

I met to discuss with a couple of colleagues for my Study Café to bring multiple narratives, which will allow me to reflect on my weaknesses in my professional development and who serve or might serve as a good mentor in my development. Jason Davis, a coworker who has been working at the organization for six months, and Heather George, a volunteer and First Nations Museum Colleague, were shown the above questions that I wanted to discuss with them.

I know that I have a number of strengths that allow me to do my job well. This past Friday, I also had lunch with a community colleague, Alex Felsky, who I canvassed with for the provincial NDP campaign and wrote a Letter to the Editor supporting her bid for school board Trustee. She said that she watched me on TV the first time I presented to council commenting that I was an excellent presenter and oral speaker, although she disagreed with the cause I was advocating.

In a discussion with my work colleague, we talked about how nobody at my workplace, has had a vision or a direction of where the museum should head. We are more focused “the act of doing things”, rather than outcomes that we want for the organization and deriving out actions based on those outcomes. Burton and Scott (2003, pp. 63) suggests that what makes a museum special is their value brand. This is what I am attempting to do in the workplace and the community as a whole to add value to the organization. Jason believed that I was the person best suited to take us towards a more sustainable future.

When I asked Heather George about my weaknesses, she suggested that perhaps my diplomacy is a soft skill that I could work on developing. In October, I took part in a workshop on emotional intelligence which is composed of five pillars and attempts to balance you out if you rate too high or too low in an area. One of her examples was of the assertive-aggressive scale where she gave a personal example on how she is a direct and assertive communicator, which people often misinterpret as an aggressive behaviour. I think this is what Heather was referencing is “softening” my direct and assertive tone.

The discussion attempted to generate some suggestions on who would make a good mentor for my life goals. Jason had no suggestions as to who would make a good mentor for me. Heather suggested Clark Bernat from the OMA would be a good mentor for me. Clark definitely has years of experience that I could learn from and improve myself.

I have always been disappointed in people’s suggestion of mentors for me as I have posed questions to them and they have stared at me baffled as to how to answer. In a recent conversation with Paul Robertson, he suggested that perhaps the best place to start was making sure that all members of my local museum community are together about where we are heading together.

Another takeaway I got out of this conversation was that Heather also suggested that I improve not talking to her about local museum happenings. It is after reflecting about this that I recognize her as a great mentor to whom I can talk about problems and find potential solutions. Out of this experience, I gained many, if not all, of the benefits listed in Joy’s (2007, pp. 5) *Mentoring Programs*.