

# SENSEMAKING BY NARRATIVES

How Organizing Occurs Through Mentoring Relationships

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- Organizational life is a network of *relational linkages* (Putnam, Phillips, & Chapman, 1999; Jablin & Putnam, 2001). This metaphor provides a lens for understanding how *sensemaking* occurs in organizations through mentorship.

*Dialogic mentoring relationships*, where mentor and protégé collaborate to construct organizational reality (Bokeno & Gantt, 2000), are beneficial for **sensemaking** and organizational learning.

These relationships are driven by **narratives**. Narratives are shared and simultaneously shaped by mentor and protégé as they carry mentorship partners forward in the unfolding history of organizational processes (Bokeno & Gantt, 2000; Abolafia, 2010).



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- Combing the seminal works of Weick's sensemaking (1988; 1995) and a synthesis of mentoring literature, conclusions are drawn to demonstrate how dialogic mentoring linkages lead to collaborative sensemaking, and thus, *reliable organizing* (Weick & Roberts, 1993).

The verbiage of organizations as *organizing* is helpful to understanding mentoring relationships as they make sense of organizational processes.

- Additionally, analyzing how **mentoring relationships** transfer the interpersonal co-construction of meaning to organizational sensemaking through relational linkages by explicating the nuances of collaboration is vital. Lastly, mentoring as a communicative sensemaking process is highlighted and future research implications are discussed.