



Finding a Mentor: How to Get The Support You Need

By Adrian Pei

Whether you're seeking perspective or a sounding board...



I believe that one of the biggest issues for leaders today is that they are working so hard and facing so much stress—without enough people providing the support and encouragement they need.

Fortunately, there are a lot of resources out there—coaches, counselors, and mentors—whose job is to provide wisdom, perspective, and a listening ear. In this article, I want to focus on some **practical tips on how you can find a great mentor.**

First, what is a mentor? I would define it as an “experienced industry professional who helps you advance your career and subject knowledge.” This can be a senior leader in your organization or division, or it can be someone you meet at a conference.

What does a mentor do? I believe they:

- Accelerate your learning about a specific subject and industry
- Connect you to resources, opportunities, people and networks you wouldn't otherwise have access to



How do you go about getting a good mentor? Here are a few ideas:

- In some cases, you can **join a mentorship or employee development program** through your organization or group—which will pair you up with a mentor. I’ve created and led programs like this myself.
- You can **get an introduction from a colleague or friend**, through e-mail or LinkedIn.
- If you attend one of their talks or presentations, you can **follow up with them afterwards and make a connection**. I recommend that you look for anything online that they’ve done (talks, articles, etc.) so you get a sense of the way they think and interact.
- You can **hire a person** you have in mind for a service, or just for a session. This could also make them more likely to be invested in you, and want to help you.

Before you reach out, don’t just think about what they can provide for you—**think about why they might want to work with you, too!** They’re likely busy with many opportunities, and so this will help you to stand out. What do you have to offer as a mentee?

Maybe you provide them a connection and relevancy to the “younger generations.” Maybe you can provide fresh perspective and insight, or support for their work. Most mentors want to feel helpful—and to make an impact, on and through you!

When you reach out, be specific and succinct in what you’re asking for. I’d suggest you write an e-mail that’s no more than 4-5 sentences, and that includes the following:

- **Who you are** (and any specific, personal connections)
- **What you’re asking for** (be specific!)
- **What you’re offering** (to hire them, to help their project, etc.)



By the way, I wrote every word in this article (no A.I. whatsoever!) based upon my personal experience over the past three decades—having had numerous mentors, and having been a mentor myself. I’ve been fortunate enough to have been able to work with almost anybody I’ve wanted to, and I think my approach has also helped make this a reality!

If you want to talk this through or get some guidance in building your support “dream team”, I offer workshops on “**Building a Strategic Support System**”—as well as **cohorts** and **coaching** on personal, relational, and organizational change! If you want to learn more about these topics, or if you know a company or group that could benefit from an organizational consultant or leadership trainer, you can easily [schedule a call on my website](#). I look forward to hearing from you!

Discussion or Reflection Questions:

1. Have you ever had a mentor before, formally or informally? Describe any experiences you’ve had, and how they impacted your professional or personal life.
2. How could a mentor be of most benefit to you, at this point of your career and life? Please explain.
3. What do you think you have to offer to a prospective mentor? How can you use that knowledge to make a connection or form a mutual relationship?



Thank you for reading this article! Simply mention it when you contact me, and I’ll take 10% off any of our coaching, cohort, or workshop offerings.

Contact me through our **website** or e-mail me at:

adrian@changenavigation.co