

Finding success with help from a mentor

November 2014 Newsletter



Who do you turn to when you need help, advice or guidance? It may be a coworker, family member or friend. But have you ever considered finding a mentor?

What is a mentor?

A mentor is an experienced person who helps someone with less experience (the “mentee”). A mentor can help the mentee develop skills and knowledge. The mentor is a trusted advisor who nurtures the mentee’s career and/or personal development.¹

Many of today’s most successful people have had mentors along the way. This includes Oprah Winfrey, Cal Ripken, Jr., General Colin Powell, Hillary Clinton, Bill Gates, Tom Hanks and many others.²

Where can you find a mentor?

Some companies and organizations offer mentoring. If your organization has this type of program, you may find a mentor right where you work.

You can also seek a mentor outside of work by asking someone you respect to take on that role in your life. Good mentors may include local business people, retirees, clergy and others in your non-work world.

What does a mentor do?

Mentoring is a low-cost — sometimes no cost — way to have a skilled person teach you. A mentor can:

- Coach you on a specific issue or skill
- Share resources and networks
- Challenge you to move beyond your comfort zone

- Give you objective advice and feedback
- Identify skills you may not realize you have
- Work with you to plan new goals

Getting the most out of a mentoring relationship

Here are some simple tips to follow if you’re interested in finding a mentor:

- **First, think about why you want a mentor.** Create some objectives ahead of time so you’ll know what you want to achieve from the relationship. More goals and ideas will come as the rapport builds.
- **Don’t wait for a mentor to come to you.** Instead, look for one — and be choosy. If your first pick doesn’t work out, move on and find another.
- **Learn to listen.** Ask questions. Then really listen to your mentor’s answers. Ask for clarification if needed.
- **You don’t have to limit yourself to one mentor.** You can have a few and learn different things from each. You might look to one for career help and another for personal issues.
- **If you want a mentor, be ready to be part of a relationship.** Effective mentoring depends on mutual trust and respect. It’s a commitment. Get the most out of having a mentor by spending time together so you can really get to know and understand each other well.

And remember: You might also consider becoming a mentor for someone less experienced than you. A mentor-mentee relationship can be invaluable to both parties!

¹management-mentors.com

²degreescout.com