



SPONSORSHIP

INTRODUCTION

- **Definition of Sponsorship:** Advocacy for a colleague's career by someone in a position of influence
- **Importance:** Key driver in career advancement, distinct from mentorship

WHAT SPONSORSHIP IS AND IS NOT

- **Sponsorship vs. Mentorship¹**

Mentorship	Sponsorship	Both
Career development	Career advancement	Key professional relationship
Focused on personal and professional development	Focused on specific career-advancing opportunities	Both participants benefit
Transformative relationship	Transactional relationship	Multiple mentors/sponsors are desired
Usually longitudinal	Often episodic	Mentor may serve as sponsor
Critical early in career	Critical later in career	Trust, respect, and loyalty

Table adapted from Ayyala MS, Skarupski K, Bodurtha JN, et al. Mentorship Is Not Enough: Exploring Sponsorship and Its Role in Career Advancement in Academic Medicine. Acad Med. 2019;94(1):94-100.

- **Characteristics of Sponsorship**
 - Episodic
 - Sponsors use their influence
 - Involves risk to reputation
 - Not always apparent

ROLE OF SPONSORSHIP IN CAREER ADVANCEMENT

- **Impact:** 60% of professionals report that sponsorship played a significant role in their professional development²
- **Equity:** Women often face a gap, being over-mentored but under-sponsored³
- **Proposed interventions for sponsorship equity⁴**
 - Training on sponsorship
 - Proactive sponsoring of women
 - Community building for women in academic medicine
 - Establish institutional expectations for sponsorship
 - Sponsees seek sponsorship from upper leadership
 - Transparency in sponsorship opportunities



- **Recommendations for sponsorship at the institutional level⁵**
 - Expected to occur at all levels
 - Performed with competence
 - Transparent and equitable
 - Accountable and addressed

BEST PRACTICES FOR SPONSORS

- **Qualities of Effective Sponsors⁵**
 - Understand your role as a sponsor
 - Know how to sponsor
 - Follow through on your sponsorship actions
- **Concrete Strategies for Sponsors⁶**
 - Identify the sponsee's sponsorship goals
 - Host a sponsorship party
 - Facilitate a round-robin sponsorship announcement
 - Elevate the sponsee to a bigger stage
 - Highlight the sponsee's work
 - Co-author a letter to the editor

BEST PRACTICES FOR SPONSEES

- **Building a Personal Board of Directors:** Diversify mentorship and sponsorship sources
- **Sponsee Traits**
 - Brings unique viewpoints
 - Trustworthy
 - Demonstrates loyalty and high performance
 - Receptive to feedback



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