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The Mentoring Relationship in an Advertising Agency: Mentors Training Mentees

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Abstract

Advertising work meets significant challenges in terms of hiring young professionals that should properly match the job description due to the permanent progress in this field. Therefore, in spite of the academic background, the portfolio, and the training hours, young professionals need to be mentored for a while in order to adapt to labour market. The relationship between juniors and seniors might be difficult unless the latter understand and help them systematically. This paper aims to present obstacles and necessity of mentorship in an advertising agency from juniors' perspectives, when meeting seniors' attitude towards their young teams or when achieving their first tasks. Therefore, this research is conducted by using two complementary methods. Firstly, 9 focus groups were organized by interviewing students between 2017 and 2020. A second method is represented by a survey applied to juniors working in full-services and specialized agencies. Practically, this study means to emphasize the need for mentorship, expressed even at the end of Bachelor or Master studies, on the one hand, and the manner this has changed when respondents were hired in agencies, on the other hand. This survey leads to a very simple idea: young professionals require a short time of transition from the academic to the labour responsibility, especially in this field where only knowledge is not enough.

Keywords: Mentoring, professionals, advertising, agency, seniors, juniors

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Introduction

Young people face a deep challenge in an advertising agency, when they get hired and they should be integrated into a new community. There is not just a problem of adaptability and social belonging, but also being professionally accepted refers to the relationship between seniors and juniors at any kind of workplace. Although young people might have had appropriate studies, learning by doing stands for the key of their mentorship. The purpose of this paper is to explain to which extent the relationship between seniors and juniors is based on mentorship in order to get the proper skills according to position demands. Before discussing various approaches with regard to this complex process of mentoring, one should take into consideration that there is always a difference between theoretical knowledge and applied skills, even if most universities include special programs of internship in their curricula. It is worth mentioning that the need for mentorship was clearly expressed even during Bachelor or Master studies as genuine concerns for a prospective career in advertising and communication. In the following lines, one aims to display the significance of the most relevant concepts involved in this equation of being trained at work, i.e.: the process of mentoring, the term "mentor" and the entire relationship defined as mentorship interaction or program.

The mentoring process embraces diverse aspects, considering the manner the mentor communicates and the influences towards mentee's personality as well. An interaction between two people is not considered a mentoring process unless it follows specific stages of absorbing information, experience and skills, during a specific period of time, according to the required standards of a job description. The scientific literature points out these issues: for example, Bozeman and Feeney (2007) are questioning many other previous assertions. According to them, "Mentoring: a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development; mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé)" (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007). Firstly, their definition highlights the main role of each factor involved in this relationship: the mentor and the mentee. Secondly, the way the applied knowledge and the secrets of jobs are conveyed is revealed from the very beginning: it is an informal communication, which increases mentee's trust in the mentor. Thirdly, the mentor is perceived as a guide in many circumstances by constantly supporting his/her mentee in the long run. Even if Eby's opinion (1997) towards mentoring is similar, it displays a better structure: there are two stages of influence the mentors exercise upon juniors. He makes a clear differentiation between organizational and psychological support during this sophisticated relationship meant to trigger a successful development for the junior. Eby asserts that "Mentoring is an intense developmental relationship whereby advice, counselling, and developmental opportunities are provided to a protégé by a mentor, which, in turn, shapes the protégé's career experiences...This occurs through two types of support to protégés: (1) instrumental or career support and (2) psychological support" (Eby, 1997). By "instrumental support" we can easily understand a range of skills, techniques and strategies that help any junior progressively fulfil his/her tasks. Eby adds a relevant characteristic of this kind of communication, whose purpose is not only to socially integrate the junior, but to intensively extend his/her knowledge and approach in the field. Not everyone sharing from his/her own experience some knowledge is a mentor, only the one who is aware of this role and constantly behaves as such.

