



How to Find Your Ideal Mentor – Action Planner

Well done! You're on the path to success with this **How to Find Your Ideal Mentor Action Planner**.

You've probably already read our '[How to find a Mentor in 3 easy steps](#)' post. Now it's time to plan your moves, take action, and accelerate your success.

Here's how requesting feedback can help you on your journey:

The three big benefits of finding a Mentor

1. They can advise you on the immediate challenges that you face in your current work
2. You can learn from their knowledge and experience, to accelerate your development
3. They can help you expand your network

Also, learning and growing through conversation and discussion is enjoyable!



Step 1: Explore your development goals

Clarifying your development goals will provide you with a strong foundation for finding your ideal Mentor.

First, decide if you want to improve in your current role, or prepare for future roles:

- I want to improve in my current role.** Reflect on what you are doing well, and what you need to improve. Discuss your performance and opportunities for development with your manager. If you have one, explore your role profile or job description (a good one will list out the competencies you require).
- I want to prepare for future roles.** Identify the role(s) that might be a good next step in your career. What skills, knowledge and experience do you currently believe will help you prepare for those roles?

Then, select your broad 'areas of interest' for development.

I want to develop my:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication / interpersonal skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Functional / Technical skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership / management skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding of my company and its strategy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding of my industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Wellbeing and personal growth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Navigating through change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other development areas: _____ | |

Once you have identified broad areas for development, become more specific. For example, an interest in communication and interpersonal skills may be further defined as: “enhance my ability to influence C-level executives early in the sales cycle”. This will give you a very definite focus for the next step.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Step 2: Identify a pool of potential Mentors

Now that you have your development needs clarified, it's time to develop your pool of potential Mentors (ideally, aim to identify 3 to 6 potential Mentors).

Each potential Mentor should have experience that is relevant to your development needs and be someone you trust to give you good advice.

Tips for identifying possible Mentors:

- **First, be guided by your development needs**, look for people that have deep experience and expertise in 1 or more of your development areas (the more, the better!).
- **Also, be guided by your intuition**, who do you trust and want to spend time with?
- **Look 1-2 layers above you in your organization**. People 1-2 layers above you are more likely to have recent and relevant experience to share with you. There could also be potential Mentors amongst your peers.
- **Look 'up and across' the organization, not directly up** (as it's not appropriate to have a Mentor who sits directly above your manager in the organization).
- **Prioritize people you already know**. It's unlikely you'll strike up a Mentoring relationship with someone you don't know, it's too big a leap. Stick with people you have had some interaction with already.
- **Explore your network**. Sometimes it can be helpful to have a Mentor from outside of your current company (again, it all depends on your development interests!).

Be open to the possibilities, and list down the names of your potential Mentors:

1.
2.
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6.

Step 3: Reach out and get started

There's no need to reach out and ask: "will you be my Mentor?". A much better approach is to reach out and ask for advice. Like this:

"I'm interested to understand XXX better, I know you have valuable experience in this area, and I'd really appreciate your advice. Would it be possible for us to meet and discuss? I'll come with plenty of questions, and I won't take up too much of your time."

That may seem like a challenging thing to do, but most people will appreciate your proactive approach. And if they don't respond positively, they're not Mentor material anyway!

If the first conversation goes well, take it to the next step:

"I really appreciate your time helping me with this and I enjoyed our conversation, do you think we could get together and chat again, maybe in a month or two?"

And if that conversation goes well, take it to the next step:

"I'm really benefiting from your advice and guidance, which I really appreciate, would it be possible for us to catch up every month or two?"

If you take this approach with each of your potential Mentors - and build the relationships progressively - you will soon have a network of active Mentors, each supporting you in different aspects of your development and your career.

One Mentor is never ideal, build a network of Mentors to support your development!

Mentor's Name	Notes on progress

Step 4: Build the relationships

To make the ongoing relationships a success there are four actions to take. As you move forward with your Mentor relationships check that you're achieving each one:

- I am active in cultivating the relationships. I bring lots of questions to our conversations, I show appreciation, I take action between our conversations.
- I have chosen the right moment to confirm that our conversations are confidential.
- I take occasional 'time outs' from my needs, to focus on getting to know my Mentors better and invest in building the relationship.
- I have checked that the relationship is working for the Mentor too.

Take these four steps and you'll soon have a network of Mentors to help you accelerate your success!

