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Mentoring and How to Use It for Your Benefit

Chapter 6 from the #1 best-selling book ***The DNA of Success***
by **Jack Zufelt**
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"Hitch your wagon to a star."
--Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

John Bytheway says, "Smart people learn from experience. Super smart people learn from other people's experience."

Having a mentor is an integral part of getting where you want to go and accomplishing what you want to accomplish in as fast a time as possible and in the most mistake free, time and cost efficient manner possible. Why try to reinvent the wheel when you can talk to its inventor? Albert Einstein knew the importance of seeking advice or answers. He said, "The important thing is to not stop asking questions."

An ancient Chinese proverb makes the value of a mentor quite obvious. It goes like this. "He who asks is a fool for 5 minutes but he who does not ask remains a fool forever."

Who are you going to ask questions of? Obviously you ask someone who knows the answer. Who you put your trust in is very important. There is a story about two friends discussing religion. One said to the other, "Obviously you don't know anything about the subject." "Yes I do." The other retorted. To prove that his friend didn't know much about religion he said he would give him $5.00 if he could quote any one of the Ten Commandments.

The friend accepted the challenge, thought long and hard and then said: "Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."

The guy who made the challenge was very surprised. Handing him the money he said, “I didn’t think you could do it!”

You must choose carefully who you wish to seek advice from. Certainly not someone who only has opinions or only thinks he knows.

> ***The person who desires to be successful will always learn from other people’s successes as well as their mistakes.***

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow observed that, “Sometimes we may learn more from a man’s errors than his virtues.

Everyone needs mentors. They are critical in our quest for enjoying the best our lives has to offer. Mentors are ideal if you want to capitalize on the shortcuts and proven methodologies for creating wealth, closer relationships or any other important, positive, pleasant or fun objectives. Don’t ever believe that someone made it to the top without the help of others.

Mentors are very necessary. Remember the adage, “*People seldom improve when they have no other model but themselves to copy after,”* the author of which is unknown to me. Don’t let fear or pride keep you from seeking out mentors. Take comfort in the words of Benjamin Franklin who said, “He that won’t be counseled cannot be helped.”

You already know something about mentoring because you’ve probably enjoyed the efforts of mentors on your behalf, usually by accident. Let me explain. Nearly everyone has had a coach, music teacher, college professor, Big Brother, or business associate who has had a major impact on his or her life. It could even be someone who you don’t know personally—someone whose philosophy, attitude or example touched you deeply to the core of your heart and you decided to emulate them.

The important thing is to recognize that, in some way, directly or indirectly, they were there for you, they knew what they were talking

about, and they showed you a better way to do what was needed so you could achieve your Core Desires.

> ***When we want to go somewhere unknown to us, most of us consult a roadmap. A road map is simply a mentor on paper.***

So are all the non-fiction books and tapes that fill our public, business and private libraries from coast to coast.

Mentoring has been with us since the dawn of time. Sophocles (496-406 B.C.) observed, “It can be no dishonor to learn from others when they speak good sense.” No school system exists that isn’t utilizing mentoring to teach – it’s as simple as that. Awhile back – probably sometime in the `80s, mentoring was a hot buzzword. People treated it as if it were something new. It was certainly the “in thing” to be involved with – either as the mentor or the one being mentored.

Mentoring really isn’t even new to the business world. Hundreds of years ago, business people saw the value of mentoring when they set up guilds, with their inherent apprenticeship programs. Apprentice programs were nothing more than seasoned artisans teaching newcomers the ropes.

Mentoring has been a mainstay of the military establishment the world over for eons. Armies the world over have taken in raw recruits and molded them into top soldiers, mainly through mentoring by seasoned, experienced and often battle-hardened drill sergeants.

Sure, the recruits also had classroom instruction, but wasn’t it the military’s top mentors who wrote the textbooks, designed the lesson plans, and provided the teaching aids? Sure they participated in war games, but wasn’t it the mentors who structured those games, based on their experiences?