Obviously, a set of differences stands in between mentors and mentee: age, experience and expectations. All these can affect the level of communication from the very first contact. Some scientists consider that age is the main factor empowering mentors to adopt this attitude, although this is not the most relevant criterion. The simplest approach of this superior position in an organization has been described based on age differentiation by Smith et al. (2005) as follows: "The term 'mentor' refers to a more senior person who takes an interest in sponsorship of the career of a more junior person". In advertising agency, performances cannot be measure in terms of age or stability in that organization, but in notoriety among industry people and rewarding campaigns. Therefore, juniors appreciate more the professionals whose performances go beyond their age and communication with them is better because the gap between generations is less visible. In this term, Ragins et al. (2000) persuasively assert: "A mentor is generally defined as a higher-ranking, influential individual in your work environment who has advanced experience and knowledge and is committed to providing upward mobility and support to your career. Your mentor may or may not be in your organization and s/he may or may not be your immediate supervisor". This definition offers a broad perspective of a mentor's responsibility, due to the fact that s/he is not especially part of the organization hiring the junior yet has a relevant influence on someone's career. Besides, being a mentor does not have to do with the vertical communication in a centralized organization, considering that it is not mandatory to be the manager or to have a superior position. Sometimes, experience in that field and the relevance of her/his job or even the previous performances empowers this type of employee as a mentor for someone else.

Types of mentoring activities

Mentoring is not only a diverse and complex activity, but its success depends on other many criteria, that stand for organizational development. Consequently, the present study should approach this topic according to the style of communication and the main purpose. Definitely, there is a strong connection between both criteria aforementioned and, most significantly, the context of launching a program of mentorship. Sometimes, juniors are looking for informal support not necessarily within the organization that hired them; at other times, they ask for internal support and, there are situations when the employer is preoccupied to properly mentor young people. In the last case, juniors deal with formal mentorship, following some rules, requiring a certain type of behaviour, specifically oriented towards organization's goals.

Nevertheless, as Bortnowska and Seiler (2019) state, informal mentoring can have a high influence on both individual and teams in different organization: "On the other hand, informal mentoring is carried out spontaneously, without special rules being set out by the employer. It can be conducted for individuals (individual mentoring) or for groups/teams (group/team mentoring)". The main idea here is to establish good relationships based on personal needs and spontaneous flow of skills/knowledge to quickly achieve the responsibilities. This kind of mentorship might be more efficient as young people put their trust in seniors' judgement whenever they need. Seniors are more willing to help them for different reasons such as: empathy, efficiency, future performances or, just for emotional causes. Mazur (2008) classified the mentoring relationship in terms of belonging to the same team or hierarchical communication. According to him, *intrateam mentoring* is used for partners belonging to the same team, when someone is acknowledged as seniors based on his/her knowledge or experience, whereas *interteam mentoring* involves

sharing the knowledge between different departments or teams in charge with different tasks. The concept "lateral mentoring" (Kram & Izabella, 1985) is meant to define employees working at the same level, having the same position, but one of them has just recently entered a low level of the hierarchy in the organization and needs mentorship.

As for the formal mentorship, this activity relies on specific procedures, rules and schedule, because mentees' progress is strictly assessed to analyse the weak and strong points of the entire program. Requirements are quite obvious and this manner of mentoring is addressed not only to young employees, juniors, but also to potential employees enrolled in an internship programs. Considering the fact that an organization invests in such mentoring activities, Bortnowska and Seiler (2019) unfold other contexts of developing them as follows: "This form of mentoring can be used, for example, in the process of socio-professional adaptation or during the preparation of members of the organization for managerial functions". Adaptation becomes a relevant issue in a creative industry because juniors cannot properly express themselves without being encouraged and after understanding the organizational values.

