

# The Ultimate Guide To Being A Great Mentor

**Jacob Morgan** 00:00

Should you be vulnerable at work? What if I told you the answer to that question is no. I'm very excited to announce that my brand new book leading with vulnerability is coming out in just a few months. And I started out with a very simple question is vulnerability for leaders the same as it is for everybody else? It turns out, it's not. I interviewed over 100 CEOs and organizations around the world and teamed up with leadership firm DDI, to survey 14,000 employees around the world to try to figure out how can leaders approach vulnerability in the right way. So that it allows them to unlock the potential of those around them to drive performance to lead through change, and to create trust. If you want to get access to this book. It's coming out October 3, I'm going to have a lot of really cool bonuses for people who preorder a copy, you can learn more at lead with vulnerability.com. Again, go to lead with vulnerability.com. And now let's get right into the show.

01:02

Not all great leaders make great mentors. A lot of the skills you may employ as an entrepreneur and owner, a forceful leader may or may not serve you well as a mentor.

**Jacob Morgan** 01:12

My guest today, Scott Jeffrey Miller, he's the former cmo and EVP at Franklin Covey. He's also a current senior adviser on thought leadership seven time best selling author and he also has a brand new book out which is called great mentorship 13 rolls to making a true impact. Sometimes we just say that somebody who's helping us out is considered a mentor. How do you define mentorship?

01:36

It's not education. It's not inherited. It's not personality, or charisma, or intellect or genius. I think what most successful people have in common is they've been tutored. They've been guided, mentored, led by a mentor or mentors in their life, formal or informal mentorship really is when a wise person chooses to invest in another person on their journey.

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Scott, thank you so much for joining me today.

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Jacob, my honor. Thank you for the spotlight the platform looking forward to a conversation around my new release The Ultimate Guide to great mentorship.

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Yes. Is the book actually officially out? Nope. Elite

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releases on July 11. And digital. Yep,

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July 11. Yeah, I had the opportunity to read one of the advanced copies really, really interesting way that you frame mentorship. And so let's jump right into that. Why don't we start with kind of a high level question on what exactly is mentorship? Because we hear about this a lot inside of an organ inside of organizations. Sometimes it's formal, sometimes it's unstructured. Sometimes we just say that somebody who's helping us out is considered a mentor. How do you define mentorship?

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Well, first, I think it's the unifying commonality amongst successful people. You know, it's not education, it's not inheritance. It's not personality, or charisma, or intellect or genius. I think what most successful people have in common is they've been tutored. They've been guided, mentored, led by a mentor, or mentors in their life, formal or informal. Talk about the differences there. But I do think it's a commonality of everybody I know, across all of the podcasts that I've hosted and radio programs that I posted, is that those that are the most successful can exactly name, who their mentor was at a particular point in their life, whether it was a parent or an uncle, or a boss, or a leader or a rabbi, a neighbor, a business leader, with the value they played in, I think there's a difference between being a mentor and a coach. Typically, what is the difference? I think typically coaches are compensated, right? There's a methodology. They've used to have some certification or some credential, they have a pedagogy, if you will. Mentorship is sort of like pro bono coaching. It's usually doesn't follow a process that you do not as prescribed methodology, but it's really someone who cares, passionately around, giving back by the way coaches do the same, but usually coaches are, that's their business, it's their profession. It's your money making model. There's nothing wrong with that. Mentorship really is, I think, when a wise person chooses to invest in another person on their journey. By them. I think there's a process for mentoring. I wrote it right about in the book, but subtle, but I think big difference between coaching and mentoring.

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Ya know, it's interesting, and it's funny, because a lot of the executives that I've been interviewing, and I'm sure you've been seeing this the same. It seems like there's a big trend now for a lot of executives to work with coaches. And there's also a big trend of a lot of employees who are saying that they are being mentored by their leaders. So when you think of mentoring, is it you know, is there like structure around it? Is it like one minute A day, an hour a week? Or is it just kind of any context in which one person is providing guidance on a regular basis to another person, whether that's a couple of minutes a week, or whether that's structured sessions for like an hour, two hours a week?

