**Selecting the Right Mentor**

1. **Willingness to Share Skills, Knowledge, and Expertise**

A good mentor is willing to teach what he knows and accept the mentee where they currently are in their professional development.

Always take time to stop talking about yourself and ask your mentor how he or she is doing. Ask them about their experiences and learn from their stories. Good mentors can remember what it was like just starting out in the field, so use their experience to your advantage.

1. **Demonstrates a Positive Attitude and Acts as a Positive Role Model**

A good mentor exhibits the personal attributes it takes to be successful in the field. By showing the mentee what it takes to be productive and successful, he/she demonstrates the specific behaviors and actions required to succeed in the field.

Remember, the positive attitude must go both ways. It’s important that you always treat your mentor with the utmost professionalism.

1. **Takes a Personal Interest in the Mentoring Relationship**

Good mentors do not take their responsibility lightly and feel invested in the success of the mentee. Usually, this requires someone who is knowledgeable, compassionate, and in possession of the attributes of a good teacher or trainer. Excellent communication skills also are required. A good mentor is committed to helping their mentees find success and gratification in their chosen profession. Overall good mentoring requires empowering mentees to develop their strengths, beliefs, and personal attributes.

1. **Exhibits Enthusiasm in the Field**

A mentor who does not exhibit enthusiasm about his job will not make a good mentor. Enthusiasm is catching, and new employees want to feel as if their job has meaning and the potential to create a good life.

Your mentor has to take a special interest in helping you build and develop as an executive. If they aren’t enthusiastic about you and the kind of work you are trying to do, it probably won’t work out.

1. **Values Ongoing Learning and Growth in the Field**

Mentors are in a position to illustrate how the field is growing and changing and that even after many years there still are new things to learn. Anyone who feels stagnant in their current position will not make a good mentor. When starting out in a new career, people want to feel that the time and energy they spend learning will be rewarded and will ultimately provide them with career satisfaction. Good mentors are committed and are open to experimenting and learning practices that are new to the field. They continually read professional journals and may even write articles on subjects where they have developed some expertise. They are excited to share their knowledge with new people entering the field and take their role seriously in teaching their knowledge to others. They may choose to teach or attend classes to further develop their knowledge and skills. They enjoy taking workshops and attending professional conferences provided through their membership in professional associations.

Finding a mentor who is committed to continued learning is important. You want someone who truly believes in the power of professional development, regardless of where they’re at in their career.

1. **Provides Guidance and Constructive Feedback**

One of the key responsibilities of a good mentor is to provide guidance and constructive feedback to their mentee. This is where the mentee most likely will grow the most by identifying their current strengths and weaknesses and learning how to use these to make themselves successful in the field. A good mentor possesses excellent communication skills and can adjust her communication to the personality style of the mentee. A good mentor also will provide the mentee with challenges that foster professional development and a feeling of accomplishment in learning the field.

As the mentee, it’s crucial that you listen to the feedback, don’t take it personally, and actually consider it. Remember, this feedback is coming from the right place.

1. **Respected by Colleagues and Employees in All Levels of the Organization**

Ideally, mentees look up to their mentors and can see themselves filling a mentor's role in the future. Mentees want to follow someone who is well respected by colleagues and coworkers and whose contribution in the field is appreciated.

Ask your mentor about his or her experiences working with their team, ask them about how they navigate sticky situations, and ask them about how they got to where they are.

1. **Sets and Meets Ongoing Personal and Professional Goals**

A good mentor continually sets a good example by showing how his habits are reflected by personal and professional goals and overall success.

That being said, your mentor is busy, and you have to respect that. They aren’t always going to be able to drop everything to speak with you. Make sure you don’t abuse the relationship–pick and choose what you bring to your mentor.