

What the Best Mentors Do

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- **Recognize the importance of the underlying relationship**

Even the best-designed mentoring programs can evolve into a checkbox procedure; no structure can substitute for a genuine relationship

Unless mentees have a basic relationship with their mentors, there is no discernible difference between individuals with and without mentors (see publications by Belle Ragins)

- **Help your mentees to develop character rather than competency**

Focus on values, self-awareness, etc over technical skills or content knowledge

- **Encourage exploration**

Before you criticize a mentee's idea, consider all the reasons it might be better than you originally thought

- **Value your mentees above your organization**

Help your mentees discover their passions; avoid steering them according to anyone else's ideas or agenda