

# How to Find a Copywriting Mentor

## *By Tammy Powell*



Most writers can benefit from having a mentor. Even some of the most successful individuals out there have given credit to those who helped them learn and grow along the way — no one has to travel the path alone.

However, finding a mentor can be tricky. How do you know who to choose?

And, if you do know who you want to work with, how do you know they'll have the time or inclination to help you out? ... especially if they're already very busy ...

I'm a firm believer that the term "mentor" is open to interpretation ... mentors come in all different styles, and sometimes happen by chance.

With that in mind, I believe we can find the help we need ... with a combination of communication techniques, and an open mind to new opportunities.

## Finding a Mentor the Traditional Way

I'm sure most of us have someone in mind we'd like to work with ...

Whether it's an "A-list" copywriter, industry guru, or another high-profile individual ... we can all benefit from the guidance of someone who "knows the ropes" and can share with us the wisdom of their experience.

However, there's one problem ... we're not the only ones who want to work with them. There are dozens (maybe even hundreds, or more ... ) of people who look to them for guidance, many of whom reach out with email messages ...

So, does your email have any chance of standing out in the crowd and getting a reply?

While there's no guarantee that someone will take you under their wing ... there are some things you can do to improve your chances of starting a healthy working relationship.

## Crafting Your Message

When you send an email (or letter or phone message, depending on the situation), you want to be sure that your message is **specific, well-researched, and credible**.

First, regarding specificity: It's best to send a message that's not too open-ended. Offering to help out with 'anything,' or write a blog post about 'anything,' creates too much work for your would-be mentor ... basically, it means they have to come up with an idea for you.

An offer to help is important — it's *much* better than asking for a favor. However, I've had more luck approaching it this way: First, include a few specific suggestions of ways you can help, or topics you can write about ... and then, AFTER that, mention that you can help them with anything else they need, too.

As far as your specific suggestions ... this is where your research comes in. If you offer to write a blog post, then research and see what topics are already on the site. Try to figure out who the audience is.

Then, suggest an article idea within the same theme, written to the same audience ... and be sure not to duplicate any recent topics.

And finally, be sure to make your request credible. Briefly list relevant experience, and a link to a sample or two, along with your own website. Also, be sure the email message itself contains good quality writing — triple check it for typos!

## Making Your Message Stand Out

Your future mentor probably gets tons of email every week. So, why not give them something that's fun to read?

Include an interesting question, a link to a relevant article, or even just a genuine compliment or thank you for the work they do.

## Paying for Mentorship

So, of course, we'd all like to get mentored for free ...

But our mentors have to make a living, too. And often, a paid mentorship or coaching program is well worth the investment. Of course, do your research first ... but if you find a personal coaching program that sounds right for you, consider going for it!

## Surprise Mentors

Even though there may be someone you're dying to work with ... try to keep an open mind to others who are willing and able to help you on your journey.

A good way for this to happen naturally is at conferences, workshops, and other live events.

Make a point to introduce yourself to others, and see why they're there and what interests them. Just be yourself, and if you find you have a common interest, be sure to talk about that. You may just find that you make a new friend who's open to helping you down the line, especially if you stay in touch after the event.

## Mentors from Afar

Although I'd love the opportunity to meet everyone who's been an influence on my career and my life ... I accept that's probably not going to happen.

For example, Tony Robbins and Timothy Ferriss, through their books and online materials, have had a HUGE influence on the decisions I've made — they've literally changed my life. Author J. K. Rowling has also been a big inspiration, both in terms of her actual writing, and her own amazing life story.

There's a good chance I'm never going to develop a personal working relationship with any of these people. However, I still consider them to be mentors.

The same is true of gurus within the copywriting community. Although there is the opportunity to meet and mingle with "A-listers" at [AWAI's Bootcamp](#) or other events ... these gurus are still helpful to me even if I never ask them for personal, one-on-one advice.

## Look to Your Circle of Friends

There's a well-known quote from motivational speaker Jim Rohn that says, "You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with."

This is more important than we may realize ...

Think about the family, friends, and coworkers you spend the most time with ... are they encouraging? Or do they just 'not get you' when it comes to your writing and freelancing goals?

I'm not suggesting to break up any friendships ... I'm just suggesting that it's a good idea to add some positive influences if you need them.

Consider finding some fellow writers or entrepreneurs you can confide in ... people who can encourage you, and help you grow.

One good way to do this is by keeping in touch with people you've met at conferences. See if any of your new friends are open to starting a mastermind group, even if you just meet virtually or over the phone.

Also, look for Meetup groups (Meetup.com has a presence in most major cities) with similar interests, such as fellow writers, WordPress enthusiasts, or small business owners. It's a great way to network.

I've found that my own career has benefited from a combination of these different types of mentors, and they've all contributed positively to my life. Having a variety of mentors makes for well-rounded insights, and a solid foundation for any writing career.

And, once you've had some success ... be sure to 'pay it forward' and give some advice and encouragement to someone else who is just starting out.

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