



Proven insights into a powerful mentoring relationship

Any professional who strives alone will discover that the road to success is a rocky one. So it's nice to have a helping hand over the hurdles.

Some of the most successful people in business and professions have mentors. Mentors can become key influencers who will help inspire and guide you to a successful career. Finding the right mentor could make the difference between floundering in your professional career or making it big. After all, a mentor can challenge you, inform you and inspire you.

However, not every successful professional can help you make a leap forward professionally. There are a number of considerations to bear in mind to ensure that you find the best mentor to help with your career development.

- 1. Develop a vision of the future you desire** so that you can identify an appropriate mentor to help you along the way. You need to have a clear vision of what you want your mentoring relationship to help you achieve, otherwise the relationship will drift and stall.
- 2. Experience matters.** Mentoring relationships established with more experienced professionals usually allow the mentee to access an additional knowledge depth which can be transformational. Be clear on what type of experience will be beneficial for you.
- 3. Be specific on the why you have selected your mentor.** Explain why you have chosen a particular professional to be your mentor. The mentor is giving you their time and attention, so it is good to be able to share with them tangible and specific reasons why you would like them to mentor you.
- 4. Seek support, not direction.** A good mentor is someone that can support you in achieving your goals. Whilst a mentor can help you to set those goals, ultimately they are *your* goals, so you need to set them to ensure they take you in the direction you want to go. A good mentor can then help to lift you up and give you the tools you need to succeed regardless of your path.



5. **Communicate your goal.** What does a successful mentoring relationship outcome look like to you, and what specifically do you want to learn? Clearly communicate what your goal is for the partnership and why you are sure that your mentor can get you there.

6. **Define your idea of success.** Clearly define what your idea of success looks like for your career focus. A professional who has proven success in their career and the experience to impart knowledge will be in a better position to aid you towards your goals.

7. **Be prepared for each mentoring session:**

- Take notes during each session.
- Determine actionable items at the end of each session.
- Be prepared to report on what you applied from the last session.
- Have questions prepared ahead of time for your mentor.
- Remember that mentors are not there to tell you exactly what to do, so if you enter into a relationship expecting them to do this, you will be disappointed.
- Mentors don't have all the answers you need. You may still make a few mistakes, but valuable experience can be gained when an answer is found by getting through a situation rather than by avoiding it.