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Beautifully said yes. To all of that, right? I mean, I think there's formal mentoring where your organization, your employer might have a program where they match 40 mentors, from the executive suite with 40, you know, onboard new associates, or any level in the company, lots of formal structures around mentoring and large organization, I think close to 90% of the Fortune 5000. Employers have a mentoring initiative in place, right? It's a big part of career growth, retention, engagement. And then, of

course, there's a lot of looser mentoring, all the way to not even knowing your mentor. I'll tell you, the biggest mentor in my life was a man named Bruce Williams, you're not old enough, Jacob, fortunately, because you're young and smart. But back in the 80s, there was a talk radio program called the Bruce Williams Show, kind of like, you know, one part Dave Ramsey, one part, Gordon Ramsay, but basically he only had a program where he had a three hour call in show every night people called in and they wanted to know how to buy a home how to deal with an inheritance. What is a FICO score, what to do with their life after their divorce and their finances, you taught business acumen, legal skills, and I listened to him every night for three years for a decade. Wow. And Bruce Williams was my biggest mentor in life and he died. Not even knowing I was alive, never met the guy. So I think how you define mentors in your life is up to you formal, informal, distant, maybe you follow someone's books, or listen to their podcast or go to conferences where they speak. I wouldn't prescribe it in a tight definition. But I do think everyone should have a series of mentors that meet them where they are in their life, helping them to accomplish what they want to accomplish. Next, I can name five or six mentors. In my life, two or three were formal. No, one or two knew they were my mentor. And some did.

07:13

Yeah. I liked that way of thinking about that. Now, you wrote the book specifically for the mentor, not for the mentee. And I thought that was an interesting approach to take. Why did you specifically want to focus focus on the person doing the mentoring, instead of the mentee who's, you know, receiving the coaching or the guidance or the advice?

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I'm delighted you asked that will HarperCollins leadership published the book, they've been the publisher of several of my books, they wanted to book on Mentees and mentors. I said, You know what, I want to start with mentors. Maybe I will maybe I won't write a book for mentees,

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because I need sneak peek of what's coming next. Well,

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we'll see. That wasn't being coy. I'm actually not sure. I actually think that if a mentee reads this book, The Ultimate Guide mentorship, they're gonna learn a lot about how to be a great mentee. But it really is a guide for what I think is the more powerful, the more influential of the two roles can a mentor learn from a mentee? Of course, absolutely. But the role of mentor is so influential, and being a transformation, a transformative experience, right, a transition figure even in the life of a mentor. And I think there were so many people that are being asked to be mentors volunteered, voluntold and accompany they needed a structure and in a format, my book does not tell you what to do. It tells you how to do it, you know, when to be in this role, when to be in that role, when to move between roles identified 13? It's a lot I know. But I think if the mentor does a better job, they can lift the mentee more frequently than the mentee will let the mentor and we'll see what happens with the second book.

08:59

Yeah, well, let's jump into some of these roles. So you found 13 of them, we'll see how many of them we can get through. So maybe for the first part of this discussion, we can focus a little bit more on the

high level kind of educational piece of this. And then towards the end, we'll see how much time we have, we can focus on maybe how to implement some of these things and how to bring them to life. And I really liked the way that you constructed and put together these 13 roles because I've thought about mentorship a lot. But I never conceptualized in the way of these specific roles that you're using, which I think get, it adds a lot of really great structure to mentorship. So any leader out there, you know, any employee out there who gets the book, they'll clearly be able to see, you know, the different things that a great mentor is supposed to do and how to actually do it, which is fantastic. So the first one that you have in there is the role of the revealer. So tell us a little bit about what the role of the revealer actually is.