Today, businesses around the world rely heavily on mentoring, whether or not they call it that. If you are in the business world you’d be wise to

heed the word of management guru Warren G. Bennis: “Make sure you have someone in your life from whom you can get reflective feedback.” I could go on and on, but I think I’ve made my point. Mentoring is ubiquitous. It’s going on every day, everywhere. It isn’t anything new. It goes by many names but its end result is usually the same. With minor exceptions here and there, it is advancing civilization in a good and positive manner. It is definitely a source of guidance you should not leave up to chance.

> **An Important Tip: Never ask someone to teach, train, guide or lead you if that person has never successfully done what you want to do. Don’t ask someone making $60,000 a year to mentor you on how to make $160,000. If they knew, they’d be doing it.**

Is it difficult to find a good mentor? My experience tells me the answer to that is, “No.” Most highly successful people are almost always willing to spend some time with you and give you any information that helps you understand what made them successful.

They usually love what they’re doing. If you share their enthusiasm for their specialty, they’ll usually welcome you with open arms. I know I do when someone asks me.

When I’m mentoring, I’m giving back that which was so graciously given to me. All but one individual I asked to mentor me did so willingly. I asked this very well known motivational speaker to share with me how he had become so successful. He was at least 30 years ahead of me. I was just starting out as a speaker and he was already famous. His response was, “I don’t train my competitors.” This was the exact opposite of what he taught on stage where he espoused the philosophy of helping others.

If time permits, I love mentoring others and showing them what I did to create the success I now enjoy. I do so willingly because I truly love helping others become successful. I love it when they become successful knowing that I played a part in shaping their life. *“The sign of a good teacher is when the student passes the teacher.”* -- Author unknown.

People come to my office from all over the world and stay as long as a week at a time. They sometimes fly with me on business trips or attend

my speaking engagements. I even mentor internationally, via the telephone and email and newsletters.

I became who and what I am because of my Core Desires to succeed and because I asked successful people how they got where they are. Then I listened to what they said, and did what they suggested and became like them.

In fact, I have a beautiful plaque in my office listing in chronological order, on small brass plates, 32 of those people who impacted my life greatly. At the top, these words are engraved: “To These People I Owe An Eternal Debt Of Gratitude For Their Substantial Influence In My Life.”
Okay, back to specifics.

How do you get someone to mentor you? Simply ask.

Compose a letter along these lines:

“Mr. or Ms. _____, you have accomplished so much in your business and/or personal life. You seem to have achieved the lifestyle (or family unity, closeness to your spouse, etc.) that I really want in my life. I want to be just like you.

Would you please teach me some of the things you know so I can become more like you? Would you please show me how you got where you are?

You might continue with:

“I’m eager to learn from you. I’ll gladly work around your schedule. I will do whatever I have to do to learn from you. I will buy your lunch. I will fly with you at my expense wherever you go just so I can have time with you on the plane.”

What you’re doing is signaling your potential mentor that you’re serious but that you wouldn’t be a nuisance. Let the prospective mentor know that you consider him or her to be the perfect role model for you. Be full of honest praise for his or her accomplishments. Be sincere.

When I was 28, I asked a very wealthy gentleman from my church to be my mentor. He was about 30 years my senior. He had the kind of life I wanted. He had time for his family. He had money. He would spend more on a two-week vacation to Europe than I earned in a year. I called him on the phone, although I didn't know him and said to him "I want to be like you and have the lifestyle you have. I just don't want to be your age when I get there. Will you please show me how to be like you?

He chuckled and said, "Sure! Come over to my house sometime and I will tell you what I know." And he did. He was my first business mentor. I created a substantial net worth over the next five years because I used what he told me. I was a good student of his because I took copious notes in his presence. I did it for two reasons. First, it was to remember all that was said. Second, to prove that I was serious. I'd suggest you do the same with anyone you choose as a mentor. It sends a sincere message.

I was an avid listener. I have found that many want to impress the mentor instead of listening. Ernest Hemingway agrees. He said, "I like to listen. I have learned a great deal from listening carefully. Most people never listen."

> **An Important Tip: Either take notes or record what your mentor says on tape – with his or her permission, of course. That way you won't overlook something important. Review the notes and tapes until you have it down pat.**

I'm a firm believer in the philosophy that when you are in need of a teacher or mentor, one will enter your life if you're actively seeking one. I believe that could be part of the reason you bought this book. You were ready to make changes in your life. And here I am to help you.

