Making the Most of Your Mentorship: Being an Effective Mentee

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Mentoring: Complex but Rewarding

What do Mentors do?

Mentors advise and inspire.

In short, practical terms:

1. Mentors make introductions – to people, to programs or companies.
2. Mentors give recommendations to best resources – reading, classes, experiences.
3. Mentors give feedback for the mentee to consider.

More: http://www.mentoringstandard.com/mentor-recruitment/
Benefits of Mentoring - to Mentees

• Greater productivity, competence.
• Enhanced professional confidence.
• Reduced job-related stress.
• Better interpersonal relationships.
• Larger personal and professional network.
• Understanding of their career path.

Benefits of Mentoring - to Mentors

A mentoring program cannot succeed without experienced and reliable mentors, preferably coming back year after year. What motivates a senior executive or technical developer to spend up to four hours a month with a mentee?

- Giving time to help others - paying it forward.
- Developing mentor’s coaching and leadership skills.
- Extending professional and personal networks (mentor and mentee).
- New understanding on the most effective ways to work and knowledge of their own company or organization.

Key Value of Mentoring to Companies and Organizations

• Productivity gains.
• Leadership and career development.
• Diversity awareness and support.
• Retention improvement and staff satisfaction.

## Mentoring vs. Coaching vs. Sponsorship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Boundaries</th>
<th>Reward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor</td>
<td>Hierarchical or positional authority</td>
<td>Succession planning, leadership building</td>
<td>Long-Term: many years</td>
<td>Part of regular work</td>
<td>Career direction, protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Special knowledge</td>
<td>Transfer of specific information, Teaching</td>
<td>Short-Term: class or program duration</td>
<td>School or training scope and vision</td>
<td>Student: passes test, Coach: payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>Wisdom authority</td>
<td>Career or personal growth</td>
<td>Mid-Term: 6 to 12 months</td>
<td>Program scope and vision</td>
<td>Mutual learning, recommendations, feedback</td>
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</tbody>
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Let’s start with 108 Role Models...

A role model is a person whose behavior, example, or success can be emulated by others.

More: http://www.notabletechnicalwomen.org/
TechWomen empowers, connects, and supports the next generation of women leaders in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) from 21 countries in Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East. Includes 5-weeks in the San Francisco Bay Area and Silicon Valley (company projects, professional workshops, networking events), then meetings in Washington, D.C. TechWomen is an initiative of the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), started in 2011. The women return home to be mentors in their home communities.

< Heba Hosny (TechWomen 2012 Emerging Leader) is a software Engineer in Egypt. A group of TechWomen mentors raised money so that Heba could return to the USA in 2013 to present her project at a conference held at the MIT Media Lab.

< Josette Tejan-Cole (TechWomen 2013 EL) is a petroleum Engineer in Sierra Leone. While in California, two TechWomen mentors helped Josette to spend a morning with a Vice President of a major oil company, discussing her career and education plans.
What Happens Next?

398 mentors from 112 San Francisco Bay Area companies have served in the TechWomen program, working with 333 mentees from 21 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. After TechWomen Emerging Leaders return home, Mentors participate in delegation trips to the mentees’ home countries, to expand networks of girls and women in science, technology, engineering, & mathematics (STEM). TechWomen has over 23K followers on Twitter!

< Adla Chatila (TechWomen 2012 Emerging Leader) hosted Katy and Jessica in Lebanon after the 2013 TechWomen Jordan Delegation – including tours of the Makassed schools where the Notable Women cards are now being used.

< Nezha Larhrisi (TechWomen 2013 EL) hosted the whole TechWomen 2014 Morocco Delegation in her home in Rabat - complete with a drum band and kaftan fashion show!
2 Surprising Long-Term Findings

Sun Microsystems

• **Gender**: There was no substantive difference in reported satisfaction between mentees with male mentors and those with female mentors.
  ○ Although female mentees have a strong preference for female mentors, long-term data showed that men and women mentees reported the same program satisfaction (90% average), regardless of their mentor's gender.

• **Distance**: There was no difference in mentee satisfaction whether partnered locally or with a remote mentor.
  ○ In 5 years of quarterly report responses, 22% were co-located with their mentor, and 88% were at-a-distance. Both groups reported an equal level of satisfaction.
  ○ It is harder to make and maintain informal connections when the mentor and mentee are not local to each other - but satisfaction is the same.