Reaching this level of discussion, scholars observed that organizations make a difference between mentoring and training. The former is meant to help juniors to accumulate the mandatory skills to fulfil their duties required by their position. The latter address to the entire organization and refers to improvement and updating working style according to trends or technologies in the working fields. Besides, training plays a significant role in socializing, thus increasing the level of loyalty towards organization or the employer. Thew (2019) is one of the authors unfolding this difference, focusing on training's benefits for both factors involved, the employer and the employees: "It is also important to distinguish between mentoring and training; both can be fundamental to professional development, but training, at least as provided by employers, is typically skills-based/role-based and organization-centric, with the employer benefiting at least as much as the employee".

Another term describing mentoring activities focused on employees' performances could be represented by coaching, which has specific characteristics. According to Marinescu (2010): "while mentoring is focused on specific individuals, his/her career and the support s/he needs in order to develop from a professional standpoint, coaching refers to performance. Mentoring works with and for the individual, while coaching is impartial and performance focused". Managers always look for challenging activities to extend and trigger employees' ambition, these standards relying on organization profile and its potential higher goals. Coaching is perceived as an abstract process not limited in time, while mentoring and training have a schedule and point out organizational culture. In an advertising agency, coaching means 1. encouraging professionals to take part in festival competitions; 2. approaching pioneering ideas and 3. creating memorable campaigns, which later become part of popular culture.

Stages of successful mentoring

The entire mentoring process is successful as long as it follows several steps that, certainly, describe the dynamics of the relationship between seniors and juniors. Marinescu (2010) states that there are 4 relevant stages of this interaction: initiation, cultivation, transformation of the young employee and separation. Initiation refers to the first level of communication when they know each other and establish the style of relationship: familiar, informal, formal, friendly, respectful. Sometimes, even the tone of voice is relevant in the beginning of mentoring. After the initial discussion

meant to establish both roles of mentor and mentee, it follows "the cultivation phase, defined by the valorisation and capitalization of the young one's strengths, by 'building' his/her professional development" (Marinescu, 2010). The mentor appeals to psychological factors to gain mentee's trust in order to improve his/her behaviour and to start sharing his/her experience. The most important information the mentor focuses on is mentee's potential future that should encourage him/her to ask questions and be open-minded. When it comes to transformation of the young employee, the mentee is able to positively meet job challenges, take responsibilities and, eventually, become autonomous. At this moment, the mentee is integrated into work routine and community. Last stage of mentorship involves separation, which requires taking some risks and assume his/her ideas till the end. Junior mentees should be ready to accept both failure and success and work harder on their own to prove their qualities and values in front of the entire team. The young employees know how to handle their job's difficulties, how to develop their strengths and fight against their weaknesses.

Motivational factors of mentoring activity

As for the mentors' decision to commit to such activity, there are significant aspects that influence their answers such as: time, motivation, personal issues, business deals, and, sometimes, even dedication for his/her job. The intrinsic motivational factors are, usually, related to personal generosity of mentors, to their interest in juniors' career for a better development. Allen et al. (1997) revealed two dimensions of intrinsic motivation: "self-focused" and "others focused" motivation. The choice of these terms is based on their main purposes. Firstly, "self-focused" motivation comprehends such feelings as gratification, satisfaction and respect when juniors succeed in doing their job properly and are rewarded for their effort. Secondly, "other focused" motivation involves organizational success, the personal heritage passed to younger people and the pride to become someone's else model. The relationship between a mentor and a mentee helps them to better socialize in a new professional environment; mentoring also awakens the mentee's world consciousness. Alinsky (1971) asserted that this relationship between the self and the world is entirely significant, considering that people experience themselves as the organisers of relationships, power, experiences and actions. For managers acting like official mentor in many situations given that they are responsible for their departments, juniors' guidance is a confirmation of their position, as Malota (2017) states "It seems that managers regard mentoring others as a self-development tool and as well an expression of pro-social behaviour". This is a form of authoritarian socialization that can positively or negatively influence the young employees. At this level, motivation stands for an intrinsic or extrinsic argument for managers' status.