But don't just stop with me as your mentor. Seek out many more on your own. The time and effort you put into doing this correctly will be repaid many times over as your mentors prevents you from making time consuming and costly mistakes. You may only get one good idea from a mentor but it could be the very idea you needed at that time.

Don't expect mentors to pop out of the woodwork and present themselves to you, offering their wisdom and counsel. You usually have to seek them out. Networking is a great way to meet mentors.

When you talk to mentors, ask them very specific questions—not just about the big picture—but little things, too.

I remember talking before a sales organization and was astounded to learn that one of their sales people had more than quadrupled an old sales record in one day! She sold 28 people in that one day on taking a specific course, which cost $400…and not one of the other 15 sales people ever asked her to show them how she did it.

I suggested to my audience that anyone who wanted to become as successful as she was should talk with her about how she did it. I advised them to ask about the little details.

Some of my suggested questions were, “Did you do any group presentations? If so, how did you set it up? Did you joke with them? Did you meet them personally, or did you do it all via the telephone? If by phone, where did you get the contacts? How did you bring up the reason for your call? If in person, what were you wearing? Do you recall your actual sales pitch? If so, what were the exact words you used? Can you say them to me in the same way? How did you handle objections? How did you close? How did you handle payment? How many calls did you make, or how many appointments did you make? What was your closing ratio? Did you take people to lunch, or provide them with a small gift? Did you sign them up at a meeting, or in a public place? If so, describe the circumstances to me.”

If I wanted to perform at the same level that this woman achieved, I would do what she did and say what she said. When you ask mentors specific questions, you’ll gain new insights. Furthermore, you’ll demonstrate that you really want to learn all you can from them.
Let me share with you some of the important details my millionaire mentors taught me were important if I wanted to emulate them and their success.

When I take out a pen to write myself a note or sign contracts—which I do with great regularity —I use a Mont Blanc pen as opposed to a Bic.

Both write well, but one makes a statement that the other doesn't. One costs $125 and the other costs .49 cents. I was told not to bring a .49-cent Bic when doing a contract with a client. They taught me that image is important and a .49-cent Bic just doesn't present the same image, as does a Mont Blanc.

Are there pens that exceed the Mont Blanc in cost? Sure there are. They may be 24-carat gold, or platinum for that matter, I don't believe in being ostentatious. However, I do want to make the right statement and cause others to have confidence in me.

Why do I wear a nice gold watch instead of one with a black leather band in business settings? Because my mentors told me that gold watches make a different type of statement than the black or silver ones do. Both tell time equally well, but the gold watch makes a different success statement. While a gold wristwatch instead of a black, silver or black rubber sports watch is important; it doesn't have to be a Rolex.

> **An Important Tip: One of my mentors taught me to always, always carry a $100 bill with me. You'll find you have an improved attitude about yourself when you have $100 in your pocket.**

My wife and I have an unusually strong, close family. We raised five of the best-behaved children anywhere. It happened primarily because it was a genuine Core Desire for us both so we sought out intelligent and knowing mentors. We interviewed more than 20 parents who had, in our estimation, exemplary children. We asked them how their youngsters or teenagers got that way.

They willingly gave us their viewpoints and shared their belief systems with us. They even provided us with specific parenting methods. For instance, one couple taught us the right perspective on discipline. We learned from them that spanking or striking children isn't necessary to have well-behaved kids. Another couple taught us how to get our children to be reverent and quiet in church. They had nine children, all under the age of 14, and eight of them sat quietly in church. The ninth was a baby at the time.

We applied what they taught, and sure enough it worked.

Don't hesitate to ask others to teach you whatever you want to know in any of life's areas. Then duplicate their methods and attitudes and you'll get the same results.

By doing what I've already suggested, and adhering to the following guidelines I've created, finding and working with a mentor should be fun, easy and very productive for you. You don't have to, in fact it is unwise, to fly by the seat of your pants. Would you get in an airplane whose captain was going to fly by the seat of his pants? Me either.

To help people know how to find and interact with a mentor I developed what I call The 10 Commandments of Being Mentored. I think you will find them quite useful.