09:55

Yeah, let me make a disclosure that may or may not be popular with your viewership and listenership and it that I think, not all great leaders make great mentors, a lot of the skills you may employ as an entrepreneur and owner, a forceful leader may or may not serve you well as a mentor. So I think there's some self awareness that has to go around every mentors mind to say is this skill that I demonstrate in my business, the right skill to demonstrate today as a mentor? Sometimes, yes, sometimes no. The role of Revealer is the first role. And another disclaimer, I don't suggest you should play all 13 of this roles. And by the way, they're numbered partially for a reason. But you know, you aren't playing role one in the first meeting and role six in the sixth meeting. They're kind of effervescent. And you're not supposed to have a mastery, kind of a working knowledge. Oh, you know what, maybe this is a good time to be the validator or the revealer, or the questioner. So role of the reveal are really has two parts. The first part is around recognizing that as the mentor, your primary job is to uncover so that your mentee can discover your uncovering, so they can discover your uncovering their passions, their fears, their anxieties, their goals, their dreams, their vision or visions, so that they can help discover a name though, and I use in the book a metaphor about kind of being a paleontologist or an archaeologist that, you know, I don't know any paleontologist, but I'm guessing when they enter a dig site, they don't helicopter in and whip up a bunch of dust and start jackhammering, right? They're very mindful of their footprint. They come in with brushes and small tools, and they scrape and they scratch. They don't come in like pounding forest in the first 30 minutes. And so the reason this one is the first role is to be mindful of your footprint. Recognize that you aren't trying to accomplish your goals, you're helping to name your mentee goals. What are they trying to accomplish? What are they trying to get done? And I remind their readers to say, never, never say, Well, if I was you, I would do this. Or if I were you, I would do that because you're not them. You don't have their experiences. They don't have your education or title or trust fund or 401k, or confidence or self esteem. You want to enter gently and delicately get to know each other be vulnerable. Ask them bold questions like What are they trying to accomplish? And where are they confused? What do they want to do?

12:34

Would you say that in this kind of gets back to the the first part of the discussion around mentorship as a whole? Would you say that mentorship, great mentorship, successful mentorship is mainly based a little bit more on the Socratic method where you're not telling people what to do, but you're asking them questions to help them get to the decision themselves. Because there's a fine line, like you said, right between saying, Oh, if I were you, I would do this and giving that exact advice versus asking people

questions, and they get to that decision themselves. And they're like, Oh, well, now I know what to do. And you help me get there.

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I think it's situational, right? I think every situation is going to be a little bit different. You know, if someone comes to you and says my lifelong goal is to be a patent attorney, and you want a law firm, you're probably going to be more prescriptive. Someone comes in and says, you know, I'm thinking about being a chiropractor or a florist, I have a different conversation, right? I do think the further you are into the relationship, the more prescriptive you can be and should be. You can question your way into frustration. I think it's knowing your audience, knowing your situation, but also knowing your own personality, which is the second part of the revealer. The first part is to be gentle about how you approach the questions. And second is to show what is arguably Jacob an unnatural level of self awareness for a lot of people. What's it like to be on the other side of feedback from you? What's it like to be in a conversation, a zoom call sitting across a table at Starbucks from you do you know your rate, your tone, your pitch, your vocabulary, your business acumen, be thoughtful not to weaponize it against your mentee, you want your mentee to be vulnerable and comfortable being uncomfortable. So you have to really show a level of self awareness and maturity to know is my natural style going to resonate with this particular mentee, maybe yes, maybe no, maybe it's in a religious setting. Maybe it's member of your faith community. Maybe it's, you know, an underprivileged member of your local community. Maybe it's a person in your organization, maybe it's with a social club. You have to know your audience and not just have your default personality. And your default leadership style automatically become your mentorship style, because they don't always translate.

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Yeah. Well, it's interesting, because you also mentioned not all leaders make great mentors. Yeah. Why is that the case? I mean, because you, you would imagine that if you're part of it organization and you have maybe a mid level or senior level executive, the natural instinct is to say, Wow, that person achieved a certain level of success. Yeah, clearly they know how to become successful, they should be my mentor. So what what would make that leader who got to that level of success, not a good mentor?

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When you open you mentioned that I spent much of my career with the Franklin Covey company 30 years with Franklin Covey. So I have spent three decades as an author podcaster radio host and executive vice president of the world's most trusted leadership development company. So I know nothing about AI. I know nothing about six sigma. But I know something about leadership. And that is, first of all, not everyone should be a leader of people. That's a different podcast. Not everyone should be an anesthesiologist. And not everyone should be a commercial airline pilot, and not everyone should be a leader of people. And not every leader makes a great mentor. Because we all have default leadership styles like me, for instance, I have a fairly loud, fast paced, domineering person, a little bit of charisma tend to have a controlling personality, probably a little narcissistic, a lot of leaders are, and these are naturally good skills, to be empathetic, to listen, to be patient, to ask big questions. I've run a large company for many years, where my job was to peel the onion, get to the root cause to ask piercing questions, write in as few words as possible to help solve the problem. Now, I've not described all leaders. But my point is, is I think, a lot of the leadership skills that may have made you an effective

sales leader, or operations director or CFO, they may not always translate into great mentorship, where you're listening more than you're speaking, where you're asking maybe big bold questions and showing an unnatural level of patience while your mentee accelerates to maybe an epiphany at a little slower pace than you might have allowed one of your employees to do it. So I'm sure there's lots of opinions on leadership. I don't think there's a correlation between being a great leader and a great mentor.