Usually, extrinsic motivation reflects the organizational structure based on a special training of juniors, pushing them to become efficient the fastest way possible.

Their motivation grows stronger when helped to fulfil their goals as well as they can. This is especially true about Millennials, according to Meister and Willyerd (2010): "However, they want a road map to success, and they expect their companies to provide it". This generation wants to be appreciated, and therefore is open to any form of mentorship. Their extrinsic motivation stands for gaining experience despite their youth to deal with job's challenges. Their intrinsic motivation consists of self-respect and need of recognition among the entire professionals' community. Mentors acting according to their hierarchical position strive for control and adaptation to different generations, because they take advantage of their abilities. For instance, Millennials are willing to embrace mentoring activities as long as these

open the doors to success. Therefore, it is not unamazing that young employees yearn to be appreciated for their ideas by superiors. Consequently, "Managers need to be in tune with the preferred working styles of the different generations and how they receive and react to feedback, especially with Millennials who react more positively to coaching than traditional constructive criticism" (Fraone et al., 2008).

Methodology

The research aims to reveal the extent to which young people ask for mentorship in the first years of their career, either formal or informal guidance. Therefore, the study approaches two methods: qualitative and quantitative. Firstly, the qualitative method is represented by 9 focus groups, conducted in Bucharest's universities specialized in communication and advertising, on the topic of relationship between academia and labour market. The qualitative research was effectively carried out between 2017 and 2020 in order to analyse what exactly young future employees expect from academia and future employers. Each focus group was made up of 10 participants and the recording lasted between 90 and 100 minutes. Besides, the respondents were selected longitudinally in terms of age, starting from freshmen upward to the master year, in order to have a wider array of opinions.

The quantitative approach relies on a survey built according to Likert scale on the attitude towards the relationship between mentor and mentee. The survey was applied to the last 4 years of ALUMNI respondents, aged 21 - 28, all of whom graduated faculties specialized in advertising and communication profile: University of Bucharest (Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies) and National University of Political and Administrative Studies (Faculty of Communication and Public Relations) in Romania. Even if the number of ALUMNI was, theoretically, 550, the research actually relies on 395 answers collected between 15 of March and June 2020. Nevertheless, the survey is still open for further improving outcomes. Referring to the analysed categories in the survey, these were distributed based on 4 scores: firstly, personal information regarding age and professional experience; secondly, need for mentorship; thirdly, mentor's profile and, last, but not least, the relationship mentor and mentee.

The main research questions leading this research to conclusion are the following:
Q₁-What are the main reasons for mentorship both at academic level and in the beginning of the career in advertising?

Q₂-What does the appropriate mentor's profile look like when supporting juniors in the beginning of their career?

Q₃-What are the main factors influencing the relationship between mentors and mentees?

Q₄-What can affect the relationship between the mentor and his/her mentee?

Hypotheses

H1-Future employees in advertising industry need advice and supervision to have confidence in themselves before acting independently and before becoming responsible for their tasks on labour market.

H2-Facing many challenges at the beginning of their career, juniors expect a mentoring program from advertising agencies as a useful tool for finding solutions;

H3-Mentors should have a specific psychological profile that encourages juniors in front of the entire team, by setting proper tasks and monitoring them along.

H4-Both formal and informal mentors are a good solution to ease the pressure of juniors' adaptation to the professionals' community.