The 10 Commandments of Being Mentored

1. **Thou shalt** select mentors who have successful experience in areas that you don't.

2. **Thou shalt** find mentors who are willing, able, enthusiastic, compatible and interested in mentoring you.

3. **Thou shalt** allow considerable time to finding your mentor(s).

4. **Thou shalt** establish ground rules with your mentors governing your interactions.

5. **Thou shalt** honor and respect thy mentor in word and deed.

6. **Thou shalt** not argue with your mentor(s).

7. **Thou shalt** provide your mentor with positive feedback.

8. **Thou shalt** willingly provide your mentor with all the truthful

information needed to help you make an informed decision.

9. Thou shalt use your mentor wisely and sparingly.

10. Thou shalt let your mentor know when his or her services are no longer needed.

Okay, now let's look at each commandment in depth.

1. Thou shalt select mentors who have successful experience in areas that you don't. You want to capitalize on his or her strengths and minimize your weaknesses and shortcomings. They must have achieved a high level of success in the same field, endeavor or area that you are seeking to succeed in. You want someone who can challenge you and hold you accountable, if need be.

2. Thou shalt find mentors who are willing, able, enthusiastic, compatible and interested in mentoring. You want someone you can talk to easily and comfortably. Just as some mentoring prospects will reject your overtures, so too should you be willing to reject those who just won't fit the bill. Mentoring and being mentored is a two-way street.

3. Thou shalt allow considerable time to finding your mentor. While you may identify your ideal mentor the moment you decide you require one, that's not always the case. Sometimes it takes a dedicated search and sincere introspection to find just the right person. It helps to create a profile of your ideal mentor and put it on paper before you begin your search. Things to consider include age, experience, proximity, gender, reputation, availability, veracity, etc.

4. Thou shalt establish ground rules with your mentors governing your interactions. Your mentor should clearly understand what you see as your obligations and contributions. By putting this in writing, you'll have a document you can refer to at your first meeting. Include things like you'll cover the expense of phone calls, copying or postage, whether or not you can call your mentor at his or her job, etc. "I'll never call you before 8 a.m. or after 9 p.m. I won't bother you on weekends." When you're calling me long distance, I insist you call collect, etc. I want you to be candid, honest and always tell me straight, etc." Don't expect to assign tasks to your mentor.

5. Thou shalt honor and respect thy mentors in word and deed. Thank or repay your mentor in some small way. Even if a mentor refuses payment, a small gift on his or her birthday is a nice gesture. During the mentoring process, a grateful letter detailing his or her impact on your life is an excellent way to give mentors a sincere thank you. Always speak highly of your mentor to others. When something goes right, give the mentor credit; when it goes wrong, accept the blame yourself. Never volunteer your mentor's services to others without explicit permission to do so.

6. Thou shalt not argue with mentors. Don't argue with them. That makes them mad. They should not have to sell you on their ideas and suggestions. If you argue with them they may not want to work with you. If you don't like their ideas never say, "That won't work in my situation." Rather, express your concern or doubt as a question, such as, "I must not be getting something. Why do you think that would work in my situation?"

7. Thou shalt provide your mentors with positive feedback. Let mentors know which ideas they proposed worked, and how well. Be able to quantify, i.e., "As a result of your suggestion, I sold 10 more new cars last month and I am now the top salesperson. Thanks a million!" Don't report on a mentor's ideas that didn't work, unless specifically asked to do so.

8. Thou shalt willingly provide your mentors with all the truthful information needed to make an informed decision or suggestion. You must level with mentors. They can't help you if you hold back information, or only share half-truths with them. Ask mentors to tell you anything they may see about you that needs to change or improve—anything at all. Even if it might hurt your feelings. And tell the mentor when you want the information you're providing to remain confidential.

9. Thou shalt use your mentors wisely and sparingly. Don't ask your mentor to solve all your problems -- only those within his or her area of expertise. Don't abuse a mentor's time or goodwill. The more successful a mentor is the more valuable is his or her time. Use it wisely. For instance, write down the key questions you need answered before calling your mentor. Don't just pass the time of day unless the mentor signals he/she wants to.

