

## The Value Of A Business Mentor

By Larry Kesslin

President & Chief Community Officer of the Let's Talk Business Network

You begin your life with no experiences, just an innocent child with the world as your teacher. You are immediately introduced to your parents, your first teachers in this world. As we grow others enter our lives and make an impact, guide us on our journey to ultimately find out what our true meaning and purpose is in life. If you are persistent and aware of your surroundings, you will find these treasured guides along your journey.

Over my career I have met many "guides," or mentors. These individuals have had a major impact on my life and my career. I must say that I did not always want to listen, but I am glad that I have traveled this road, and met the mentors that have impacted my life. For me, there have been a few key mentors; first, of course, was my father. A semi-pro athlete and entrepreneur himself, my father taught me that if I didn't enjoy what I was doing to change and find something that thrills me.

As I started my business career after college I met numerous individuals that I learned from, but it wasn't until I went to work for the General Electric Company, and met Vince Tullo, did I discover the possibilities of what a mentor/mentee relationship can look like. Vince was more of a guide than a boss. He taught me how to work within the corporation, and what really mattered. I excelled in the corporate world, but deep down I wasn't very happy, and when the time came for me to follow my entrepreneurial journey, Vince was behind me 100 percent.

This relationship had a profound effect on my career and me. So, as I started my entrepreneurial journey I knew that finding a mentor for this trip would be crucial. I didn't have to wait very long, as I met one of my current mentors, and one of my business partners, Mitch Schlimer, on a train shortly after resigning from GE. I had still not had my last day with the world's 2nd largest company, and my newest mentor had already appeared. Mitch is the founder and host of the syndicated radio talk show, Let's Talk Business.

Mitch has gone through his own journey since we have met, and I believe that in some ways, other than building a business, I have been his mentor as well. But the entrepreneurial journey would not have been as successful as it has been if it weren't for this individual in my life. I tell everyone that I meet that I would have a job by now if it weren't for Mitch. Our relationship is special. We are able to talk on a level that I can with very few people. When you find someone who has the knowledge and experience to help you get to where you want to go, make it happen.

Our business, Let's Talk Business Network, is focused on helping entrepreneurs along their journey. I meet entrepreneurs on a regular basis, and the one's that seem to be the most successful are the one's that have learned from those before them. So how do you find your mentor? I don't believe that finding a mentor can be considered a science, but you want to look for a number of key characteristics.

Find someone who has accomplished goals that might be similar to yours. Find someone who is open to providing time and energy to help you achieve these goals. Find someone who you are willing to listen to, even when you might not want to. And, find someone who has similar values to you. One of the strongest bonds between my mentors and me has been a shared value system.

So, if you are on the entrepreneurial journey and you don't currently have a mentor, find one and see your entrepreneurial dreams come true!

Larry Kesslin is the President of the Let's Talk Business Network, an entrepreneurial support community focused on increasing the success rate of small businesses. Having built a corporate career and started a business from scratch, Larry can give the prospective from both sides of the track. You can visit LTBN's Web site [www.ltbn.com](http://www.ltbn.com) and listen to their excerpts from the Let's Talk Business Radio

Broadcasts.<sup>i</sup>

Reference:

---

<sup>i</sup> [http://www.score.org/article\\_value\\_of\\_business\\_mentor.html](http://www.score.org/article_value_of_business_mentor.html)