Results

Students' expectations before entering the labour market

The 9 focus groups reveal two essential aspects, significant for juniors' profile later: the relationship between professors and students, on the one hand, and the success perception as future employees, on the other hand (as well as their perception about success as future employees). Considering these issues, the paper aims to discover the connection between students' and juniors' mentality, by using both qualitative and quantitative approach. At the academic level, students appreciate teachers with a pragmatic approach, young and adaptable communication partners with flexible behaviour and open-minded perspective. They focus on the bidirectional communication of the student-professor relationship and appreciate the engagement of the latter. Understanding the success was a real challenge during the focus groups, because respondents highlight diverse dimensions of this concept. Actually, there is just a perception of this term or a depiction that helps them imagine the future as professionals. Respondents listed relevant characteristics that can trigger their career success as follows: perseverance, adaptability, respect, responsibility, moral principles, hard work and time management. Most statements were quite mature and proved awareness, such as: self-knowledge (*"To know what your strengths are and to develop them constantly"*); Self-marketing (*"To know how to communicate your achievements so that they become visible to everyone"*) and perseverance (*"You have to be diligent and ambitious in order to fulfil your dreams, and you must try several times till you succeed in your attempt"*).

Nevertheless, interviewees identified few factors that influence their future career, anticipating the challenges they should deal with in any organization. First of all, they observe how important a mentor or an opinion leader is to guide them, although they were just students. Actually, a better portrayal of mentors at that age corresponds to role models or inspirational professors. This kind of mentoring involves an enthusiastic attitude, encourages bold ideas of students and draws their respect. The second factor underlined by young respondents was the balance between theory and applied skills, considering that mastering practical issues is the secret for a successful career. Besides, they strongly believed that curricula should frequently be updated, so that specialized classes can be earlier included in.

To sum up this qualitative approach of young people, aged 19-22, respondents are aware of their need to be guided, in the beginning by professors, and then by professionals during internships, in order to prepare them for future positions in advertising agencies.

The beginning of juniors' career as mentees

The quantitative outcomes focus on the mentorship need, mentor's profile and on the relationship between juniors and seniors according to our sample. 46.7% out of our young employees have professional experience between 1 and 3 years, 20% only a few months experience, another 20% between 3 and 5 years, and, finally, only 13.3% of our respondents started working 5 years ago. As for their positions in advertising agencies or in Marcomm industry (marketing and communication industry), juniors declared a range of jobs, which proves their adaptation and flexibility on the labour market. Most relevant observed here are the following: account manager, copywriter, junior content creator, strategic planner, art director, digital account manager, social media manager, marketing specialist. In terms of their present employers, our respondents listed quite impressive global and local agencies and clients such as: Friends TBWA, Publicis, Heist Industries, Tuio, OneTouch

Advertising, Next Advertising, MRM Romania, Jazz Communication, Connections Consult.

Need for mentorship

Most interviewees (46.7%) admitted their need to be constantly guided by a mentor in the beginning of their careers, while 33.3% of them denied this, maybe because they trust themselves more (due to a higher self-confidence level). In 20% cases, juniors need mentors' help from time to time, which accounts for their transition from insecurity to autonomous fulfilment of their goals. Those, who accepted to be guided, were more compatible with an informal mentor from their agency. Only in 20% of cases they recognized someone's else involvement in this process of mentoring. Investigating carefully the main reasons for being guided in the first stages of juniors' career, it was discovered various motivation. Table 1 depicts the scale of agreement, highlighting the main reasons, which became relevant for our respondents:

Table 1

The main reasons for looking a mentor's help

Reasons	Disagree ment	Partial disagreement	Agree ment	Partial agreement	Total agreement
I was not sure.	13.33%	13.33%	20%	46.67%	6.67%
I was not familiar with the organization.	6.67%	20%	20%	13.33%	40%
I was not used to the work style.	0	13.33%	40%	20%	26.67%
I did not have the applied knowledge.	20%	13.33%	6.67%	33.33%	26.67%
I had trouble adapting to the community.	66.66%	20%	6.67%	6.67%	0

Source: Author

Briefly, juniors admitted that lack of safety at their job, in terms of knowledge, skills and trust in their abilities influences their need for a mentor to boost their confidence. 73.34% of them recognized this necessity of being sure about their knowledge. Not being informed about the employer represents another factor that requires the mentor's involvement. Interesting in the above analysis is the fact that adaptation was not at all a reason for accepting a mentor's help, as 66.66% of them completely disagree with the above-mentioned issue.