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So then it seems like part of the accountability is also on the mentee to know who they are looking for a mentor. And to be able to separate the qualities of good a good mentor from necessarily just the title or the competence. So it seems like part of these 13 roles. It's to your point, you wrote the book for the mentor. But for the mentee, it seems like one of the main pieces of value could be understanding these 13 roles and asking if you see this potential mentors being able to fill some of these 13 roles. And if not, probably not a good mentor. Or maybe they can fill maybe one or two of these roles,

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or buy the book and give it to them. I will tell you a little bit of a different thought around when it comes to selecting a mentor. I think most people think, hey, I want to open a bakery. So I'm going to go have the guy or the gal that owns the most successful bakery in town be my mentor? Yes, and no. If I want to learn how to have a successful 40 year marriage, I don't go to the guy that's had a 50 year marriage, I go to the guy 10 Five marriages, because it's less likely that I'll be able to replicate the genius, the personality, the patience, the tolerance of the guy who's had a 50 year marriage, but what I can do is I can learn from the pitfalls and the mistakes that the guy made that five marriages is most of life in my opinion. And you'll have listeners and viewers that disagree with me. Most of life isn't just about avoiding the mistakes more than halfway there. And don't automatically think your mentor needs to be someone who's taken your journey. I've never opened a bakery and I pouch I bet you I could probably mentor you really well on all the questions you should be asking the litmus test is this like a three year side hustle? Or a 40 year career? What's your planning your franchisee? What are the margins in bakeries? What are the hours the holidays? What is your personal life? Like? I mean, I never baked anything in my life. And I can ask you a lot of great questions to be thinking about on how to run a successful Baker, big bakery shop. Don't just default to the expert in that industry. Now by all means don't discount bakers as your mentor. But I don't think you have to go to the industry expert to select a great mentor.

19:27

Yeah, no, I like that very much. All right, let's jump into the second roll. So we talked about the revealer. The next one, I think a very very important one, the boundary setter, this to me also strikes very important, not just from the context of the way that you talk about in the book. But you know, it seems to me that sometimes as a mentor perhaps you can get too close to the mentee. Right I mean, like you know, work context, can you get too close to the mentee become friends with them and all of a sudden your judgment, the the advice that you're giving the questions that you're asking We are now biased or skewed because you have a vested interest in this in this person that is outside of a, you know, the relationship that it was intended to be.

20:09



Well, if you're human, the answer is yes, I think you've beautifully put that. There's a reason why number two is the boundary setter, the other 11 or so are kind of episodically implemented. But this is very important. Because nearly all, if not all, conflict in life comes from mismatched or unfulfilled expectations. That's a profound quote right there from Blaine Lee. And so as the boundary setter, it's very important as the mentor, that you might even talk a bit uncomfortably move outside of your comfort zone, and discuss some of the undiscussables here's how it might go. Now, this might sound harsh, so you've got to use good EQ. But how soon? Do you talk like this? What kind of tone do you use? Is your can your mentee handle this? And so I might say, Hey, Jacob, man, I'm so looking forward to this journey together. I love what you're trying to accomplish. I'm confident I can help you there. I've had plenty of mistakes and a few successes along the way. And I'm looking forward to understanding each of our personalities and getting to know you better. And I also think, Jake, it's important that in the words of our parents that, you know, good fences make good neighbors, let's just have what might be a little bit of an uncomfortable conversation. Because, you know, surfacing awkward issues always is, I'd like to set a few boundaries, and I'm gonna invite you to as well, first and foremost chicken, I want, I want you to be aware that I plan to be your mentor. And I want to make sure that you don't fall into the sometimes common trap of mistaking that as your champion or your ally or your referral. Because I'm not that maybe I will be someday maybe I won't, but I'm your mentor, I'm your confidant on this call. But that doesn't mean I'm automatically your champion or your ally. Those words have different meanings. I'm also your therapist. I know you didn't ask me to be one. But I also don't want to be normally qualified to be a relationship therapist, I have some wisdom, I'm married, I'm a parent, I'm a leader, if any of my mistakes make sense to you great, but I am not. And nor am I qualified to earn the right to be your mentor. I'm also not willing to be your Rolodex. What that means if you're not old enough to know what a Rolodex is, I just I guard my connections very, very carefully. It is in essence, my reputation. So I'm just going to ask that you not put either of us in an uncomfortable position of asking me to play a role that I'm not comfortable in, including asked me to make connections for now all of that might have been harsh, deliver it, as it makes sense. I've set very clear boundaries right now that do not ask me to, you know, introduce you to my network. Now I've set clear boundaries upfront, I'm going to ask you to set some boundaries also, I'm gonna bite you to now the odds are the mentee won't have a lot of boundaries, they're probably really thinking, you know, you Oh, you know what makes this guy serious. But then I think as the mentor, you have the right to soften those boundaries later on. For all I know, Jacob may be on time to every meeting, deliver on all his commitments as smart questions, never asked me anything inappropriate. And five sessions in all say, I'd love to invest in that business, or eight sessions. And I might say, hey, my best friend is the CEO of this mortgage company. Let's go talk to him about you know, getting a mortgage on a building. But now I have the right to broaden lower, loosen those boundaries, because I have set them clearly up front. Because I don't want to have to be awkward or embarrassed when you ask me something that's inappropriate. And quite frankly, it might just be that you're ignorant, you may not know that it's not appropriate to ask those questions, because you're an 18 year old or a 14 year old or a 22 year old, and you haven't had this dislocation that I have in terms of relationships. boundary setting is very important up front. Yeah.

