

JUDGE PEREZ
GROUP

WILLAMETTE VALLEY
CHAPTER, INNS OF
COURT OF AMERICA
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The Good, The Bad, and the Wish I Had: Mentorship in a Legal Career



Good Mentorship

The Good: The Sherpa

- ▶ Knows what your goals are
- ▶ Helps you get there by:
 - ▶ Providing advice
 - ▶ Introducing you to the networks that help you get there
 - ▶ Advocates for you to reach those goals



The Good: The Invisible Mentor

- ▶ Watching a good lawyer in action.
 - ▶ Invite Mentee to watch you in trial/hearing
 - ▶ Invite their feedback and questions
 - ▶ Ask how they might handle that witness, argument, difficult opposing counsel
- ▶ Offer “Wise Feedback”
 - ▶ ID goals & aspirations
 - ▶ Set high expectations: clarify that you expect excellence from everyone
 - ▶ Establish individual capacity: ID specific strengths and explain your confidence that your mentee can meet the challenge
 - ▶ Share candid feedback: be specific about actual errors., avoid generalizations, offer examples of what you are looking for, and be willing to evaluate their revised product



The Good: The Connector

► Caricature



► Description

- Knows their limitations
- Supportive although not their area of expertise
- Willing to make introductions
- Builds a network of experts/subject matter experts

The Good: The Cheerleader

- ▶ PROVIDES ENCOURAGEMENT AND CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK
- ▶ MAY ATTEND HEARINGS TO PROVIDE SUPPORT
- ▶ GIVES SUPPORT WHEN MENTEE IS FEELING OVERWHELMED
- ▶ MENTEE FEELS POSITIVE ABOUT LEGAL CAREER.



The Good: The Listener

- ▶ Listens before they speak.
- ▶ Asks questions about what is being said.
- ▶ Doesn't interrupt or try to one-up a situation.
- ▶ Doesn't belittle the other's feelings.
- ▶ Empathizes with the other person.




The Good: The Confident Companion

Important Qualities:

- Trust in your Mentee's abilities;
- Treats Mentee as equal while being cognizant of their experience;
- Isn't afraid to give general feedback, but does not get too in the weeds.

What makes them special: Having someone trust in your abilities to get things done, but guides with a soft touch produces competent practitioners!



Confidence is the companion
of success.

