



HEALTH

Achieve greater success with a mentor

**YOU'RE
NOT ALONE**



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Regardless of the complexity of the situation you face, or the goal you would like to achieve, others have successfully navigated similar situations in the past.

The best and brightest among us have them.

In fact, it is difficult to find a successful man or woman who does not. They may be acquaintances, family members, neighbors, or friends. They go by many different names and titles — mentor, coach, advisor, guide, teacher, counselor, or trainer. Or they may be hired professionals.

Tiger Woods, thought by many

to be the greatest golfer of all time, has a golf coach. Imagine that — the best golfer in the world taking instruction from a coach whom he could easily defeat on the golf course. NASCAR's Jeff Gordon has a team of coaches. Former No. 1 tennis great and winner of eight Grand Slam singles titles, Andre Agassi, worked with a coach throughout his career. Professional boxers work with an entire team of trainers and coaches who are in their corner. Bill Gates, one of the wealthiest men in the world was mentored by none other than Warren Buffett, one of the most successful stock market investors in history. Did Warren Buffett have a mentor? You bet he did. Warren Buffett was mentored by Benjamin

Graham, author of the "Intelligent Investor," the father of modern security analysis and value investing.

Why do the best performers have mentors? Master performers recognize that it can be difficult to see their own limitations. They also know that an objective observer can more easily identify these roadblocks to success.

For example, men have a tendency to attribute excessive blame for failure on factors outside of themselves (e.g. "The wind was blowing too hard" or "Those people don't know a good thing when they see one"), while women have a tendency to overestimate the degree to which they are at fault (e.g. "If only I were stronger/smarter/etc.").

Both errors can have a negative impact on performance, and can be hard to see from the inside.

Secondly, exceptional performers know that there is always room for improvement, even when they are the best in the world. Finally, because they are human, even masters go through periods of crisis, slumps and downturns, where they perform below their peak. Mentors help them through these difficult times.

All master performers started out as rookies. Natural talent, desire and dedication are not enough. They must be coupled with knowledge, skill and confidence that are best achieved under the guidance of coaches and mentors.

Human beings have been perfecting certain skills and mindsets through the centuries. It has often been said that there is no such thing as an original thought, illustrating the idea that humankind has a massive collective store of knowledge.

Thus it is beneficial to anyone trying to achieve a particular goal to tap into this collective wisdom.

Regardless of the complexity of the situation you face, or the goal you would like to achieve, others have successfully navigated similar situations in the past. Rather than starting out on a journey towards a destination without a map or compass, following a process of trial and error, one of the most efficient ways to achieve a goal is by looking to a guide who has already made the journey.

So how do you go about finding a mentor? First, it is important to decide what you would like to achieve. Are you looking to rise in your profession, expand your business, improve your relationships, enjoy greater physical, emotional, or financial health, or improve your overall performance? Or are you looking to gain a specific set of knowledge or skills, such as learning to play the guitar, getting a grip on your finances, improving your speaking skills, or learning about good nutrition? Once you have decided what you would like to achieve, set your intention on finding someone who has already

achieved this goal, is farther ahead in achieving the goal than you are, or has helped others to achieve it.

There is a Buddhist proverb that says "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear." Once you have set your goal and you are committed to finding a mentor, you are well on your way to achieving your goal. When you open your mind to finding a mentor, you may be surprised to learn that you already have this teacher in your life — an acquaintance, friend, or family member — but perhaps you have not utilized them as a resource. Or maybe you can identify a person you've heard of, who has achieved what you would like to achieve, to ask for guidance.

Many master performers will make use of several mentors or trusted advisors, each with an expertise in a particular area that is important to their success. You can improve your performance by either hiring a professional mentor or contacting someone you don't know asking them to share with you some insight, wisdom, or advice.

While you might be hesitant to ask someone for this type of support, rest assured that there is no greater compliment you can give than to recognize someone's achievements and to ask them for guidance. If they can't take on another mentee or client, they may be willing to refer you to someone they recognize as equally effective.

Streamline your efforts, improve your life, and increase the likelihood of achieving your goals by finding a mentor. You won't regret it.

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