

Career Management Digest

Mentorship

Mentorship is defined through a Google search as: noun: The guidance provided by a mentor, especially an experienced person in a company or educational institution or a period of time during which a person receives guidance from a mentor.

Lennon and McCartney wrote a beautiful song lyric "I get by with a little help from my friends... Gonna try with a little help from my friends..." Would you make a great mentor? Are you looking for a mentor in your work or personal life? Perhaps this will issue of CMD will help you out.

"Should I Become a Mentor?"

It is fair to say that inherent in the human condition is the desire to help. Many times, we find ourselves in a position to be of help to others. Others call on our experience, our expertise, or our personable nature to seek out a formal or informal relationship to help them grow.

There are qualities that make up the demeanor of successful helpers, coaches, and mentors. Gordon F. Shea, author of "Mentoring", has written extensively on this topic and has developed training materials to help employers design successful mentoring programs as well as individual mentorship training programs.

"Should I become a mentor?"

Anyone who might consider such a question must be willing to complete some self-reflection on your own strengths and weaknesses before embarking on such a journey. There certainly are qualities that are conducive and blend well with successful mentoring. These qualities can make mentors unique and effective in their relationships that go above and beyond what we might find in answering some of the introspective questions listed below.

Start by asking yourself these questions when volunteering or asking to become part of a formal workplace

mentoring program. Remember that your journey throughout life may also bring upon significant events that can



only be described as "Serendipity Moments" when we will be called upon to help others regardless of our desire or intention to do so.

*I see myself as being people-oriented; I like and enjoy working with other professionals.

*I am a good listener and respect my colleagues.

*I am sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

*I recognize when others need support or independence.

*I want to contribute to the professional development of others and to share what I've learned.

*I am willing to find reward in service to someone who needs my assistance.

*I am able to support and help without smothering, parenting, rescuing, or taking charge.

*I see myself generally as flexible and willing to adjust my personal schedule to meet the needs of someone else.

*I usually am patient and tolerant when teaching someone.

*I am confident and secure in my knowledge of my field of expertise and make an effort to remain up-to-date.

Do you see potential and recognize qualities within yourself that could be found in the type of mentor others would reach out to and be comfortable with in a formal or informal mentor / mentee relationship? Many of these qualities embedded within the questions above are found in successful mentors and serve them well. They are well regarded by many helping professionals.

If you have serious doubts about your own strengths and qualifications, it should be noted that many of the qualities we are talking about can be developed or learned over the time as a result of practice and patience. You can work on it, and you can also get feedback from other colleagues on your own whom you trust and who know you well. Listen and consider what these colleagues have to say. It could give you the confidence and assurance to move on as a mentor.

Mentors take a personal interest in helping others succeed both personally and professionally. Explore the options and opportunities made available to you by being of help to others. Build upon your strengths by being a mentor the workplace and beyond.

Submitted by – Ed Duda; Career Counselor; Workforce Development, Inc.

Six Ways To Make The Most Of Your Mentorship

The following is a summary of an article by Lydia Dishman. To read the full article, go to: <https://www.fastcompany.com/1843911/6-ways-make-most-your-mentorship-dear-grasshopper>

Lydia Dishman, a business journalist who writes about the interconnectedness of tech, leadership, commerce, and innovation, interviewed Alice Korngold, the CEO of Korngold Consulting, to learn more about Korngold's mentoring experiences over a span of 30 years. Korngold offers her experiences, and shares ideas from her and others, on how to make a mentorship work.

Being prepared and having done your homework is critical to the first interaction between mentor and mentee. Korngold shared a story of one mentee, who came to her on the recommendation of a business school professor. The mentee had done nothing to prepare- except show up. No research on Korngold and no plan on what she wanted to get out of the mentorship. The mentor experience started out as a challenge. Some may assume that mentors drive the progress since they have the career expertise and a vast network. But, the mentee must hold up their end of the relationship. Korngold advises to ditch the idea that a mentee is imposing on the mentor.

On the contrary, says Korngold, "I felt an imposition that she hadn't prepared. I think it's the mentee's responsibility to do their homework to understand the background, expertise, and value of the mentor, and ask for what they need."

People at any stage of their career may seek out a mentorship. After education, it's the second most important factor in determining a person's professional success, according to executive recruiting firm Korn/Ferry International. Terri A. Scandura, a management professor and dean of the graduate school at the University of Miami, says employees who have mentors within their organization earn more money and are more productive.

Here are the six recommendations to make the most from your mentorship experience:

Make a Dedicated Effort Before You Start. Do your own homework. Read related articles, follow blogs, seek out information from those in the field. Key word: self-educate. Don't expect your mentor to do all the work for you

Know Who You Are and What You Want. Research your chosen mentor and find out what their strengths are. Determine what YOU want from the relationship and make sure that the mentor understands. At your first meeting, let the mentor know who you are, what experiences and education you bring

to the table and what you are willing to do. Build your plan from there.

Be Open to Learning Unexpected Lessons. The more research and reading you do, the more you will be able to absorb and learn. Challenge yourself and step out of your comfort zone while learning.

Abandon the Ego. Your mentor is not there to make you feel valued. Be open to the new ideas that will come and don't fall into the "but we've always done it this way" or "I think this is the best solution...". Be willing to admit that you don't know everything and that you're there to hear and accept new ideas.

Mind Your Manners. The mentor is there to share and help you; be gracious and appreciative of their time and their advice. Be on time, do the tasks or activities that you agree to do. Also, don't expect to meet for hours at a time. Most people are willing to give smaller chunks of time. If you agree to meet for 45 minutes every other week, stick to it. And remember to say "Thank you!"

Don't Wait For Permission To Try Something. Don't wait to be told what to do, one step at a time. Show some initiative and try things. You will then have something to discuss with your mentor and get some constructive feedback.

These ideas are only a few of the tips for creating and building a successful mentorship. Do your research—see who you can connect with, what you can learn from them and where that partnership can take you.

~Submitted by Valerie Kvale, Placement Specialist-Freemont County, Workforce Development, Inc.



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