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# FINDING A MENTOR

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One of my greatest fears just a short few years back was getting to a ripe old age and looking back and seeing that I left a lot on the table.

I went through this weird “no risk” stage in my life, where it seemed as if my main concern was dancing with the status quo.

Though external drama was low, internal drama was high...I knew that there was more to life.

This is when I began seeking alternatives to what I was doing and came to experience the power of having a mentor.

I’ll say it now, because you are going to think the same thing...I put myself waaaayyyy out there...which was extremely uncomfortable for me.

But because I stretched my comfort level and reached out to people I looked up to, I can say that today I am a much better person because of it...

My desire is to help you take that step and experience this yourself. If for nothing else, just to see how much you are truly are capable of.

# WHY YOU NEED A MENTOR

The reasons behind having a mentor are endless.

Here are just three that scrape the surface

## 1. SMOOTHS THE WAY

Living out in the backcountry, it's easy to get lost. Every weekend, my little girls and I trek out to play at various parks in the area. Some require multiple turnoffs, dirt roads, and lack any semblance of acceptable signage.

Luckily we have GPS, it always seems to keep us right on track to get where we need to be going.

Like GPS, we can save an enormous amount of heartache and effort by simply learning from people who have defined the way.

## 2. SEES YOUR POTENTIAL

It's fact that we are horrible at giving ourselves enough credit...we simply can't "get out of our own way"...we are constantly holding ourselves back.

Having someone there to judge us for what we really are, they are able to see where we are struggling and where we are succeeding and can offer changes that can make a profound impact on our growth.

## 3. ISN'T AFRAID TO ASK THE TOUGH QUESTIONS AND TELL YOU HOW IT REALLY IS

It is oddly comforting to be asked hard questions.

It is also oddly comforting to be told that we are "crazy" to think certain things about ourselves.

A good mentor isn't going to let you fall, they are invested in you and will do anything to keep you on the path you desire.

## 1. ASK THE PEOPLE YOU MOST ADMIRE.

Think about the people you most admire in each area of your life.

Plan to feel some mental resistance when you begin thinking about contacting...these are limiting beliefs

I felt a bit ridiculous asking my mentors because I knew how busy they were, and kept doubting that they would even want to help me along...

Bottom line, you will never know unless you ask...a No is the worst that can happen.

More likely, they will be flattered you asked and jump right on board with you.

## 2. KNOW WHAT YOU WANT.

Do you need a mentor “coach” or a mentor “counselor” in your life?

Meaning, do you need someone who will help you with understanding content when you begin to slip or do you need someone that can help you with the strategy and mind game that goes along with preparing for professional registration.

Both are out there, and either is fine, but it is vital you know what you need so your potential mentors will know what to expect.

## 3. COMMUNICATE.

Clearly communicate what you hope the mentor relationship will look like.

- How often you will connect?
- How will you connect?
- What area of your life will they mentor you in?
- How much time they should expect to invest?

Do you need face to face meetings, or is phone/skype/email enough?

Making sure that the expectations are clear will help your mentors arrange it their schedules to make sure they are making the biggest impact.

# HOW TO FIND A MENTOR

Let's get this out of the way right now...a mentor isn't going to just walk up to you to be their mentee (is that even a word!?)

If this does actually happen, let's celebrate together...that would be epic.

Here are some pointers to get you started.

# TIME TO MAKE MIRACLES HAPPEN

It's time to take some action towards, here are step by step interactions (and email scripts!) to moving yourself towards taking advantage of the power of having a mentor.

1. Brainstorm and write down a list of 10 people (using the worksheet in the back) you'd like to connect with.

Start with these people:

- People who have a job title that you're interested in learning more about.
- People who work at companies you're interested in potentially working at.
- People who are doing interesting things you want to learn more about.
- People who went to your college and are following the same career path.

The secret sauce here is that you initially connect on a common ground...things go much smoother this way.

2. Get their email address.
3. Use the email scripts on the next page to contact them and set up an informal meeting.

# LETS CONNECT

The goal is to set up an opportunity to meet someone you can ask them questions about their job and get the inside scoop.

Never, ever directly ask them to be your mentor right off the bat. That's a big no-no. You can turn an informational interview into a potential opportunity, but only if you approach it wisely.

To: Michael  
From: Justin  
Subject: San Diego State grad — would love to chat about your work at **WHEREVER**

Hi Michael,

My name is Justin Dickmeyer. I'm a '05 grad from San Diego State (I know you were a few years before me) and I came across your name on our alumni site. **[MAKE SURE YOU MENTION WHERE YOU CAME ACROSS THEIR NAME, IT LESSENS THE CREEP FACTOR OF THE EMAIL.]**

I'd love to get your career advice for 15-20 minutes. I'm currently working at **WHEREVER** Company, but many of my friends work **SOMEWHERE** and each time they tell me how much they love their job, I get more interested. **[THE FIRST SENTENCE SAYS WHAT YOU WANT. MOST PEOPLE ARE FLATTERED THAT PEOPLE WANT/VALUE THEIR ADVICE.]**

Most of them have told me that if I'm interested in **WHATEVER**, I have to talk to someone at **WHEREVER**. Since you work at **WHEREVER** and are a fellow Aztec, I thought I would ask if I could pick your brain on your job and what motivated you to choose **WHEREVER**? I'd especially love to know how you made your choices after graduating from San Diego State. **[THE PHRASE "PICK YOUR BRAIN" IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO ASK FOR ADVICE AND FLATTER, AND "FELLOW AZTEC" REINFORCES SHARED BOND]**

I can meet you for coffee or at your office...or wherever it's convenient. I can work around you! **[THE BUSY PERSON IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOU. TREAT THEM ACCORDINGLY.]**

Would it be possible for us to meet? **[MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL TO RESPOND TO THE EMAIL IN ONE WORD...THIS QUESTION ALLOWS THEM TO SIMPLY STATE YES OR NO AND NOT FEEL ANY GUILT]**

Thanks,

-Justin

To: Michael  
From: Justin  
Subject: San Diego State grad — would love to chat about your work at **WHEREVER**

Hello Michael,

I Hope all is well.

If you recall, we spoke a few months ago about meeting up for some coffee. **[REMINDE THE BUSY PERSON HOW YOU KNOW EACH OTHER]**

You were super busy at the time, and I totally understand and respect that. I am still interested in knowing more about **WHATEVER**, do you know anyone you could refer to me to talk with?

If not, no problem — I just wanted rally back with you and keep you in the loop. Thanks again for all your help!

Take care,

Justin

## HOW TO GET REFERRALS

It may happen...

You will get shot down by someone who says they don't have time...don't be fearful of this.

They will more than likely be faltered that you asked them in the first place, so if there was ever a time to ask for a simple referral of someone else you could talk to...then now is the time.

# IT'S ON NOW

You now have both the tactics (the email scripts) as well as a strategic approach.

All in one day.

What will you do with this? Will you nod and shrug and say, "Yeah, I should really do this..."

Or will you identify 10 people, emailing all of them, knowing that 2-3 will get back to you and agree to talk?

This isn't URGENT. But it is important.

Let's do this!



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