Developing a Mentoring Philosophy

If you were giving advice to a fellow researcher on how to be an effective mentor, what would you tell that person? If they ask how to do each item you mention, what would you say? Your answer would form the foundation of your "mentoring philosophy."

What is a Mentoring Philosophy?

Your mentoring philosophy is a statement that explains and justifies the way you approach personal and professional relationships with students as you guide their development into professionals.

Imagine that you are applying for a position that requires mentoring students and are then asked to describe your approach to mentoring and provide a specific example of effective mentoring.

How would you respond?

Common Themes of Mentoring Philosophies

- Identifying students' goals
- Evaluating students' understanding
- Evaluating students' talents and building on them
- Developing a relationship founded on mutual respect
- Given students' ownership of their work and promoting accountability
- Sharing your own experience
- Creating an interactive research environment
- Identifying what motivates each student
- Balancing belief with action and experience
- Creating a safe environment in which students feel that is acceptable to fail and learn from their mistakes
- Encouraging growth through challenges
- Promoting learning through inquiry
- Walking experimental avenues together

Entering Mentoring, 87-88.

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