



ESL Podcast 616 – Having a Business Mentor

GLOSSARY

mentor – a person who provides advice and guidance for free, usually to someone who is much younger and less experienced

* Clarke volunteers as a mentor for at-risk teenagers.

advisor – someone who provides advice and gives another person his or her opinion about what should be done or what decision should be made

* At most universities, academic advisors help students decide which courses they should take.

regularly – on a schedule; at the same time each day, week, or month

* Do you exercise regularly, or just every once in a while?

feedback – an opinion about how well one is doing on something or whether something was a good idea; comments based on one's evaluation

* At the end of the conference, the organizers requested feedback from the participants, hoping to use that feedback to improve next year's conference.

guidance – advice and assistance about how to do something correctly

* Before you open your own business, ask other business owners for guidance so that you can learn from their mistakes.

protégé – a person who receives advice, help, guidance, and sometimes money from an older, more experienced person who wants to help that individual in his or her career

* Why did you choose Mariah as your protégé? I'm sure many young people would love to have you help them in their career.

to hash (something) out – to discuss something in great detail, evaluating the advantages and disadvantages, often trying to reach an agreement on something

* They've spent the past few weeks trying to decide which type of car to buy, hashing out all the options.

entrepreneur – a person who takes risks and starts a new business to make money; a business owner

* Jun is a very successful entrepreneur, having opened more than 20 stores in the past 35 years.



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out of the blue – unexpectedly; without planning or anticipation; without any previous connection or relationship

* Out of the blue, I got a phone call from an old friend from high school whom I hadn't thought about in more than 40 years.

to accomplish – to successfully do something, especially if it is difficult, challenging, or unusual

* You've accomplished so much at such a young age! How did you do it?

to click – to immediately have a good relationship with another person, enjoying each other's company and having a relaxed, flowing conversation

* We met only a few months ago, but we clicked almost instantly and we have been inseparable ever since.

to get (something) out of (something) – to receive some benefit from one's actions or a particular situation

* Corrine gets a sense of pride from her work with the homeless.

pointer – a tip; one piece of advice; a recommendation

* Could you please give us some pointers on buying our first home?

expertise – specialized knowledge in a particular field or subject area

* Dr. Lubchenko is a zoologist with expertise in marine biology.

appreciative – feeling grateful or thankful for something that another person has done

* They were really appreciative when we sent them a gift last Christmas.

compliment – kind words showing that one appreciates, admires, or respects someone or something

* That man just paid me the nicest compliment, saying I have the most beautiful eyes he has ever seen.

multi- – many; with more than one of something

* Even though he is afraid of heights, he has to work in a multi-story office building.

in no time flat – very soon; very quickly; with no delay or hesitation

* If you keep exercising and eating well, you'll lose the extra weight in no time flat.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who would you expect to have the most expertise?
 - a) An advisor.
 - b) A protégé.
 - c) An entrepreneur.

2. What does Kenya mean when she says that she contacted her mentor “out of the blue”?
 - a) She found her mentor’s contact information in the phone book.
 - b) She didn’t have any relationship with her mentor before contacting her.
 - c) She contacted her mentor when she was feeling very depressed.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to click

The verb “to click,” in this podcast, means to immediately have a good relationship with another person, enjoying each other’s company and having a relaxed, flowing conversation: “My sister and I never really clicked with each other until we became adults.” The verb “to click” also means to make a short sound, like the one made by quickly pushing one’s tongue against the bottom of one’s mouth: “The speakers of Khosian languages in southern Africa click when they talk.” The verb “to click” also means to push a button, especially when talking about computers: “Click the right button on your mouse and then press ‘enter’.” Finally, the verb “to click” can mean for something to finally be understood or become clear: “Pete had always struggled with calculus, until one day, everything just clicked.”

pointer

In this podcast, the word “pointer” means a tip or recommendation, or one piece of advice: “The coach gave Molly some pointers to improve her volleyball playing.” When talking about computers, a “pointer” is the small arrow on the screen that moves when one moves the mouse: “Put your pointer on the ‘file’ menu and then click ‘save’.” When talking about dogs, a “pointer” is a dog that has been trained to find an animal or thing and then stand very still, showing its owner where that animal or thing is by holding its nose in that direction: “Do you ever use pointers when you go duck hunting?” Finally, a “laser pointer” is a small electronic device held in one’s hand that produces a thin red light that can be used to direct people’s attention: “The presenter used a laser pointer as he explained the graph.”



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CULTURE NOTE

Business mentors can be very “valuable” (worth a lot) “resources” (things that can help one do or build something) for young people who are just beginning their career or considering opening a new business. A good mentor can help a “mentee” (a person who receives advice from a mentor) identify opportunities, “evaluate” (determine whether something is good or bad) options, and avoid common mistakes.

