

How to get the most from your Coach or Mentor

By Dale Maxwell,
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About Dale Maxwell

Dale has coached hundreds of people for over 15 years. The insights you will receive in this book will assist you in getting the most from your coach, mentor, teacher, boss and subordinates. Dale has helped business grow, people grow and heal in his years of coaching.

Dale has worked with Fortune 500 companies and prefers to work with entrepreneurs because the levels of decision-making are many times a frustration to making improvements.

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Pre-study

Any materials assigned

Your coach or mentor will have some material to reduce the time it takes to bring you up to speed. This is a common and acceptable procedure. You may also be asked to take some pre-tests on the subject matter and some ask you to take behavioral style assessments. Ask for copies of the reports generated and to “go over” them. These assessments are not to grade or buttonhole you, but to allow the coach to better understand what style you are most comfortable with and how you prefer to be addressed in communications.

Fully Study and Apply

Take the time to fully study and understand the material provided, your coach will be happy to elaborate on a specific area of the material and less than thrilled if you ask questions that he/she has fully explained and you have not taken the time to study. How would you feel?

Research as needed

You will find ideas and questions in the material you are given to study, this is a normal part of education. Do some research and additional study as needed, your coach will be happy you have been motivated to expand your horizons.

List 3 or more Action Items here

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Prepare for session

Submit Questions in advance

You will have questions about the material and questions not mentioned in the material. Write your questions down to clarify them and first see if you can generate the answer yourself instead of asking your coach. Write the answer down and send it with your question, ask your coach for expansion or direction, this leverages the knowledge you are gaining dramatically.

Your answers may come back by e-mail - this can allow additional questions or clarification

When you pre-submit in advance your coach may answer prior to your telephone coaching session. This is a benefit to you because you can drill-down on your question or move to another. This is a benefit to your coach because you are making him/her work, and coaches are students too, your coach is learning more each day and will appreciate not repeating the same stuff over and over.

List 3 or more Action Items here

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Written Goals and Action to achieve

Get a planner and learn to use it

I have used the Franklin/Covey planner for some time now and it is flexible enough for just about anyone. Now, don't take my word for it, check out all options and decide for yourself. Most important though is that everyone you must trade information or assignments with should be on the same size planner. If you use a 8 ½ by 11 inch format and your team is using the more common 5 ½ by 8 ½ receiving and delegating becomes less than efficient. The three topics below are all needed. You will want to master each.

Time Management

Time management is the art and science of taking the long-term dreams and converting them to goals and action steps. Learning this one skill and using it daily can move you toward your desired results faster than any other skill you can master. It leverages everything else.

Process Management

Process management takes the time management skills and applies these skills to encompass and extend to managing others, contract service providers, employees or contractors.

Activity Management

Learning how to document and measure activities will allow you to delegate successfully. If you ask someone to do an activity they are not fully aware of and/or they may have a different vision of what the results should be you will become frustrated. Suppose you were going to fight a house fire with a team of people who have not been trained. Could be a problem. If you have a clearly written plan and everyone studies and practices, your success in saving lives and property will be much more likely. Are your business or health plans any less important than firefighting? I don't think so. Learn this skill.

List 3 or more Action Items here

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Timing

Avoid a tight time table (weekly at 2:00pm)

Please don't disappoint yourself or your coach by agreeing to a timetable you cannot successfully achieve. Be reasonable, use your time management skills and plug in your assignments.

If you cannot move through the process, spread out the sessions

Be up front with your coach and he/she will support you in adjusting the "schedule" to meet your needs.

List 3 or more Action Items here

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Assignments

If given verbally, write down and send to Coach for verification

This is especially important, if you do the work and the expectation is “A” but the assignment is “B” no one is happy. So write down your assignment and send it back to your coach, request acknowledgement that you are correct in your understanding of your assignment.

List 3 or more Action Items here

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Respect

On time

Always be on time with your assignments and phone calls.

Do not miss

Your coach is as busy as you and missing an appointment will not show the respect you want to show.

Do not allow interruptions

Don't put your coach on hold

When you are calling your coach, turn off call waiting and any other phones in the room. Focus on your time together.

Arrange not to be interrupted

Put a sign on your door – do not let your time be discounted by allowing interruptions.

List 3 or more Action Items here

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Map your thoughts

Learn and Use every tool you can acquire

Learn tools to assist you in learning and communicating.

www.mindjet.com delivers a quality computer program. A sample is included in the appendix of this book.

List 3 or more Action Items here

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Coach Someone Else

There is no better way to know you know the material

Arrange to share your knowledge with another person; you will master the material by teaching it to another person.

List 3 or more Action Items here

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Lifelong Student

Philosophical Necessary

We live in a time that change happens faster than any other time in the history of man. You must be learning and growing or you will shrivel and die.

Constant Change

This constant change can be an advantage if you embrace it. It can be a challenge if you resist it.

Learn to learn

Your assignment is to research and obtain skills to compress the time needed to master a task. One common skill you have heard of is “speed reading” others include masterminding, the Einstein factor, accelerated learning and many more. Find some and learn them.

List 3 or more Action Items here

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Choosing Your Coach

You will have many coaches during your new “Lifelong Student” life model; the very best leverage you can have in selecting your coach will be to define your challenge in writing. Ask your prospective coach for his/her approach to addressing your needs.

List 3 or more Action Items here

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Appendix