Bringing into discussion the favourite mentor that could positively have influenced them, most respondents admitted that both formal and informal guidance cause success and are very welcome. This means that juniors take into consideration both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in terms of good integration into the professionals' community.

Mentor's profile

The range of answers here was quite generous, considering that each respondent paid attention more to social and psychological factors and less to moral or axiological dimensions. This idea emphasizes the complexity and diversity of a mentor's profile, either informal or formal. Respondents appreciated a deeper psychological involvement of their professional guide, because they are aware of the level of their self-confidence and of the difficulty to take some responsibilities.

Table 2 offers a progressive mentor's depiction scaling from disagreement to total agreement.

Table 2
Mentor's profile

Characteristics	Disagree ment	Partial disagreement	Agreement	Partial agreement	Total agreement
Open to any questions	6.67%	0	6.67%	20%	66.66%
Performant in the field	0	0	13.33%	40%	46.67%
Member of the team	0	20%	26.67%	26.67%	26.66%
Patience	0	0	0	26.67%	73.33%
To have critical spirit	0	0	20%	20%	60%
To be manager	26.67%	26.67%	33.33%	13.33%	0
To encourage initiatives	0	6.67%	6.67%	33.33%	53.33%

Source: Author

At a first glance, juniors prefer open-minded managers, with no prejudices, enough patience to work with beginners. Our respondents recognized that critical spirit supports young people in terms of valuable knowledge and self-assessment. As for appreciating an official position of their mentors as manager, juniors feel intimidated and only partially agree with this status. Overall, patience is the most relevant characteristics of any good mentor who should be able to accept failure and improve mistakes.

The relationship between mentor and mentee

Juniors were requested to honestly answer the question "What should a mentor never say to a mentee?". They admitted that nobody should discourage or criticize them harshly, at least not during their mentoring stage. What should a mentor never tell to his/her mentee? Relying on a synthetical analysis of all statements, the most relevant answer is this: "Never offend, humiliate or compare me with somebody else. All those things that could affect self-confidence, generate intimidation and a focus on one's faults can definitely hinder progress. And progress always boost our motivation to move forward".

Together with the recommendation the juniors made to a mentor, the survey unfolds a broad perspective that, actually, characterizes the relationship between the former and the latter. One respondent's words are a valuable proof of their level of maturity and experience: "The key is to find a way to give juniors the freedom they need in order to encourage their initiative and their work patterns, rather than pointing to a well-known walkway. And keep on asking how they could find a solution to a given problem before offering them the right answer. This is a great manner to encourage the future independent search for solutions." This depiction of a real communication between a junior and a senior highlights the portrayal of a spiritual mentor, able to psychologically understand his/her mentee.

Analysing the situation when the relationship between a mentor and a mentee can be compromised, the present study leads to many-sided aspects that generate a lack of autonomy or an excessive control over each junior's responsibility. The

mentor's autonomy and control top this list with 53% and this is closely followed by less motivation and lack of trust, both of them having the same percentage – 13.33%. The rest of percentages reveal a form of dependence on senior's approval, professional compromises, sometimes conflicts or a mentoring program running for too long. There is always a thin line between accepting a complete mentorship and being suffocated by it, which makes juniors reject other forms of coaching.

Discussion

At a first glance, the need for mentorship conveyed during academic studies is a priority in advertising agencies or in Marcomm (marketing and communication) field, at least from junior's perspectives. Young students advanced the idea of a better integration into a professional community, fully aware of the difference between theoretical knowledge and practical skills. They are looking for mentors even at the academic level, because they need to be advised and prepared for the labour market. Consequently, the first hypothesis was validated considering that students start their internship and volunteering programs during their studies, because they begin working on their portfolio and resume.

