

Spectrum Brands

LEARN HOW A MENTOR CAN HELP YOUR CAREER



HOW TO FIND A CAREER MENTOR THE SEARCH BEGINS



5 STEPS TO TAKE DURING THE SEARCH STEPS FOR SUCCESS



HOW CAN A MENTOR HELP YOUR CAREER? RELATIONSHIP 101

CAREER MENTOR



How to Find a Career Mentor

What exactly is a career mentor? This is the person who can point you in the right direction when you're at a fork in the road. It's a person who you'd like to model your career off of. And it's a person whom you could count on when you're looking for your next job – or a recommendation. But how do you find such a person? Here are some tips to get you started:

A mentor can be someone you know, or someone you've never met before.

The Search

A mentor could be someone you know or someone you've never met before. Buddy up to your own boss or a coworker that you admire in another department. Reach out blindly to someone who lives across the country on LinkedIn or Twitter. Walk up to a prominent community figure at a networking event. Email a family friend or long-lost cousin who's in your industry.

The Approach

Anyone will be flattered if you say, "I've really been impressed by your career and I'd love to hear any advice you have in regard to furthering my own." Although many successful people are busy, they'll be more likely to commit if you suggest a date and time up front. For example, suggest a 20-minute coffee date tomorrow in the break room or a 30-minute phone call next week.

The Follow Up

Be sure to thank anyone who's taken the time to meet with you and share their advice. Then tell them you'd love to keep in touch. Don't scare them away by suggesting you chat once a month, but definitely shoot them an email every couple months to check in and share progress on your careers. Eventually suggest another time to chat over the phone or meet in person. Before you know it, you'll have built a quality business connection that can last for years.

5 Steps to Take During Your Search for a Career Mentor

Who doesn't need a little inspiration and motivation at their job? When you go into work every morning it's not uncommon to be thinking about that one co-worker you want to avoid. But instead, what you should be imagining is the employee you work with who inspires and motivates you to learn everyday and enjoy your career. Think back to grade school... your mentor was your teacher.

Don't Want a Mentor? Become One Instead.

Are you a Boomer or Gen-Xer who's willing to offer mentorship? Now is a great time to volunteer your services to an up and-coming employee.

Know that you may not find the Millennials reaching out to you. Some feel uncertain and that they are looked down upon by the older generations.

Reach out to them. A mentoring relationship works for both parties. After all, the mentee is not the only one gaining in knowledge and motivation.

The mentor also reaps rewards by passing down their knowledge and helping in the growth of another person's career and personal development.



You didn't get to choose, unfortunately, but if you were lucky to get the "good" teacher, you probably learned a lot.

Today, in the work world your mentor is whomever you choose. It's up to you to use your perseverance and research skills to find a co-worker who might be the best fit as a mentor for you. Here are some tips on how you can find that person:

1. Define what type of mentor/coach you're looking for.

Analyze and write down the skills (technical and/or soft) you need to develop in your work life. It's best to know first what you need so you'll know what to look for in a potential mentor and you'll be able to discuss this with him/her.

2. Pay attention to the employees in your immediate department.

Do you look up to or admire anyone in your immediate department? Does anyone you work closely with come into mind? Don't overlook the opportunities right in front of you.

3. Ask your manager about department heads who might be a fit.

Depending on who you interact with during the workday, you may not be aware of all the great mentorship opportunities within your organization. Your own manager knows you well enough to make some suggestions.

4. Do your own company research about the C-Suite.

The higher-ups in your company can be great resources for advice. Acknowledge that their time is at a premium. If they're not available, ask him/her to make suggestions for another potential mentor within the company.

5. Think outside the box.

A mentor outside of your work is an option as well. This could require a bit more research and investigation with your peers and community. Industry organizations and conferences are great places to rub shoulders with potential mentors.

How Can A Mentor Help Me?

So you found the perfect mentor—the one you admire and respect, the one who does the job you'd like to do some day, the one who is unflappable at their job, the one who seems to handle people and work like it's as easy as pie. You're a bit jealous and envious, for sure. But, the most important thing at this point is to soak up all their knowledge and secrets. Now, how do you make that happen?

- 1. Ask them to lunch or coffee.** Ask them out to discuss what a mentorship means to each of you. Set some boundaries around how often you'll get together and communicate. Both of you need to agree to the mentorship going forward. Don't force it. Be respectful of their time and gracious they have agreed to offer it to you.
- 2. List what you like.** You already admire this person for various reasons. Put together a list of characteristics and skills you admire and begin working with them on how you might also acquire these skills. The mentor can listen and give suggestions, feedback on past scenarios, or even give you some real-world homework that you can apply in the office.
- 3. Share strategy.** Discuss your long-range career plans with your mentor and give them a chance to chime in on your next steps.
- 4. Get help navigating the organization.** Your mentor may be able to help you understand the office politics and culture. He/She could introduce you to the influential players and help you learn how to communicate through the organization.
- 5. Attend industry events together.** Your mentor can bring you as a guest to company-sponsored events or industry meetings to help you learn about employees and the industry in general. Or they can suggest industry groups you should become a part of.
- 6. Ask them to advocate your work.** Your mentor can be someone that helps promote your skills in the organization. In larger organizations it can be hard to share your talents with those in different departments. Your mentor can be an advocate for you to get the ball rolling and point you in the right direction based on your pursuits. Your mentor, in essence, should be helping you build a reputation in the organization by supporting your growth, sharing your skills and abilities with others, and passing on their wisdom and knowledge.

As you see, this mentorship can look like a one way street. As the mentee, make sure you are routinely thanking your mentor and making sure he/she is aware of your appreciation and witnesses your growth. If you're moving in the right direction, this should be empowering for them as well.

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