

Option 1

Salvador Mucino was strategic. On my first day at Wellington High School, I was in the front office for some help with my classes. Mucino was waiting behind me and got my attention by asking what my classes were. Turns out, he was my algebra teacher. He spoke in a very proper manner, but with an accent that reminded me of my relatives in Spain. He asked me if I played any sports. At the time, I skateboarded. He told me I looked like a runner, then proposed I join the running team. I didn't have anything preventing me from joining the team, and I was at an unfamiliar school — having recently moved from Spain — so I became a runner.

As my teacher, Mucino challenged me to get the most out of the class by tutoring other students and pairing me with partners. As a coach, he pushed me to be a team player and to train smart instead of hard. He had a firm belief in team culture and made sure that everyone was performing at their best.

Mucino took a first principles approach. When providing any form of content, he would begin at the lowest level of understanding, and work up from there. Learning how to think like he did made me feel much more prepared for the future. I now hold the ability to break down any problem into its most basic component and build up from there.

Trust meant everything to Mucino, and it was a two way street. As I trusted Mucino, he gave me a perceived sense of responsibility over team practices. When the time for class scheduling came around, having trust in Mucino made picking the next ones relatively simple. Building an academic relationship with Mucino gave me a sense of confidence in STEM, which pushed me to where I am today.

Mucino led by example. At the team practices, he would always make his classroom the meet up spot, and converse with the team as we got ready to train. He took part in the practices and only got on his bike if he was injured, and made sure that we didn't overtrain. Having Mucino work with me for over 2 hours every day instilled many of his values into me, which still I carry with me.

For strengths, Mucino expected a respectful environment, and never second guessed himself. Communicating in a space around Mucino, words were spoken with purpose. When mistakes were made, I learned fast through Mucino's respected feedback.

racing my memory to find a weakness is difficult, there was nothing I disliked about Mucino. Having 2 periods of my day with him focused on productive work, I was able to stay busy enough to not encounter any weaknesses in Mucino.

My relationship with Mucino was most definitely a relational mentoring relationship. As Mucino expanded my mental knowledge and physical limits, there were moments where I was not as thrilled. Mucino, being the teacher, took responsibility to pick me back up and set me on the right path. These experiences provided him with a better ability to work with students and make the most of his students.

As I navigated through the experience of high school, I was not always the best student, athlete or person. If I could go back and do things differently, it would have been to be more receptive to advice from Mucino. I took most it, but struggled to make commitments long term. Time and age have improved that.

As an adult, the relationship dynamic of mentor—mentee is more active than with Mucino. The value he provided throughout all of high school was not apparent until I did not have him as a guide in college. Channeling the knowledge and character of a mentor is a privilege that I hope to get again soon. At this point, it must be an active effort.