THE
ESSENTIALS
IN WORSHIP
TOOLKIT



4 PRACTICAL TIPS ON HOW LONG TO MENTOR SOMEONE

worshiptraining

INTRODUCTION

How long should you mentor someone?

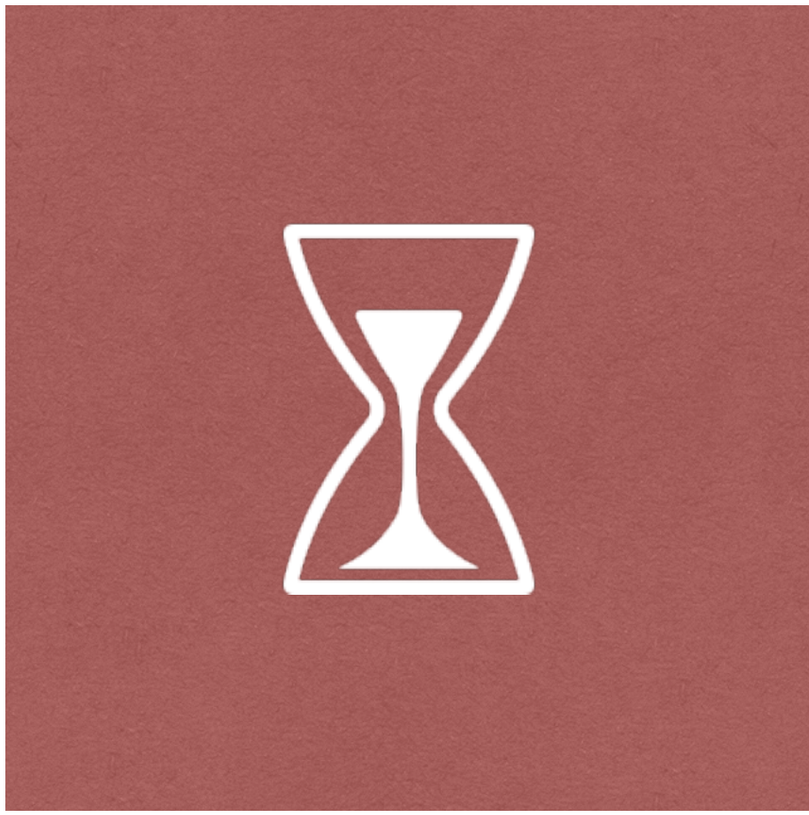
While it may not seem so at first blush, this simple question is a vital question for any effective, committed mentor to ask.

As one author put it, the value of anything is determined by the amount of the currency we call "life" that we are willing to spend on it. Over-investing time, and under-investing time, both have an impact on the return we will get from making those investments. For the sake of this lesson, let's use this metaphor, and equate time and life with currency. Then let's think about mentoring "time" in terms of making wise investments – and the risk that is always involved when we invest that time in people.

(Note: While this content focuses on mentoring worship leaders, these mentoring concepts will spill over into mentoring other spiritual leaders, pastors, parents – or anyone that God sends to us to develop a life-to-life exchange with.)

INTRODUCTION

1. Mentor On A Timeline
2. 6-9 Months, Minimum
3. 1-2 Years, Maximum
4. Engage In Life Friendship



TIP 1 - MENTOR ON A TIMELINE

Mentor on a timeline.

Setting a clear beginning and ending to a mentoring season can be very helpful for both the mentor and the mentee. When we set a timeline to our mutual investment in the mentoring process, we can better manage our expectations of one another, and can make commitments and plans with confidence.

Be explicit about these parameters from the outset; say when and where you'll begin, how often you'll meet, where you'll be connecting together, what you're seeking to accomplish, what you're both hoping for, and what your roles will and won't be.

Being clear about the boundaries of the mentoring relationship helps both parties to manage their expectations so we avoid disappointment or a sabotaging of what could be a wonderful, mentoring-launched friendship.

TIP 2 - 6 TO 9 MONTHS, MINIMUM

Invest six to nine months, minimum.

As someone once said, “You learn more about someone in an hour of play than in a lifetime of work.” Create a specific mentoring and development timeline. It is difficult to birth a vibrant life-to-life exchange without a significant season of concerted connection, over a period of at least half to three-quarters of a year.

In the earliest years of the church, there would be a three-year catechism (discipleship development period) before someone could even be baptized at Easter time. Six to nine months is not so unreasonable in light of this! We want to be able to connect together, to see each at work and at play, and to see one another at our best and worst in handling life situations.

Six to nine months gives us time to see how life impacts the other, and thrusts mentoring into its optimal environment – real life.

TIP 3 – 1 TO 2 YEARS, MAXIMUM

Mentor for one to two years, maximum.

While most mentoring relationships can (and should) continue for a lifetime, after two years I would suggest we have moved from a concentrated training, discipling, and development stage into more of a spiritual friendship with mentoring qualities.

Maxing out our mentoring season at two years enables us to disciple and train others beyond our current mentee, and allows the mentee some breathing room as they learn how to fly. While this is not a hard and fast rule, it is a guideline that can keep both parties feeling as though there is an end date – especially if the quality of the relationship makes an end date feel like a helpful goal.

Two years is plenty of time to pass on a skill set, a heart-set, and a mindset – so that someone can begin to do what you do in their own unique, individual way.

TIP 4 – ENGAGE IN LIFE FRIENDSHIP

Engage in a lifelong friendship.

There are some people we will call “our mentors” until our dying day, and those people are usually those with whom we have had a fruitful season of mentoring at a specific time in our life.

There is often a lifelong friendship that emerges from a concerted mentoring relationship that is so sweet many would not trade it for anything. When a lifelong friendship emerges after a wonderful, healthy, mentoring season, it can stir strength in both the mentor and the mentee for a lifetime.

At this stage, mentoring feels worth every bit of time we have invested in the relationship. And the quality of friendship that can emerge from that investment is the best return many have ever imagined.

ACTION STEPS

> Try at least one idea for the next time you meet.

Setting clear expectations together for your mentoring relationship is key at the beginning of a mentoring season. Both parties are then clear about their expectations for the relationship, and can prepare for the amount of time and type of energy they will put into that journey.

Once you've established clear direction and timelines, you can begin to begin to work with your mentee in the areas needed.

Mentoring relationships can turn into some of the most deeply-rooted friendships we will have in our lifetime – and they are well worth the investment.

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