

HOW TO FIND A MENTOR IN 5 STEPS



inclusiq

by Suzanne Doyle-Morris, PhD

*I'm Dr Suzanne
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I help women who work in male-dominated fields get the careers they want and help companies retain and develop the best of a diverse workforce.

I can help you create a strategy that will work for your career. With a few key tactics, you can turn allies into mentors and mentors into sponsors which will fast-forward you to a fulfilling and rewarding career.

Do you want a career that stagnates?

No, didn't think so

Mentoring can open doors... if you do it right.

Follow these five steps for a surefire route to career success.



MOST APPROACHABLE, not most senior

Nothing turns off a potential mentor more than an appeal from someone with whom they have nothing in common.

It's like saying: 'I want to know you because you're senior.'

Think about your challenges ...



Returning back to work after parenting leave



Switching into a new sector



Handling clients who are 2x as old and thought you were "fetching the coffee"



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SHORTLIST potential mentors

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If you think your current or potential boss is the best person to look to for mentoring, think again.

You may be lucky, and they may agree to mentor you, but don't count on it. Instead, think back to your list of challenges and add a list of the most interesting people you've come across who may have experienced some of the same challenges:



Look through your internal newsletter, industry reports, external press, or speakers at conferences



Consider a peer working in another team



Someone whose posts on LinkedIn or Twitter you like

Look further than your own team for a wider perspective.

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RESEARCH your shortlist

Once you've found the people you want to approach, dig a bit deeper into them, specifically to find areas of overlap in your work and theirs.

What are they interested in - both personally and professionally? It's amazing how many mentoring relationships start simply because you comment on a project they're working on, or a presentation they've recently given.

People love recognition, so set yourself apart from others by commenting on a specific stance they took on an issue (proves you're listening!) or giving detailed feedback on something they wrote or said that resonated with you.



APPROACH your chosen mentor

Many people are wary when someone asks: ‘Will you be my mentor?’

It sounds all-consuming

Sell it by making it appear finite and related to something they’d value as well. Better ways to approach include:

‘I’m working on this project that reminds me of what you did with X, would you have time for a coffee? I’d really value your insights.’

‘I’ve noticed the way you do Y, and I’d love to understand what got you to that point. Could I treat you to lunch?’

‘I’m impressed by the way you moved from X to Y, and I’d love to hear more about how you made some of those key decisions. Do you have time for a quick chat?’



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MAINTAIN YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Most mentors will give you time because it's rewarding to see people grow and it's a great reminder of how far they've come - and what they already know.

However, a mentor will invest more time in the long-haul if you make yourself useful to them as well.

Share things that may help them:



Things you've heard on the grapevine



Your perspective on an issue



How your department is handling any new changes



Nominate them for awards



Forward relevant articles they might not have seen

Extra Tip!

Be Their Eyes and Ears on the Ground

Leaders often miss the 'news on the ground' as they progress their own careers, but know that staying in touch with people down the line keeps them current too. So keep in touch! Link with them on LinkedIn, follow them on Twitter, or send them a request on Instagram ... staying up to date with their relevant social media will keep you in their loop, and them in yours!



I'm Dr Suzanne Doyle-
Morris



I've seen clients go from overlooked, frustrated and confused, to feeling in control of their careers just by making a few tweaks to their strategies.

I'm here to help you make that same shift. You've got the qualifications you needed, so isn't it time you got the recognition you deserve?

My own business began winning awards a few years ago, and I did it by turning my experience into content that will help you earn credibility and respect in your workplace.