

Mentoring 101 – Be the Net, not the Net

Be like this:



Not like this:



- The role of a mentor is to: enhance the experience of the Teen Leader in Training by sharing their experiences, helping the TLT overcome obstacles in their path, and to provide the TLT a safe space to try new ideas and leadership attributes.
- The role of a mentor is NOT to: kill the TLT ideas by telling them that it has already been tried that way and this way is better, discourage the TLT by letting them be beat-up or worse ignored by those in positions of power, and to lead the TLT to believe that there is only one right way to accomplish a task.
- Remember in the pictures above, if you move the net in the picture on the left up too high to make the space “safer”, you will turn the net into an impediment and it will function more like the net in the picture on the right.
- TLTs need the ability to try new and risky ideas without fear of harming their own self-esteem or causing harm to the Pathfinders which they are serving in a leadership capacity.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Who drives the mentoring relationship, the mentor or the mentee? **The mentoring relationship needs to be driven by the mentee. The mentee should come up with actions, ideas, plans and during the storming, norming and forming of those plans should ask questions of the mentor. Once the plans become reality and get put into place the mentor becomes the cheerleader, the assistant coach dealing with the adults, or the general manager, while the TLT is the head coach calling the shots and moving out on the planned activity.**
2. What is the most precious asset you can give your mentee? **Your Time**

3. What is the best thing you can do for your TLT as a mentor? Share your experiences with them. Let them know that it is okay to try things and fail. Make them comfortable with the role of leadership
4. Do all TLT mentors have to be Pathfinder Leaders? No, in fact your head elder, treasurer, church clerk, or head deacon may be ideal candidates for some of the mentoring roles in TLT. I would suggest that the counseling track mentor and the Administrative track mentor be either active or experienced Pathfinder leaders in those particular roles.
5. Should I have parents mentor their own children? Where ever possible, I would avoid this practice. The role of a parent is so much more than the role of a mentor and it is difficult neigh impossible for parents to have the objectivity to step out of their parental role and be just a mentor.
6. When the TLT is doing the Counseling track and also working on their Master Guide (which requires them to take 2 participants through a level of Investiture Achievement), do they have to teach everything in the IA by themselves? No, the role of a counselor is not necessarily to teach everything, it is to insure that all the IA requirements are taught to the Pathfinders. Hence, the TLT can work with their mentor and determine what items the TLT should teach and which they should arrange, and which requirements will be taught or arranged by the mentor. If this happens across the counseling track and the instructor track with the same group of Pathfinders, then the TLT will have met the Master Guide requirement as well. Remember the new Master Guide requirements expect the candidate to be 16 before starting their work, so your club may want to move the counseling and teaching tracks into year three for this reason.
7. How do I know if I am being an effective mentor? If your mentee is regularly bringing questions to you, and if you are having regular dialog that is initiated by the mentee, than you are being very effective.
8. What if my TLT does not drive the mentee/mentor relationship, do I force them to meet with me? Force, No!!! Put yourself in their path to facilitate them being in a better position to ask you for help, Yes.
9. What attributes will make me a great mentor?
 - a. A sincere desire to be involved with a young person
 - b. Respect for young people
 - c. Active listening skills
 - d. Empathy
 - e. Ability to see solutions and opportunities
 - f. Flexibility