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# 5 Ways To Get The Most Out Of Your Mentor Relationship



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Mentorship plays a key role in helping women advance at work and climb the corporate ladder, but it's only effective if the mentor-mentee relationship is a good match.



Mentoring is one trend that continues to grow and gain popularity, and that's a very good thing. 82% of women agree that mentorship is important, yet only **1 out of every 5 women** actually have a mentor. Mentorship plays a key role in helping women advance at work and climb the corporate ladder, but it's only effective if the mentor-mentee relationship is a good match.  Since a mentor is a person you'll be working closely with, compatibility is crucial to success.

Once you've found a person you're compatible with, how do you get the most out of that relationship?

### **Be curious.**

Step out of your comfort zone and be curious. This is perhaps the most beneficial piece of advice that you need to follow to get the most out of a mentor relationship. Ask thought provoking questions that make you dive deeper for answers. They shouldn't be questions that can be answered in the spur of the moment, but rather leave you searching for the answer. These questions should linger in your mind while you think about them after your sessions.

Explore the possibilities of doing the things that scare you. Learn as much as you can about them until they no longer scare you. Talk through challenges with your mentor so that you can turn your fear into excitement. This is exactly what a mentor relationship is for. Mentors will help you find answers to your questions that will help you dispel your fears.

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### **Be honest with your mentor.**

Your mentor is there to help you, and they truly have your best interests at heart. Be 100% honest and 100% open to feedback. You should feel comfortable enough to fully open up and not hold anything back with them. Inhibitions have no place in a mentor discussion. Remember, they are not judging you. If you hold back your thoughts and feelings when talking to them, you're not doing yourself any favors.

Be honest with your questions as well as any information you share. If you want something, ask for it and don't beat around the bush hoping your mentor will pick up on your hints. This will be frustrating for the both of you. Share your thoughts fully and don't leave out details. Give them the full picture of your challenges, needs, goals, and accomplishments so they can understand how to best help you.

### **Respect each other.**

Respect goes both ways – you should respect your mentor and they should respect you. The best mentor-mentee relationships are **built on trust**. Mutual trust ensures that you both feel comfortable letting your guard down, knowing that sessions are held in confidence. Respect each other on a personal and professional level and respect each other's time. Be punctual to your appointments and try to stay within the time limit you've

established. Respect each other's boundaries so that neither party feels taken advantage of.

As a mentee, it can be tempting to want to ask your mentor every time a question arises, especially if they've agreed to make themselves available to you outside of your scheduled sessions. Save the times that you do reach out to them for the big things, and make a list of the smaller questions you come up with to ask at your next session. This shows that you respect their time, and also forces you to put things into perspective and focus on what's really important.



### **Know exactly what you want to get out of the relationship.**

Before you get started, you and your mentor should set up some ground rules and establish a big picture goal and outcome for your sessions. This goal should be decided together to ensure you're both on the same page. If you're going to be working with a mentor long term, set a few smaller goals along the way. This gives you something to work towards and helps keep sessions on track and focused. Without a goal, you won't know how much progress you're making, and you may feel like you aren't getting enough out of your mentor relationship.

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### **Give as well as get.**

You can learn from each other! Don't be afraid to share advice. It's not overstepping or crossing any boundaries, it's simply taking your relationship another step further. Being able to both [give and take](#) will enhance the relationship for both parties, and will take your mentor-mentee relationship to the next level.

Remember, your mentor is there to help you succeed. This may mean that they have to give you some tough love or advice that's hard to hear. Be gracious and know that they are doing this to help you! It's not easy to receive criticism, but coming from a mentor it's meant entirely to help you accomplish your goals.

*This article is part of a series on Mentorship. Read part 2: [What To Look For In A Mentor](#), part 3: [How To Be A Great Mentee](#), and part 4: [Questions To Ask Your Mentor](#).*

What's your mentor success story? Join the conversation on [Twitter](#) and use hashtag #MentorSuccessStory.

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