

# Leaving the **MOTHER SHIP**

## **Making the most of a mentoring relationship**

### *Tips for the "mentee"*



Mentors often play a special role in the career development and advancement of most successful managers. They can provide valuable advice and perspective on many facets of a career, from handling difficult decisions to smoothing the political way when problems occur. They also act as a role model and, at times, a trusted friend.

But what about the role of the mentee?

"While most business managers understand how valuable a mentor is and the role they play in their career development, there is a general lack of understanding about the responsibilities of the mentee, says Randall Craig, management consultant, speaker and author of the career planning book *Leaving the Mother Ship*. "Relationships are a two-way street; the mentee must add value too."

Randall Craig offers mentees the following tips on making the most out of a mentoring relationship:

1. **Deliver on your promises.** It is critical that you keep your promises. Commit to doing something at your mentor's suggestion and deliver to a standard of excellence. When you make a commitment and keep it, not only do you impress the mentor, but you also feel good about yourself.
2. **Return the favour.** Discover your mentor's "hot buttons". Determine if you can help them solve an issue they may be experiencing. Show interest in what is happening in their world, and lend a hand if you are able. They will appreciate it.
3. **Return the favour to others.** Become a mentor. Take on someone in a more junior capacity who you can, in turn, provide valuable advice and perspective. You *can* learn invaluable information from a person you are mentoring. It helps you build confidence in your career and makes you feel more valuable.
4. **Maintain confidence.** Do not broadcast any discussions to colleagues or other people inside or outside the organization. Consider whether the relationship needs to be discreet in order to avoid jealous feelings from colleagues.

5. **Keep your mentor informed.** When acting on the mentor's advice, be sure to circle back to let them know the outcome. It is frustrating for a mentor to give advice and never know the outcome.

6. **Show appreciation.** A mentor is providing two priceless gifts: their experience and time. Be grateful for having them in your life, and be sure to thank them with kind words and deeds.

7. **Respect their time:** Mentors have busy lives, too. If the mentor is not available when advice is needed, use good judgment and do not be a nuisance (e.g. do not interrupt your mentor when they are on vacation).

8. **Learn from them:** Whenever a mentor is not accessible for advice, try asking yourself this question: "What would my mentor do?" Asking this question shifts your perspective, and allows you to see the situation with a new light: your mentor's. In fact, the closer your mentoring relationship, the better your answer will be.



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- Looking to take the next step? Purchase the Leaving the Mother Ship book and Workbook at [www.LeavingTheMotherShip.com/store](http://www.LeavingTheMotherShip.com/store).

Randall Craig is a management consultant, speaker, and author of *Leaving the Mother Ship*, a career planning book. [www.LeavingTheMotherShip.com](http://www.LeavingTheMotherShip.com). He speaks on the topics of Career Planning, Work-Life Balance, Entrepreneurship, and Consulting.

The screenshot shows the website [www.LeavingTheMotherShip.com](http://www.LeavingTheMotherShip.com) in a Mozilla Firefox browser window. The page features a green header with navigation links: Free Newsletter | Store | View Cart/Check Out. Below the header is a navigation menu: Seminars | Resources | Coaching | For Corporations | News | About Randall | Contact us. The main content area is titled "Leaving the MOTHER SHIP" with the tagline "Having the courage to leave, and charting the path to get there." A "Make It Happen! (Career Success Tipsheet)" sign-up form is visible, with fields for Name and email, and a Submit button. Below the form, there are three columns of content: "Leaving the Mother Ship means taking control over your career...", "Just Released: The Working Resume", and "What's New?". The "What's New?" section lists several articles and seminars, including "Make It Happen" in the news section, "Monday Morning Manager" in Globe and Mail, and "Personal Performance Work-Life Balance Seminar - Enroll Now!".