

Insider Knowledge: A missing piece in the comprehensive development of STEM talent

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ABSTRACT

Sharing insider knowledge is important for equity in talent development. Every one of us has had an experience where we thought we had a chance of winning an opportunity, only to find out there were some implicit rules we did not follow. This might include failure to realize that the support of a key individual is needed to have your idea approved or supported by others. It could include understanding the importance of attending certain social events for networking or gaining supporters for your research agenda.

Insider knowledge is complex in that it is particular to a career or domain and important in making decisions and finding successful solutions, such as when to employ strategic risk taking or how to respond to chance factors. It also varies by developmental level. That is, there are unspoken rules at each stage of an education and career trajectory. As professionals, we can do a lot to level the playing field in a domain by making insider knowledge more explicit to those who are upcoming in a field.

KEYWORDS:

Opportunity awareness, Developmental level, Social events