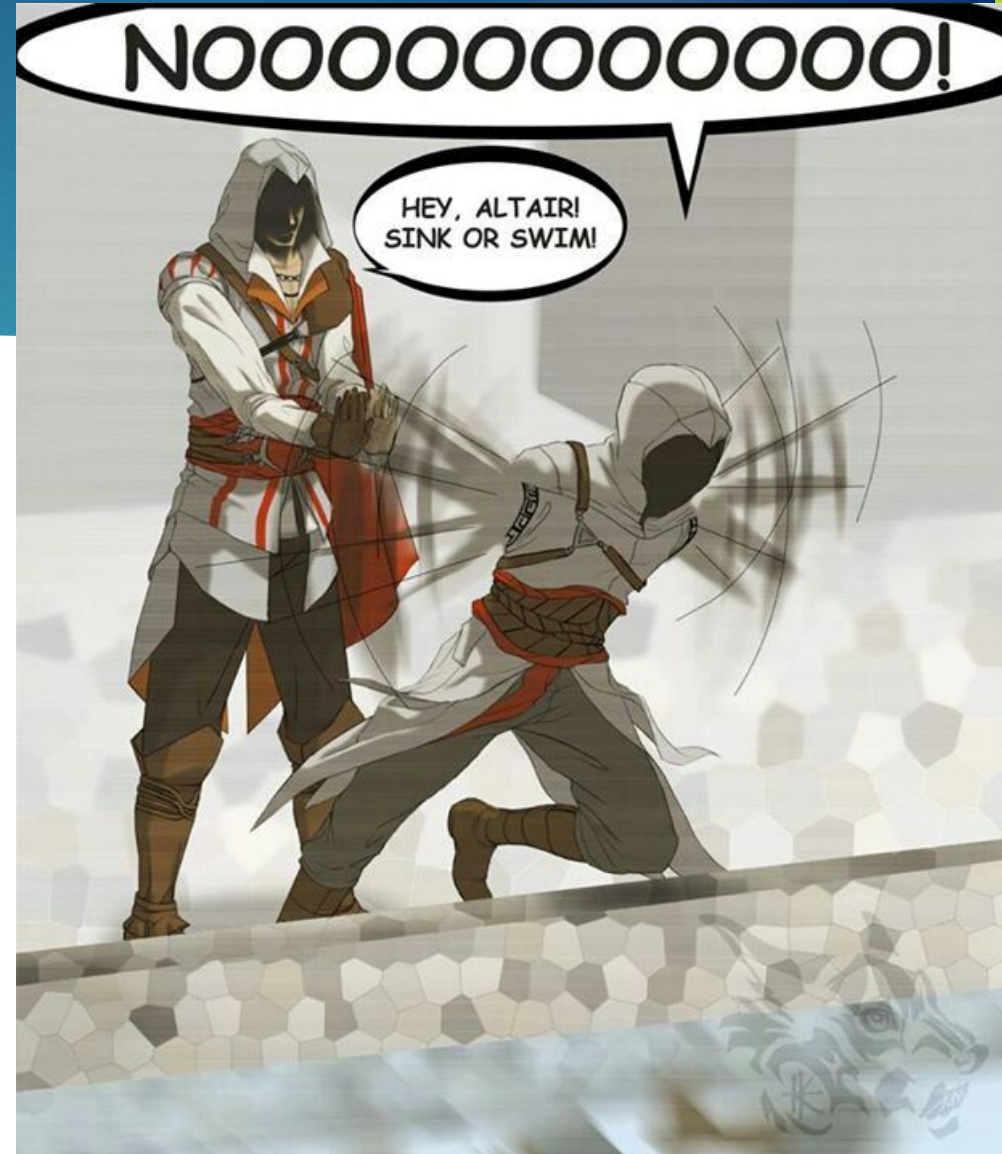
Questions and Comments



The Bad

The Bad: Sink or Swim

- ▶ Assumes you know what you're doing
 - ▶ You're too insecure (green) to tell mentor otherwise
- ▶ Does not follow up to see if you need help
 - ▶ You're too busy dog paddling to ask for help
- ▶ No real mentoring takes place



The Bad: Give it to Mikey

- ▶ Pitching a novel legal theory to your Mentee to try out
 - ▶ Makes you sound smart and dashing
 - ▶ May create a lasting impression on your Mentee (and not a good one)



The Bad: Looking for my mini-me



- ▶ Description
 - ▶ Thinks they know all the answers
 - ▶ Instead of cultivating mentee's strengths, tells them what to do
 - ▶ Doesn't appreciate different styles of practice
 - ▶ "my way or the highway" attitude

The Bad: The Drive-By

- ▶ Frequently cancels appointments or arrives very late without contact.
- ▶ Makes promises for “big ideas” without any real content.
- ▶ Does not provide any support.
- ▶ Frustrates the Mentee and turns off the Mentee from seeking support from experienced attorneys.



The Bad: This Just Isn't Working

- ▶ Why?
 - ▶ Sometimes people just don't work well together...
 - ▶ Personalities may clash.
- ▶ What to do?
 - ▶ Try and find some common ground.
 - ▶ Don't avoid your mentee or leave them without assistance.
 - ▶ Connect them with someone else that you think may work well with them.



