallace and Haines 2004).

Even if women are more likely have had a mentor, it is important to recall that women are no more likely than men to have multiple mentors, and it is multiple mentors that offer the most desirable career rewards, specifically in terms of such tangibles as salaries and promotions. Furthermore, mentorship, by one or many, occurs most often in larger law firms—a sector of the profession that most often offers formal mentoring programs (Kay et al. 2009). Formal mentor programs may offer women and ethnic communities opportunities for guidance not commonly afforded to these groups in the past, yet the quality of mentoring may be inferior to more spontaneous, informal mentor arrangements (Scandura and Williams 2001). Finally, women lawyers, compared with their male peers, are more often mentored by other women. In our survey, we found 16 percent of women were mentored by women; meanwhile only 2 percent of men were mentored by women. Mentoring research reveals that having a male rather than female mentor significantly augments salaries for both men and women protégés (Dreher and Cox 1996; Kay and Wallace 2009; Ragins and Cotton 1999). Mentoring by women may be less effective because women in the legal profession have not acquired the status and influence comparable to their male colleagues, even as partners in law firms (Epstein et al. 1995; Kay and Gorman 2008). The glass ceiling confronting earlier cohorts of women lawyers has a cascade effect whereby senior women’s capacity to mentor new cohorts of women lawyers is diminished.

Turning next to the second question addressed in this paper, we see that having multiple mentors is far more beneficial to professionals’ careers than having a single mentor. Moreover, while having one mentor enhances intrinsic career outcomes, it does not appear to contribute to greater extrinsic rewards. Having either a series of different mentors at different stages in the career or a group of mentors at one time may offer diverse learning opportunities deficient from singular mentor associations. In other words, a diversity of social networks in the form of mentors may yield superior resources and benefits. Different mentors may possess complementary qualities, a portfolio of rich resources accessible to eager protégés. For example, some mentors may be valued for their friendship, counseling, role modeling, acceptance, and confirmation (e.g., psychosocial mentor functions). In contrast, other mentors may be strategically positioned to provide visibility and profile to senior management, introductions to elite clientele and “rain-making” networks in the business community, valued knowledge about negotiation tactics and deal making, and even protection from politics within the workplace (e.g., career-related mentor functions). Single mentors may offer any combination of mentor functions (though rarely a complete set of all qualities and assets), but as a collective multiple mentors may prove to be a powerful stock of resources. These mentors may

work as a coordinated team of sponsors or as disparate and unconnected contacts that when called upon may produce valuable information and introductions for junior professionals. Over the course of a career a sequence of mentors may offer social resources that when tapped can open doors to promotions (Murrell and Tangri 1999; Scandura 1992; Smith et al. 2000), accelerate skill acquisition and reputational profile, enhances earnings (Dreher and Cox 1996; Wallace 2001; Whitely et al. 1991), and even provide advice and support to overcome barriers to advancement (such as tensions among colleagues or family-work time conflicts).

In closing, the current study has several limitations that should be noted. First, we operationalize mentoring as the absence of mentoring in comparison with the presence of one mentor or multiple mentors. However, there are other ways to explore mentoring, such as the amount of mentoring received, relationship length, or relationship quality (Eby et al. 2008:265). Second, our study does not examine specific mentoring behaviors and their differential impact on quality of mentoring and career outcomes. Research that explores the substance of mentoring behaviors is necessary to further advance theoretical understandings of developmental relationships (see Higgins 2000; Higgins et al. 2008). Third, while our study affords an opportunity to tap mentoring and career development using longitudinal data, there remain questions regarding the memory recall of established professionals as they recount their mentoring experiences over career span. We encourage additional studies that use controlled designs (e.g., experimental) and longitudinal research that assesses mentoring and outcomes across time (Eby et al. 2008; Higgins et al. 2008). Longitudinal research that tracks mentorship at successive career stages could yield valuable insights into the qualities of mentorship and the functions that are most pivotal at each successive career stage or transition.

In conclusion, the results of this study show that individuals benefit more from having multiple mentors over the course of their career. The idea of a “constellation” of developmental relationships echoes Kram’s (1985) original scholarship and recent work by Higgins (2000) and her colleagues (Higgins et al. 2008) that contend most people draw on a broad and diverse range of individuals for mentoring support during their work lives. It is important to note, however, that the initial analysis predicting who is most likely to be mentored was less relevant to predicting which protégés are more likely to have multiple mentors. That is, the factors that distinguish who is more or less attractive as a protégé do not differentiate between who is more likely to draw on the support of multiple mentors across their career. Despite learning how having multiple mentors is extremely beneficial, we can not conclude from the results of this study what it takes to obtain more than one mentor over the course of a person’s career. Future research might explore how certain protégés are successful in obtaining several mentors and the various developmental functions that different mentors fulfill. Also, research needs to unpack what composition and quantity of mentors is

optimal. After all, for any individual a winning line-up of mentors demands a suitable complement of resources and talents, effective and advantageous to that individual's professional competences and aspirations. That line-up may mean only a small, elite squad of mentors, or one particularly skilled mentor committed to the protégé's advancement (Higgins 2000), or an expansive network of mentors (Higgins et al. 2008) diverse in abilities and willing to lend support as needed. The benefit of more mentors is not necessarily a linear relationship (Baugh and Scandura 1999), but certainly the individual with more than one mentor is merrier.

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