10. Thou shalt let your mentor know when his or her services are no longer needed. Let the mentor know when your time with him or her is over and you are ready to move on without them. You'll be relying on some mentors for perhaps only a day, a week, a month or a year. Others you'll want at your side for as long as you live. If you know a mentor's usefulness to you has ended, it's time to send the person a small gift, plus a letter outlining all the help they've given you, and a heartfelt thank you for their services, advice and help. Or you may wish to say farewell at a dinner at a fancy restaurant that you'll host.

You may have several mentors at one time. In fact, I recommend it. If you really think about it, you will probably already have several mentors. I could go on, but I'm sure you get the idea.

An Important Tip: Adjustment and change are necessary to achieve at high levels.

Why is it that archery targets feature three or more concentric circles around the bull's eye? Why not merely have the black dot, the bull's eye, up there to aim at? It would be very obvious if you hit it or not. The concentric circles lets the archers know how to make the necessary adjustments so they'll hit the bull's eye. So it is, too, with pursuing your Core Desires. You need to check for feedback from time to time. A mentor is one of the best sources for course correction.

You may be initially proud of this outstanding mentor you've recruited for yourself. This individual may have the reputation of being tops in his or her field. The only trouble is, they cannot explain to you the steps, systems and approaches they implemented that led to their success. I've seen many examples of people like this in the business world, quite often involving salespeople. They may be sales leaders for ten years running, accumulating all the accolades that go with the lofty perch they've attained. They can bring home accounts other salespeople can only dream of. And they do so with regularity.

But…they just simply cannot explain in a logical and cogent fashion what they do and how they do it that leads to their success. Words escape them. So all their secrets remain locked up inside them. It isn't that

they're not willing to share -- although that is certainly the case with some -- but rather that they haven't the ability to do so.

An Important Tip: Not everyone who has done something well can teach you how to do it.

This is far too often the case in the arena known as network marketing. Many very successful, high-income earners lack the ability to pass onto their organization exactly what kind of characteristics they have and what they do to generate their high incomes. I know one man who is earning a very high six-figure income in network marketing. He told me he was concerned about what I was teaching because it went against what he had been teaching his organization for years. He was specifically referring to my viewpoint that goal setting and daily affirmations and visualization do not work.

I was in a restaurant having dinner with him when he brought this up. I responded to his concern with this question: "Are those the things that you did to become so successful?" I'll never forget what he did next. He looked at me for about 20 seconds before answering, and being a very honest and truth-filled person, he shook his head and quietly said, "No. I didn't do those things. I just went and did it." He couldn't define the "it" so he began teaching the "standard fare" of writing down your goals, doing affirmations, listening to tapes and all the rest of the so called success methods. But he didn't do *any* of them!

I then gave him this paradigm. When you stand in front of a group of your distributors and tell them to do these things, the things that you did not do, you imply they will be successful. They trust every word that comes out of your mouth. If it doesn't work for them, and it won't, they don't question you—the messenger, because you have total credibility. They don't question your message either—they question themselves. And they wonder what's wrong with them.

If you've accurately determined your Core Desires, you can begin your search today for the mentors you'll need to help you reach them in record time, and begin living the life you were meant to live.

And if you've yet to determine just what those Core Desires are, once you've pinpointed them, refer back to this chapter before beginning your search for mentors. I'll close this chapter with these words:

"A single conversation across a table from a wise man [or woman] is worth a month's study of books." **-- Author unknown.**

While books provide knowledge, wise individuals provide practical advice based on real life experience.

Get the complete book at Mr. Zufelt's Website
www.theDNAofMLMsuccess.com

Jack M. Zufelt - MLM Expert & "Mentor to Millions".

Jack M. Zufelt is a bestselling author and has achieved worldwide recognition for teaching people the true cause of all achievement. His life's mission is to impart the truth about-and dispel the myths surrounding-success and achievement.

His book, The DNA of Success, hit the #1 bestseller slot in the first 3 weeks it was out. It is now in 11 languages.

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Want to achieve better results? How about live a fuller life with more happiness, joy, and satisfaction? Discover Jack's DNA of Success and live the life you've always wanted...
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