The Bad: The “In My Experience” Guru

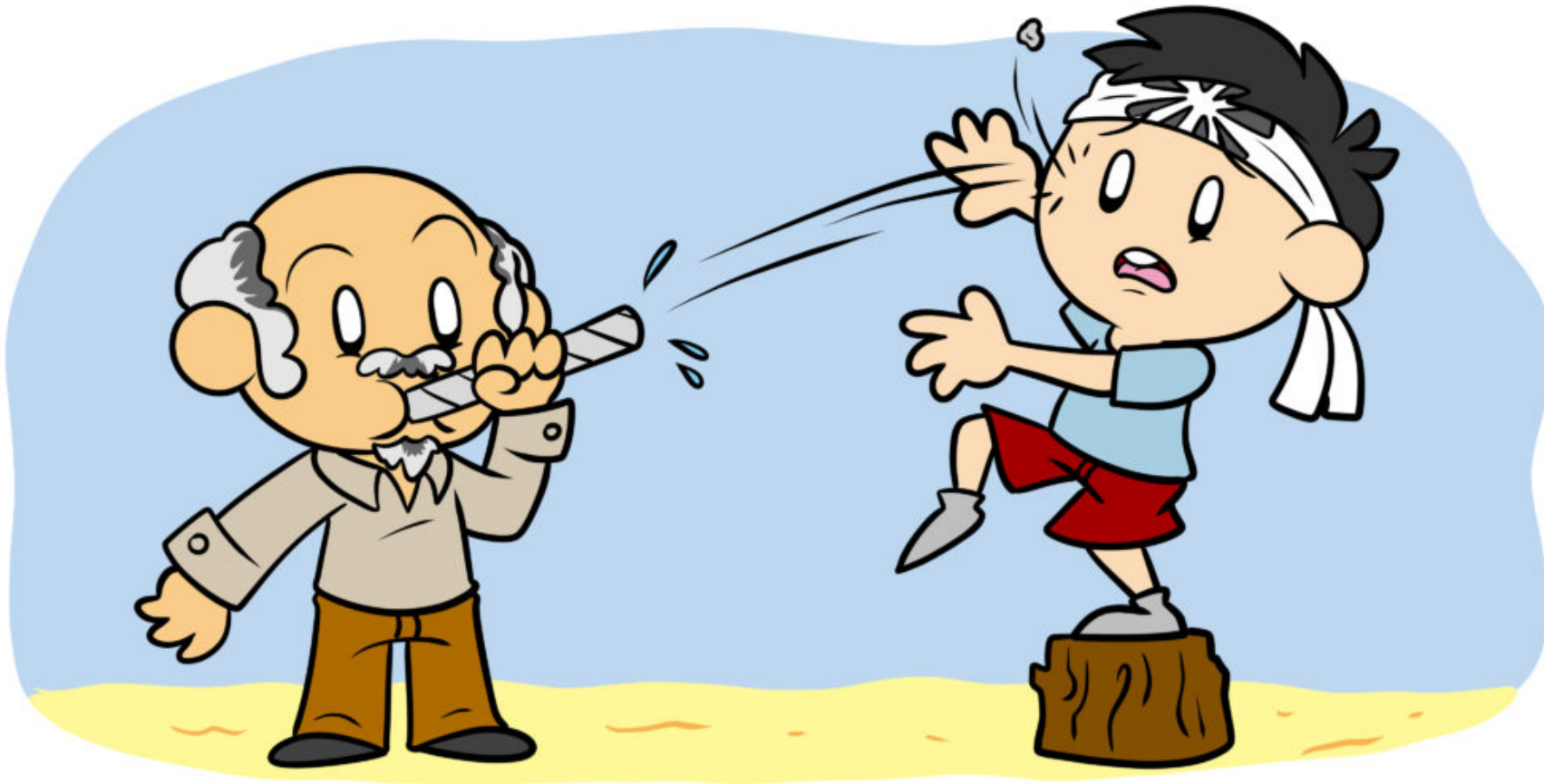
What to look out for:

- Always relates your experiences to something they have seen;
- Never fully listens to why you have the problem;
- Quick to say exactly what to do.

Why is this an issue?: When you’ve “seen it all before” the advice given tends to be based on experience, rather than knowledge. Novel issues are compared to past experiences, and the Mentee is never really taught and just told.



Questions and Comments





The Wish I Had

Wish I had... Been more proactive with Mentees

- ▶ Communicate with Mentee to understand how you can be useful.
- ▶ Understand Mentee's goals.
- ▶ Schedule meetings and reach out- don't wait for the Mentee to ask for help.

“If you're proactive, you focus on **preparing**. If you're reactive, you end up focusing on **repairing**.”

