



THE OFFICE
PROFESSIONAL
July 5, 2012

ARE YOU READY TO BE A MENTOR?

Submitted by Beth Braccio Hering on Thu, 07/05/2012 - 1:00pm

Share This: [in](#) [g](#) [t](#) [f](#) [e](#)



Being asked to be someone's mentor can be quite an honor. After all, the person is choosing you to help guide career decisions. Before taking on the position, however, think about what the role means and how it fits in with your personality and schedule.

Lisa Quast -- founder of Career Woman, Inc., and the [Wing to Wing Women's Mentoring Project](#) and author of the recently launched [Career Savvy e-books](#) and *Your Career, Your Way* -- suggests asking yourself if you have the time available. "Mentoring someone requires an on-going commitment of time to that person. It's a bit like investing in the stock market, only instead of money, you are investing your time and betting that, with your help, your mentee will be able to progress forward and upward in her career." Be open with your mentee about how much time you'll have available so that conflicting expectations don't develop.

Another consideration is whether or not you think you're ready to be a mentor. As Quast notes, "There are definitely characteristics and skills that stand out when analyzing successful mentors . . . and not everyone is in possession of these skills. For example, mentors must be comfortable providing honest, constructive feedback, have excellent listening skills, and have the experience necessary to discuss a wide range of topics and situations." If you don't feel comfortable becoming a mentor or have uneasy feelings about working with this particular person, better to be upfront and politely decline rather than set up a relationship that you can't enter wholeheartedly.

But if you do feel ready for the challenges of mentoring, also be ready for the joys. "Mentoring another person is one of the greatest gifts you could give, and there's almost no better feeling in the world than to help another person accomplish her dreams," Quast says. "There's an unexplained karma in the world that you get what you give, and the more people you mentor the more the rewards come back to you, only multiplied."

Image courtesy of morguefile.com



Career Woman, Inc.