## Best Practices:
There's More to Mentoring than Meets the Eye

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Fine Art of Effective Listening</th>
<th>Objective Support</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Two ears, one mouth...</td>
<td>- Provide timely constructive feedback as a disinterested third party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Patience: problems can be more complex than you think</td>
<td>- Be a safe harbor for venting; be a trustworthy confidant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sounding board, not “bored”</td>
<td>- Evaluate progress and adjust goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- When remote, acknowledge frequently (paraphrase, clarify)</td>
<td>- Encourage getting outside comfort zone (reward risk-taking; learn from failure)</td>
</tr>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Advise and Catalyze</th>
<th>Share Yourself, Be Committed</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>- Not just one answer; recognize and weigh options</td>
<td>- Meet regularly: it’s not mentoring if it doesn’t actually happen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Share problem-solving skills and let the mentee find the solution</td>
<td>- Meet in person whenever possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Discuss the impacts of various actions.</td>
<td>- Have an open door</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Flexibility (the Mentoring Asana)

| - Respect mentee’s choice to do what’s right for his or her situation | - Provide the connect between the mentee’s goals and the organization’s or company’s goals |
| - Accommodate changes in topics, goals | - Connect the mentee with your network, engage in mentee's network |
| - Life happens – reschedule, don’t disengage (deadlines, holidays, illnesses). | - Share your passion, have a passion for sharing |

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## Worst Practices:
### How to Dis-serve Your Mentee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No time, no time...</th>
<th>No explanations necessary</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Cancel at the last minute because something really important comes up</td>
<td>- Surely you can learn by osmosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Come late, leave early</td>
<td>- No need to share this since it was sent to an email group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Oops, I forgot</td>
<td>- If everyone knew about these resources, who’d need me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Why bother to schedule meetings?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you say something?</th>
<th>So, as I told your manager...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- I’m the ME in MENTOR</td>
<td>- Confidentiality, what confidentiality?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- When I want your opinion, I’ll ask for it</td>
<td>- I didn’t think you’d mind my sharing...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- If it worked for me, it will work for you.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th>Everything you do is wrong</th>
<th>Did you want to get something out of this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Why in the world did you do that?</td>
<td>- Goals? goals? we don’t need no stinkin’ goals...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Well, if you can’t explain it, I can’t help you</td>
<td>- Did I say I’d do that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Just do what I say, and don’t ask questions.</td>
<td>- Your satisfaction is not my problem</td>
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Being a Good Mentee 1

Suggestions from the American Association of University Women, 2013:

Do your homework. Come to meetings with your mentor prepared. Make sure you’ve done any readings assigned you. If your mentor makes a professional recommendation, do it — no matter how awkward it may seem.

Ask questions. You want to learn how your mentor thinks and makes decisions — so ask!

Be respectfully persistent. Relationships often fall apart because the mentee didn’t follow up. Don’t worry about hounding your mentor; you already have permission to ask.

Be committed. The effort you put into this relationship will directly affect the results, so make the time needed for the relationship.

Be patient. Often, the mentor learns more in the short term than the mentee will. During your meetings, the mentor may get a concrete understanding of the problems in the profession. The mentee, on the other hand, takes longer to process what she’s learning. It may take years for the mentee to fully understand the lessons learned from the relationship.

More: http://www.mentoringstandard.com/being-a-good-mentee/
Being a Good Mentee 2

Suggestions from Carnegie Mellon Univ. mentoring program started in 2010:

**Show up.** Not just physically, but mentally, to every interaction. Come with goals, come with questions, come with ideas.

**Follow up.** If your mentor gives you a contact, send the email that day. If someone helps you, send a thank you email.

**Read up.** Constantly researching your field, your colleagues, and your competitors is the name of the game.

In addition, keep in mind that “*When you invest your time in being a committed mentee, you will be rewarded with accelerated experiences from your mentor.*”


The Best Mentoring Advice

“Don’t expect or promise miracles. The goal is not perfection but improvement.”

- Dr. Bob Sproull
  - Sun Microsystems Labs Director, 2006-2011
  - Sun Microsystems Labs Fellow (Vice President), 1990-2010
  - Principal, Sutherland Sproull and Associates, 1980-1990
  - Associate Professor, Carnegie Mellon University, 1977-1990

Becoming a Certified Mentor

Mentoring Standard celebrates mentors with deep experience who have done the work of helping people to achieve their goals and grow their careers. The company was founded in 2015 in the Silicon Valley to offer an experience-based evaluation for mentors and mentoring programs that is not tied to a particular training or curriculum.

Certification Benefits to Mentors

• Establishes a current public record of successful and effective mentoring and growth, not tied to one particular mentoring program.
• Demonstrates a sustained pattern of leadership and career development.
• Provides objective credentials for an otherwise largely-subjective experience.
• Allows the individual to transfer his or her mentoring experience to a new context, job or professional program.
• Exemplifies success: senior mentors use their certification path as a model and guide for their mentees.
• Documents progression of growth over time, potentially through formal certification levels: Regular, Advanced, Master, and Distinguished.
Katy Dickinson is the Founder of Mentoring Standard. She has designed and managed successful mentoring programs in the Americas, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. She has held senior executive roles at Everwise, People to People, MentorCloud, Huawei, and Sun Microsystems. At Sun, she created and managed the global Engineering mentoring programs for ten years.

Katy Dickinson was the Process Architect for the first class of the U.S. State Department’s TechWomen mentoring program, a Member of the Anita Borg Institute Advisory Board, and a Lecturer for the University of California at Berkeley Engineering class on entrepreneurship for many years. She is part of the team that created the Notable Technical Women cards and posters. Follow her blog on katysblog.wordpress.com

Mentoring Standard Vision:
High quality mentoring changes lives. Founded in 2015, Mentoring Standard aims to improve the world of professional mentoring. mentoringstandard.com

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