— John C. Maxwell

Wish I had... cultivated a Mentor for the Ages

Perfect mentor profile

Has a different
perspective or
approach

Challenges my thinking

Judges question, not
me for asking

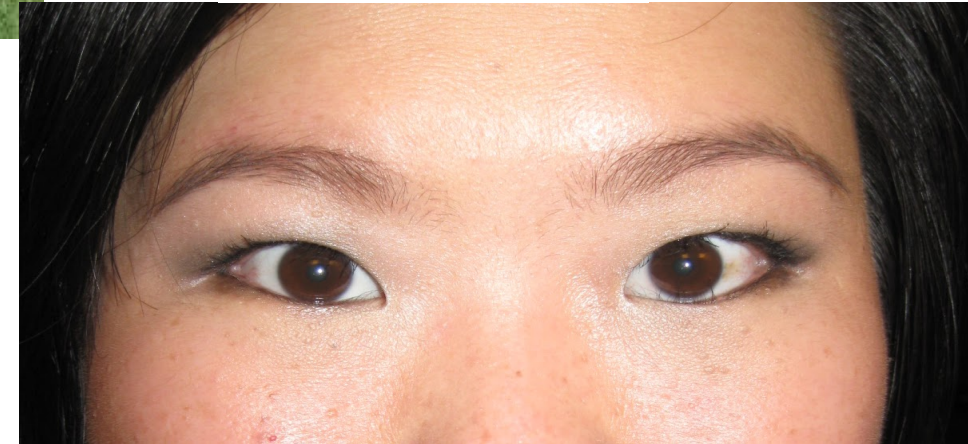
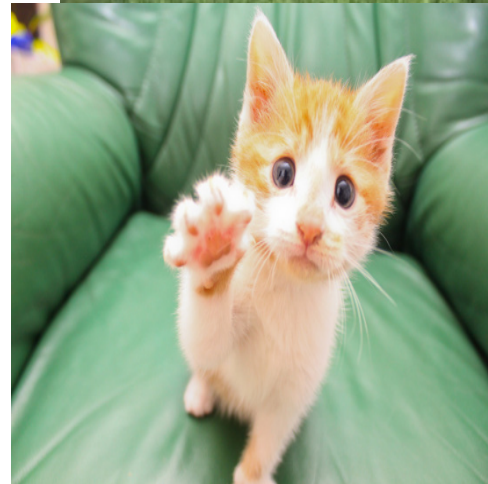
Doesn't charge ...



The Wish I had...

Mentors from different practice areas, wish I was better as a mentor at creating opportunities for mentees

- We can all do it
- Get out of your comfort zone
- Think of the future



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Wish I had: Sought Support Earlier

- ▶ Someone you know has been through a similar situation.
- ▶ You don't need to reinvent the wheel.
- ▶ Your ideas can be refined and improved with input from others.
- ▶ Talking about your ideas helps you flesh them out and refine key points.

**Sometimes the
worst place you
can be is in
your own head.**



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1 BUSY!	2 BUSY!	3 BUSY!	4 BUSY!	5 BUSY!
6 BUSY!	8 BUSY!	9 BUSY!	10 BUSY!	11 BUSY!	12 BUSY!
14 BUSY!	15 BUSY!	16 BUSY!	17 BUSY! Help!	18 BUSY!	19 BUSY!
21 BUSY!	22 BUSY!	23 BUSY!	24 BUSY!	25 BUSY!	26 BUSY!
28 BUSY!	29 BUSY!	30 BUSY!	31 BUSY!		