After they are hired, juniors should quickly prove their soft and hard skills because advertising is a very dynamic industry. Therefore, they are willing to join mentorship regardless of formal or informal communication. They look for help, even if they try to absorb knowledge on their own, because this generation is keen on gaining trust and experience. Besides, they expect to be listened to and accepted in the professionals' community, ignoring sometimes age barriers. However, the second and fourth hypotheses were validated as well, given the profile of young employees and their efficient involvement in the professional community. Last, but not least, a mentor's profile can frequently shape the entire career evolution of a junior. Still, beyond professional performances and notoriety, young people need empathy, support and trust, which makes mentorship more difficult.

Due to the complexity of mentoring process, respondents bring value to this research because of their genuine and critical answers that reflect also their experience as mentees'. Few of them strongly emphasized the relevance of encouraging ideas, not rejecting juniors' effort to take part in campaigns, events or any kind of activity. Denial, in this respect, is, however, the big enemy of a real mentorship, as long as the hierarchical communication blocks the relationship between juniors and seniors.

Conclusion

The outcomes of this study provide a useful insight of the relationship between mentors and mentees within an advertising agency and explain the motivational roots of this complex process of professional guidance. Certainly, young people express their need for being supervised in order to be efficient and get integrated into professionals' community. At the end of this analysis, an obvious conclusion can be reached: juniors prefer *intrateam mentoring*, given that they trust gradual advice. The hierarchical dimension of mentorship does not seem to be an option for young employees, who feel at risk of being intimidated by the authority and extreme control. The psychological and social support are more important than any other form of mentorship, because juniors want to be encouraged while following their initiatives and ideas.

This research has, certainly, some limits, firstly represented by the number of the respondents who answered the survey. Even if, the questionnaire was applied to

more than 500 graduates, not all of them were willing to share their views from the very first steps in their careers. Therefore, a comeback to the respondents' sample would be fruitful as it would bring other subjects into discussion. As it is, this study focuses only on those (meant to be) interested in advertising, marketing, communication and later working in the respective field. The sample was well selected, but it can be extended to other Romanian and European universities for a better confirmation of the relationship between mentor and mentees. Still, the best Romanian faculties with these specializations are in Bucharest, so this argument can explain the rather limited sample. Secondly, the number of focus groups might have been extended as well, as initially intended, but given the pandemic conditions the plan was postponed. Last, but not least, a future goal to improve this research consists in applying semi-structured interviews to a significant sample of mentors, hired by well-known advertising agencies. A comparison between seniors' and juniors' expectations for mentorship program would offer a deep understanding of difficulties during this common challenge.

What is extremely relevant is the fact that this paper longitudinally approaches the mentorship concept, starting from students' academic concerns for their future up to the first months in the agency. Similarly, a horizontal investigation intrateam focusing on the relationship between seniors and juniors could reveal more social reasons for being properly mentored. Moreover, this paper points out a number of mentors' profile that can be briefly characterized this way: the empathic one, fighting against junior's fears; the manager type, not so much emotionally attached to the mentee; the team partner preoccupied by efficiency and the junior's contribution to different tasks; the over-protective one, offering less autonomy to his/her junior; the open-minded type listening to junior's ideas and the authoritarian pattern, frequently dissatisfied by the junior's failure or mistakes. Taking into account the above-mentioned portrayals, the third hypothesis of this study was obviously validated, because many mentor's psychological features could easily be identified. This provided a great help for differentiating them among mentor's types.

In conclusion, the present paper unfolds the challenges of mentorship program in advertising agency and the necessity to meet junior's expectations since they will be part of a high standard professional community. The study highlights a significant aspect: this relationship relies on good communication skills meant to develop juniors' careers, thus improving the quality of their work in the agency. There is no way to expect achieving high standards from the employees in this creative industry, as many skills come from experience and in-door practices. Therefore, formal mentoring stands for a priority among the objectives of the organizational culture in order to efficiently and quickly integrate their juniors in the community.

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