

Find a Mentor Checklist



Finding a Mentor

My naiveté during those early years continues to amuse me. Now that I'm in my sixties, I don't have time to waste. When I need mentoring, I go grab a mentor! Not that I don't take it seriously, but I feel a mentor should be specific to the subject requiring help. To paraphrase an old adage: if you want to know how to build a watch, you'll do better with a mentor who's a watchmaker than with a mentor who only knows how to tell time. That's why I've developed a list of what I'm looking for in a mentor, and don't just indiscriminately go on and on about my problem to any ear willing to listen. A mentoring relationship is not a one-way proposition.

The Mentor must be:

- Willing to teach
- Knowledgeable in the subject
- Able to articulate
- A resource
- Willing to spend time
- Caring
- Approachable
- A problem solver
- Trustworthy
- Passionate

The Protégé must be:

- Willing to learn
- Needing guidance in the subject
- Able to understand
- A receptacle
- Willing to take time
- Appreciative
- Courageous
- Able to apply solutions
- Deserving of trust
- Committed

When I'm seeking a mentor, I adhere to the following checklist:

- q Define, specifically, the topic requiring a mentor
 - o Purpose
 - o Time frame
 - o Desired result
 - o Initial questions
 - o Outline or flowchart of anticipated project/goal
- q Determine where/how mentors on this topic will most likely be found
 - o Industry
 - o Geographic area
 - o Preferred method for initial contact
 - q Mail
 - o Name
 - o Contact information
 - o Reference source
 - o Results of contact
 - q Phone
 - q E-mail
 - o Contact information
- q Research potential mentors
 - o Current contacts
 - o Resources of current contacts
 - o Current organizational contacts
 - o Speakers
 - o Writers
 - o Internet
 - o Phone book
- q Develop short list of mentors who appear to be compatible
 - o Contact information and results
 - o Contact potential mentor
 - o Notes of initial contact conversation
 - o Entry into database (for current or future topics)
 - o Decision: affirm or reject agreement for current project
- q Organize place and time to enter into agreement

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Nancy Langdon Jones, CFPTM is President of NLJones, Inc., a fee-only financial planning firm in Upland, California. Her first book, "So You Want to Be a Financial Planner" is for mid-life career changers considering the financial planning industry