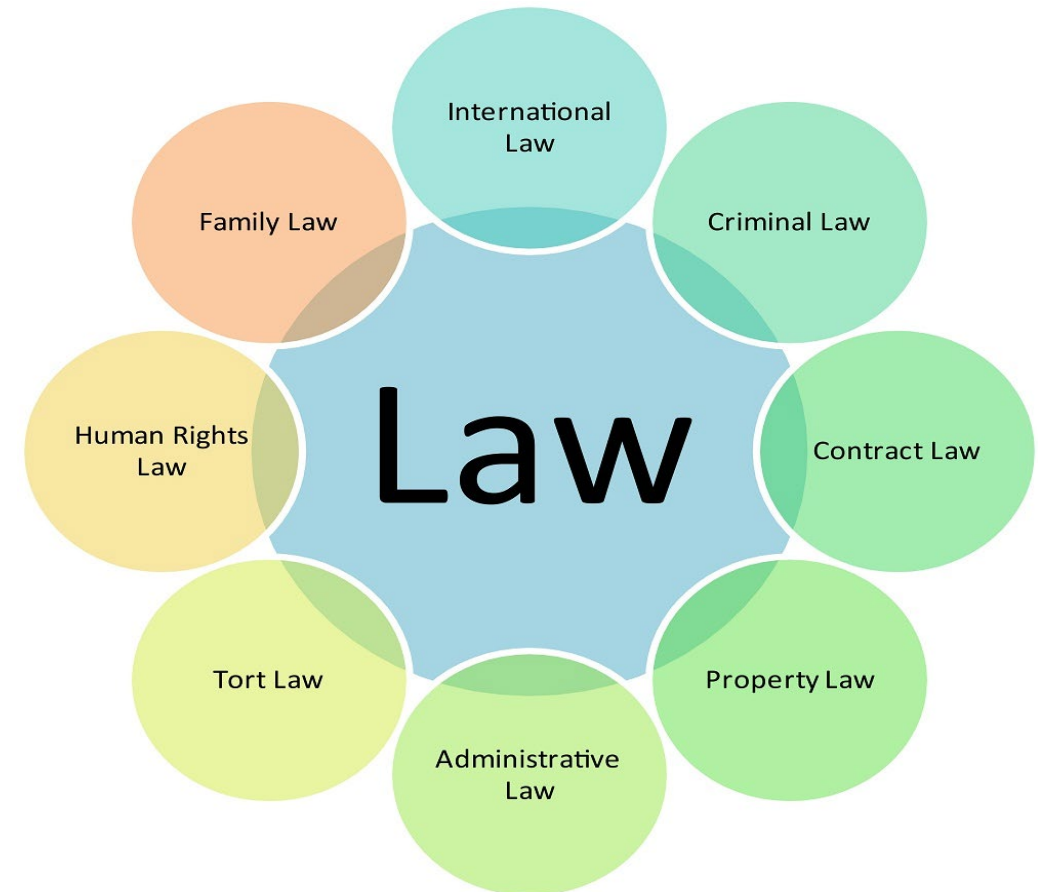
Wish I had: been more diligent about connecting.

- ▶ TAKING TIME OUT OF YOUR BUSY SCHEDULE TO MEET WITH A MENTOR OR MENTEE IS IMPORTANT.
- ▶ DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP, WHETHER IT BE WITH AN ISSUE OR WITH SCHEDULING TIME.

I wish I had... Sought more opinions

I wish I had maybe should be, “I really should” given my experience!

By not incorporating the experience of others you have access to, you miss out on so much potential learning. A willing and excited mentor in a different area of law can be far more valuable than the uninterested practitioner in your field. Only participating in your bar groups or focusing on attorneys who are in your area of law can foreclose amazing opportunities.



Questions and Comments



Values of a Mentor

- ▶ Be Present, be more than just a tutor
- ▶ Be Proactive
- ▶ Be Flexible
- ▶ Be Enthusiastic
- ▶ Be Professional
- ▶ Lead by Example

Opportunities for Mentorship

- ▶ Oregon State Bar (www.osbar.org) Oregon New Lawyer Division
- ▶ Your Alma Mater
 - ▶ Willamette University (willamette.edu/law)
 - ▶ University of Oregon (law.uoregon.edu)
 - ▶ Lewis & Clark (law.lclark.edu)
- ▶ Wherever you see a need...

Resources

- ▶ American Inns of Court Program Library RE: Mentoring

- ▶ **Videos**

- ▶ *Millennials need a mentor in the workplace.* Lauren Hoebee, TEDxTWU, June 28, 2016.
- ▶ *Modern Mentoring: The Good, The Bad, and the Better.* Karen Russel, TEDxOverlake, June 30, 2011.

- ▶ **Books**

- ▶ Mentoring and Coaching for Lawyers: Building Partnerships for Success, Rebecca Norman-Hochman, October 1, 2014.
- ▶ 10 Steps to Successful Mentoring, Wendy Axelrod, June 25, 2019.
- ▶ Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts. Brene Brown, October 9, 2018.

- ▶ **Articles**

- ▶ *Four Tips for Mentees to Make the Most out of Mentoring.* Jenea Hawkins, American Bar Association, August 29, 2019.
- ▶ *Mentoring Matters: Three Essential Elements of Success.* Mary Abbajay, Forbes, January 20, 2019.
- ▶ *6 Things Great Mentors Do Differently.* Sujan Patel, Entrepreneur, June 5, 2017.