It is important to identify a mentor who has the right combination of experience and expertise. In general, a mentor should have at least 10 years more work experience than the mentee. However, the mentor doesn’t have to work in the exact same industry, as long as he or she has valuable advice to give.

The “interpersonal relationship” (how two people interact) is extremely important. The mentor and mentee should enjoy spending time together. Their meetings should be relaxed and comfortable, never “strained” (uncomfortable, with people feeling forced to do something). The mentor probably isn’t expecting to receive guidance from the mentee, but he or she probably is expecting to make a new friend and professional contact.

It is also important to choose a mentor with a good “network” (the people whom one knows, especially professionally, and can ask for favors) and who is willing to let the mentee “tap into” (use) that network. The mentor’s “contacts” (the people one knows) can be helpful when the mentee needs to apply for a job, get a loan, or “seek” (look for) technical advice.

Finally, once a mentor has been chosen, it is important to have very “clear” (easy to understand; straightforward) expectations. How often will the mentor and mentee meet, and what types of advice are welcome? “Clarifying” (defining) these things can avoid “subsequent” (coming later) misunderstandings and miscommunication.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – a; 2 – b



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 616: Having a Business Mentor.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 616. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at eslpod.com. Download a Learning Guide for this episode that will help you improve your English even faster. You can also take a look at our ESL Podcast Store, which has some additional courses in English.

This episode is called "Having a Business Mentor." A "mentor" is a person who gives you advice. It's a conversation between Alex and Kenya. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Alex: Where are you going?

Kenya: I'm going to meet my business mentor.

Alex: Your business mentor? What do you do with a business mentor?

Kenya: Well, my mentor is like an advisor. We meet regularly and I get her feedback and guidance with my ideas on starting a business.

Alex: Oh, so you're her protégé?

Kenya: No, I'm not. I simply go to her with my ideas and she helps me hash them out. She's a successful entrepreneur and I'm there to learn from her experience.

Alex: How did you get her to be your mentor? Were you already friends?

Kenya: No, I contacted her out of the blue, actually. I've read about her company and her many successes, and I wrote her a letter telling her about me and what I hope to accomplish. She agreed to meet with me, and at that first meeting, we really clicked and now we meet once a month.

Alex: That's very generous of her. What does she get out of it?



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Kenya: I'm not sure, but I think she enjoys giving me pointers and sharing her expertise. I'm very appreciative and she says I remind her a lot of herself when she was my age. I take that as a huge compliment.

Alex: You should. If you're like her, you'll be a multi-millionaire in no time flat.

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with Alex saying to Kenya, "Where are you going?" Kenya responds, "I'm going to meet my business mentor." A "mentor," or "mentor," (mentor) is a person who provides advice, help to someone for free, usually someone who is either much younger or someone who is less experienced in a particular area. So if you decided to become a lawyer – and I hope you don't – then you may find an older lawyer, or a lawyer with more experience to be your mentor, to help you, to give you advice, and so forth.

Kenya says, "I'm going to meet my business mentor," so obviously this has to do with helping her in her business. Alex says, "Your business mentor? What do you do with a business mentor?" Kenya says, "Well, my mentor is like an advisor." An "advisor" (advisor) is someone who also provides advice to another person, who helps someone make a decision. A mentor is one kind of advisor. Kenya says that she and her business mentor meet "regularly," meaning on a schedule, perhaps at the same time and the same day each week or each month. She says, "I get her feedback and guidance with my ideas on starting a business." "Feedback" (feedback) is your opinion about how something is doing, whether something is working well, whether it is a good idea. The verb we use is typically "give" – "to give feedback." We appreciate your feedback on our podcast – your opinions, your advice, and so forth. Well, Kenya gets feedback from her mentor. She also gets guidance (guidance). "Guidance" is another word for advice, assistance, help on how to do something correctly; in this case, how to start a new business.

Alex says, "Oh, so you're her protégé?" "Protégé" (protégé) is a word that we borrowed from the French. In English, it means a person who receives advice, help, guidance, perhaps even money from someone who is older or more experienced. So, the protégé is the person who is receiving – who is getting the advice.

Kenya responds, "No, I'm not. I simply go to her with my ideas and she helps me hash them out." To "hash (hash) (something) out" or to "hash out (something)" is



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a two-word phrasal verb meaning to discuss something in great detail, to look at every possible piece of information about something, to spend a long time discussing it. Often we use this expression when two people have different views – if they have a disagreement about something, and they’re trying to come to an agreement. Kenya says that she’s not her business mentor’s protégé, but I think she really is. Perhaps she just doesn’t like that word, I’m not sure why. You will have to ask Kenya!

