

How to Be a Good Mentee

So you've found a potential mentor to help you with business issues, have approached them to mentor you, and now you need to establish the mentor/mentee relationship in a way that is mutually manageable and beneficial. These mentees give their advice based on personal experience as to how to be a "good" mentee.

Allison Nazarian, founder and president of Get It In Writing, Inc. gives this advice:

1. Don't be afraid to ask. Your mentor wants to help you and yes, while he or she is taking valuable time and essentially donating it to you, this is something he/she feels strongly about and wants to do. But they don't always know what you want, need or seek, if you don't come right out and say it!

2. Keep in touch. Let your mentor know what you have been up to, even if you haven't spoken or gotten together in a while. Send him/her article clippings, new projects, upcoming events -- anything that's good and exciting for you and your business so your mentor can be in the loop and and as proud of your accomplishments as you are.

3. Be focused. While your mentor's purpose in your life is to contribute to your business in so many ways, he/she also likely has a full business and personal life beyond you. Focus on what's most important, and leave everything else behind, so that you both can make the most of your time together.

Jill Marchus, president of Something Classic and The Green Goddess, a hospitality company and a green initiative, met her mentor Mary Cantando, Founder and Growth Expert of WomanBusinessOwner.com, through the Women Presidents' Organization (WPO). Marchus gives this advice about being a good mentee:

1. Keep it easy; natural; organic if you can. Know your limits - don't pull too much. Push every once in a while.

2. Promote your mentor. Network. Promote. Endorse your mentor to others in your circle.

3. Utilize Technology. Email. Email. Email. It allows your mentor to mentor you on their own schedule and in their free time.

4. Know your Mentor. Learn your mentors business model(s). Get to know them personally. Find out what they like to listen to, what books they like to read, movies they enjoy, family details etc. (but only if they're willing to divulge. This helps you respond to them and also thank them in ways that are important to them.

5. Keep confidentiality. Never disclose to others your discussions.

6. Make time. Find opportunities to make time for your mentor.

7. Follow up on your mentor's suggestions. Follow up on your mentor's suggestions. Even if you are unable to implement them for some reason, let them know why.

8. Share your success with your mentor. Share any press/media coverage, business milestones achieved or awards received with your mentor.

Says Marchus, "If someone has the ability to be a great mentor, her time will be limited and she'll want to invest it in working with individuals and businesses she finds interesting."

Once you land a mentor, always be aware that the mentor/mentee relationship is a two-way street and look for ways to be a good mentee.

http://womeninbiz.sbresources.com/sbr_template.cfm?document=mentoring_0009.htm