

Pursuing Professional Development through Mentoring

Considerations	Thoughts/Ideas/Timelines
<p>What are your strengths and professional goals? What are you good at and what do you like to do? Think about the work you do and what gives you a sense of accomplishment. Where do you make a difference? What would you like to be doing in the future? Do you need more formalized education? What's the timeline?</p>	
<p>Clarify What you want: Before seeking out mentors, write down your specific expectations and the role you want mentors to play in your career. Do you want someone who can help your stalled networking attempts, assist you in learning more about a certain industry or provide guidance on how to be a successful entrepreneur? Clarifying your expectations, goals and objectives will ensure you find the right mentors and that the relationships benefit your professional goals.</p>	
<p>Who will you approach? Great mentors can be found in a variety of places, so spend time looking outside your current workplace. Seek out mentors at business and women's associations in your area, non-profit organizations, church groups, community groups such as business chambers of commerce, and even within your family. Many people don't realize great mentors can often be found within their own family tree. Consider what mentoring model works best for you. There is a spectrum from informal to formal.</p>	

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<p>Set up a meeting. Once you've identified a potential mentor, ask to meet and discuss a possible mentoring relationship. Asking for mentoring is an important step to make certain you're both clear on the terms. This meeting should take place somewhere that is mutually comfortable and where you can speak in confidence.</p>	
<p>Be clear with your mentor. Once you find a person who agrees to be your mentor, first and foremost, make sure you share the same commitment to your expectations. Be clear on the time required and the availability of your mentor, and establish a regular meeting schedule with topics for discussion and to check in on the goals you've set for yourself.</p> <p>While obtaining mentors can be intimidating, following these four tips will help you overcome the jitters and find experts that best support your career goals. And don't be discouraged if a potential mentor turns you down. Instead, gracefully thank them for meeting with you and try to understand why — if they're too overloaded with work now, maybe they can mentor you in the future. Also, ask if they might recommend someone else...because finding a great mentor may be only one conversation away!</p>	

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/lisaquast/2013/01/02/4-tips-for-finding-great-career-mentors/>

Self-Awareness Resources:

Link to Myers-Briggs on-line test: <http://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>

Link to Agreement Dynamics "Leadership Style Matters": <http://www.agreementdynamics.com/>