



Choosing a Mentor

A mentor brings from their experience and wisdom.

New entrepreneurs may benefit from any experienced business person's insights. Finding advice early is more important than taking a lot of time to find a perfect fit. A good mentor should be compatible and demonstrate a genuine interest in you and your businesses' success.

Experienced entrepreneurs may want to think about what you want from a mentor.

Start with people you admire or who are already a role model. Consider people in your professional association, family friends and former bosses, professors, older family members, neighbors, spiritual leaders and community leaders. Ask about good candidates in your friends and colleagues' networks.

Use the Resource Navigator at www.TheDallasBRAIN.org to find business counselors.

To find a mentor that is a good fit:

- Know what you want: specific advice, more connections, an all purpose sounding board?
- They should complement your personality and communication style.
- Pick someone you respect, not just the biggest name you can find.
- Start with a single meeting for feedback on your current business project. Prepare a few good questions, meet away from the office and pick up the tab. If it goes well, ask for a follow-up meeting to go over your progress.
- Send a thank-you note and act on their suggestions if they make sense.
- If you are still interested, ask for a follow up meeting and bring them up to speed. Propose a mentorship relationship. Clarify your goals and expectations and assure them of your commitment to the process.
- If they refuse, ask if they can recommend someone else.

<http://entrepreneurs.about.com/od/businessmentoring/a/businessmentor.htm>

<http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2010/01/13/13-tips-on-finding-a-mentor>