

WSBA Preadmission Education Program

Who to Call: Finding a Mentor

Questions to ask, and emails to send, before meeting with a potential mentor.

12 GREAT QUESTIONS TO ASK A MENTOR

Delivered positively, and with some advance preparation by you, a few of these are enough to focus on in a session with a mentor:

1. There is a lot to building a practice... What do you wish you had known when you were first getting started?
2. So, how is your practice?
3. How did you determine your type of practice? What should I consider if I'm opening a _____ law practice in _____ town?
4. What kind of business structure would work well for the type of practice I'm considering?
5. Do you do any volunteering? In what ways has volunteering and pro bono work helped your career? Would you recommend that a newer attorney become involved?
6. How are your kids/hobbies/latest technological discovery?
7. What are some great books you've read that might help me with my _____ skills?
8. I am concerned about _____... is this something I should be focusing on now? How would you recommend I tackle it?
9. What CLE's would you recommend?
10. What groups would you recommend I join? I am already a member of _____.
11. A particular opposing counsel is difficult to work with because _____. I try not to let it get to me, but what would you recommend?
12. I have a client that is difficult to work with because _____. How do you tackle difficult clients?

SAMPLE EMAILS TO A PROSPECTIVE MENTOR

(IF YOU ALREADY MET THE POTENTIAL MENTOR)

To: _____

I enjoyed meeting you briefly at _____ event. As a newer practitioner I am glad that I can rely on the more experienced attorneys in our field for insight. If you are available in the next couple of weeks I would like to meet with you over lunch, or coffee (Happy Hour if it went really well) and follow-up on a couple of questions I am currently tackling.

I am free _____ dates/times. Let me know if those work for you. I am located near your office / I am frequently downtown, so we can meet in that area.

Thank you again, and I look forward to continuing our conversation.

Your Name

Attorney at Law

Washington State Bar Association
1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 600
Seattle, Washington 98101

(206) 443-9722 tel (main)
(206) 555-5555 tel (direct dial)
(206) 727-8319 fax

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(IF YOU HAVE NEVER MET THE POTENTIAL MENTOR)

To: _____

As a newer practitioner in our field I frequently meet with more experienced attorneys to discuss how to develop and build a great practice. _____ (referral) gave me your name as a great person to sit down with and discuss _____. (OR your name came up when I was looking for _____.) I am glad that I can rely on the more experienced attorneys in our field for insight.

If you are available in the next couple of weeks I would like to meet with you over lunch, or coffee. I have a couple of general questions about _____ and I would appreciate any insight you can give me.

I am free _____ dates/times. Let me know if those work for you. I am located near your office / I am frequently downtown, so we can meet in that area. You should also feel free to call me at _____ if it is easier to coordinate via the phone.

Thank you again, and I look forward to our conversation.

Your Name

Attorney at Law

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