Kenya says that her business mentor is a successful entrepreneur “and I’m there to learn from her experience.” “Entrepreneur” is another word from the French. In English it means someone who takes risks and starts a new business, usually a small-business owner. Someone who decides to start their own business is an entrepreneur (entrepreneur).

Alex then asks, “How did you get her to be your mentor? Were you already friends?” Kenya replies, “No, I contacted her out of the blue, actually.” Kenya contacted – made contact with her by calling or emailing or sending a bird with a message or throwing a bottle into the water with a message. All of these are ways to contact people. You can contact us here in Los Angeles. If you live near an ocean, just put your note into a bottle and throw the bottle into the ocean and eventually we’ll get it – or email!

Where were we? Kenya – yes. Kenya had contacted her mentor out of the blue. The expression “out of the blue,” like the color blue, means unexpectedly, something you weren’t expecting, or something you do without planning, without any previous connection to the person. In this case, it is really the last meaning: without any previous or prior relationship. “Somebody called me out of the blue and asked me to teach their daughter English.” I did not know this person; they contacted me and I wasn’t expecting it. Well, Kenya contacted her mentor out of the blue. She read about her company and her many successes, the things that she was successful at, and so Kenya wrote her a letter telling her about herself and what she hopes to accomplish. To “accomplish” means to do something successfully, especially something that is difficult or unusual. The noun is “accomplishment.” Running down the street isn’t an accomplishment, but running a marathon is. A marathon is a long race. So, it has to be something difficult. The mentor has many accomplishments. She agreed to meet with Kenya, and at their first meeting, she says, “we really clicked.” When we say that we “click with” someone, or simply “we clicked,” it means that we had a good relationship almost immediately with the other person, that we enjoy talking to each other, that it didn’t take long for us to become comfortable with each other.



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The word “click” (click) has a couple of different meanings in English; take a look at our Learning Guide for some more information.

Now Kenya says she and her mentor meet once a month. Alex says, “That’s very generous of her (that’s very nice of her). What does she get out of it?” The expression “to get (something) out of (something else)” means to receive some benefit from your action or your participation in something, that you get something too. So if you help, for example, teach a young child to read, the child learns to read and what you get out of it is the joy, the satisfaction of knowing that you helped that young child do something.

Alex wants to know what the mentor gets out of this relationship with Kenya. Kenya says, “I’m not sure, but I think she enjoys giving me pointers and sharing her expertise.” A “pointer” (pointer) here means a piece of advice, a recommendation, we might say a “tip” (tip). That’s a pointer. There are some additional meanings in the Learning Guide on this word as well. “Expertise” (expertise) – notice that it is spelled with an “i” at the end, “ise,” but is pronounced like it were an “e,” “expertise.” Well, “expertise” is special knowledge about a certain subject, a certain what we may call field – area of study or interest. A person who has expertise is called an “expert.” Kenya says that she’s very appreciative; she’s appreciative of her mentor. “Appreciative” means that you feel thankful, you feel grateful for something that another person has done for you. We should all be more appreciative of our families, our houses, our jobs, and so forth. There’s always things to be appreciative for in our world.

Kenya is appreciative of her mentor. Her mentor says that Kenya reminds her a lot of herself when she was my age. “She reminds her of herself,” meaning she sees something about her own experience in Kenya. “I take that as a huge compliment,” Kenya says. A “compliment” (compliment) means nice words about someone showing that you respect them, you appreciate them, you admire them. That’s a compliment. There’s another word pronounced the same, “complement,” except there’s an “e” in the middle of the word, that means something very different. “Complement” with an “e” is something that goes along with or matches or completes something else. A “compliment” with an “i” is a nice thing you say about someone. If your husband or wife cooks you a good meal you should compliment them. In fact, even if it isn’t good you should compliment them!

Well, Kenya takes the fact that this woman sees herself in Kenya as a huge, or big, compliment. Alex says, “You should (you should take it as a compliment). If you’re like her,” Alex says, “you’ll be a multi-millionaire in no time flat.” “Multi- (or



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multi-)” (multi-) is a prefix (something that goes in front of the word) that means many or more than one. So, a “multi-millionaire” is someone who makes more than a million dollars – 2 million, 3 million, 10 million dollars a year, let’s say. The expression “in no time flat” (flat) means very quickly, very soon, in the very near future. Alex means that if Kenya is like her mentor she will soon be a multi-millionaire.

Now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

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[end of dialogue]

We're all very appreciative of the expertise of our scriptwriter Dr. Lucy Tse.
Thank you, Lucy.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on ESL Podcast.

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