

Five Frequently Asked Questions About Mentoring

How Much Time Does a Mentoring Relationship Require?

Every mentoring relationship takes a different amount of time. Some people start out meeting once a week, some once a month, some once a quarter. You might enjoy seeing each other more often, but time and distance does not allow it.

The amount of time required in your mentoring relationship depends on your situation and your needs. Whatever you can both afford and agree on is fine. Remember that mentoring does take time. Occasionally it will be inconvenient and somewhat out of your comfort zones, but it will be well worth the effort.

How Do I Deal With My Fear of Being Rejected in a Mentoring Relationship?

There's nothing wrong with just spending time with a person to move the trust level higher and higher, to the point that you can formalize the relationship as one of mentoring. But if you are concerned about rejection, I would wait to discuss the subject. Just relate, relax, enjoy, build and grow together, and at the right time, using the word mentoring will make sense.

How Do I Get Out of a Mentoring Relationship?

Getting out of a mentoring relationship is no different from getting out of any other kind of relationship. It is simply a tough interpersonal issue. There are three key words to use when you are dealing with any aspect of an interpersonal issue: Care, honest, and fair. Use them something like this: I care far too much about you not to be honest with you, and in fairness to you I think we need to slow down, stop, change, or redefine our mentoring relationship. Then explain why.

Is Mentoring at a Distance Possible?

Yes, mentoring can take place at a distance. The main questions are: Do I really believe in this person? And Do I want to see him succeed? If the answer to both questions is yes, you can help in many ways, even at a distance via email.

What if the Mentee Outgrows the Mentor?

Frequently, great pain comes into the mentoring relationship, and a broken relationship occurs. Ideally, however, the relationship changes from mentor – mentee to friends and the mentor is honored to see the mentee succeed much as fathers and mothers are honored by the success of their children to adulthood.

Questions to discuss.

1. Each organization has a political climate. What are the compromises we need to make so we have success at Acacia?
2. Who should be involved in the decision-making process at Acacia?
3. Which battles are worth fighting for?
4. In Acacia, who has the power, and who wants it?