

MENTOR•HER

MENTORS ◆ WEEK ONE ◆ CLIMBING THE CORPORATE LADDER

SHARE

As a Mentor, you've signed up to the Mentor Her programme to help another woman succeed in her career by climbing the corporate ladder. A Mentee is defined by the fact that she does not have the same experience as you and has not yet achieved the success that she desires. Her job is to ask questions, to explore possibilities and to ultimately learn something from you that can be applied to her own career growth. The best thing that you can do when you're talking to your Mentee is to respond to her questions by sharing your own experiences. As someone who's achieved success in her career, you've made mistakes and you know the things that worked. As a Mentor, you can't protect a Mentee from making mistakes, as a lot of time they need to make mistakes on their own in order to learn from them, what you can do is share your insights and your experience so that Mentees can stay on the right path.

SUPPORT

Mentees come to you because they need help. Sometimes they're just looking for a soundboard from someone who understands their journey and sometimes they're looking for validation and agreement that they're doing the right thing. In these instances, all a Mentor has to do is listen, to take the time to understand and provide encouraging words and support for your Mentee. At other times, Mentees may have brainstormed their next step and have a lot of different ideas that they require guidance on. As a Mentor, you'll probably have a good idea from your past experience which ideas are good and which ones are bad. When presented with a "What do you think?" or "What would you do?" question, support the ideas that you feel most positive about by sharing the past experience that made you come to this conclusion. By supporting a decision with a story from your past, Mentees will also be able to get a better understanding of where your ideas are coming from and whether or not they are applicable to their own journey.

NUDGE

As a Mentor, your job isn't to advise a Mentee on how to enter a leadership role tomorrow or be the figurehead for her industry within a couple of weeks. Her journey is also not yours, she will deal with things differently, approach problems differently and ultimately land herself in a position that may not be like yours at all. As a Mentor, the simple thing you need to do is nudge her in the right direction. To share your experiences, support her decisions and, if you do feel like she is going down the wrong path, to nudge her back on the right course by offering alternative solutions. Use phrases like, "have you considered...", "what do you think would happen if you tried...", "would it be a good idea to...". At the end of the day, the decisions a Mentee will make will be her own. All that you can hope for is that, by sharing your own experiences, you will have helped her gained insights she might not otherwise have had.

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Every week we provide manuals to Mentees to help them get ahead in their career. They are not a necessity for your Mentor/Mentee relationship and the information contained within them is not a substitute for advice they may receive from a paid professional. We have advised each Mentee that their Mentor has not been trained on the information provided in the manuals. Our only hope is that by reading these manuals, Mentees can get a better idea about their business and form better questions to encourage a stronger bond with you. If the manuals do raise a question in the Mentee's mind, we encourage her to write it down to ask her Mentor in your one hour session per week. So, every week we'll be letting you know what information she is reading and questions you can ask her to encourage a better partnership.

THIS WEEK, SHE WILL BE READING ABOUT...

- What will make her happy in her career
- What job title suits her the most
- What industry she may be interested in pursuing a job in
- What aspects of company culture are important to her and what opportunities she wants to be afforded when choosing the right company to work for.

We have emailed this information to you too on Friday, if you want to take a look.

QUESTIONS YOU COULD ASK...

- What stage of your career are you at and what do you feel you need help with most?
- What job title do you have the most interest in?
- What industry are you the most attracted to?
- What aspects of company culture are important to you?
- What opportunities do you want to have opened to you for your lifetime career?