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Well, I know you mentioned earlier that you don't have to play all 13 of these roles as a mentor. But isn't this one that has to be there? Like how can you mentor without I mean, right? I mean, this to me seems like you have to have this to be a mentor.

24:10

People do it all the time. Yeah. Because because not everybody is comfortable having high courage conversations. Not everyone is comfortable setting boundaries verbally upfront, to prevent conflict, to prevent confusion, to prevent mismatched expectations. And so very few people do this because it's awkward, it requires you to say hey, I don't want you for a moment Jacob to be offended. I don't want to infer that you're going to cross these boundaries. I just want to make sure that neither of us find ourselves in the unfortunate and awkward position of me having to say no, so let's set some boundaries up front. So you're very clear on what I am willing and unwilling to offer you Now that may sound harsh to some of your viewers and listeners, but then you have the right to change that as situations change over time. Yeah,

25:06

no. I mean, I suppose I see how some people could take that as harsh, but it's also essential, right? I mean, the boundaries are important, because if you don't set them, then, you know, it can, I think cause a lot of chaos and havoc inside the relationship, right.

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Here's a great example. I was at a university a few weeks ago with an alumni board of directors, these are all CEOs of companies. A very seasoned man in his 60s, was there he was so proud of how the previous day there was a speed mentor session in the student union, right CEOs came in, or C suite officers, entrepreneurs, and they spent five minutes with these students had never met before undergraduate students coaching them. And as I was giving a keynote on mentoring, he raised his hand and said, I love playing the role of the connector. Its role number 12, I think it is. He said, Just yesterday, I met this student, I offered to connect him to one of my private equity, guys, and I said to him, he was so proud at his abundance. And without embarrassing him, I said, I'm delighted for you, I said, I would never do that there is no condition ever, ever, in five minutes of meeting someone, or I would connect you with anyone in my network, because my network is my reputation. My Network next to my next to my character, is my most valuable asset. And the first time that that young college student doesn't show up to a meeting. It behaves inappropriately, you know, flames out, that's going to reflect on your network, I want my referral system to be golden. Now, that doesn't mean that you have to jump through hoops to how do I commend you, but I just said, I'm delighted for you, I would never do that. And the more he saw me and thought about he thought, oh, yeah, I know what you mean, maybe that was a little bit impulsive. And maybe I should have like, gotten to know him for a couple more minutes, or hours or weeks or months are seeing them operate and really know his competence in his character. I think you should be very judicious about the types of boundaries you set. Yeah, but I think you can say hard things in a soft way. Yeah, you can choose to set up and say, hey, I want to have a high courage conversation with you. It's gonna be a little awkward. But you know, sometimes high courage conversations are, let's agree to be awkward for three minutes. And we'll move on. Let's set some boundaries. There's a way to make it soft. Yeah. And I came across when I grew up late it

**Jacob Morgan** 27:35

Yeah. Remember, my brand new book leading with vulnerability is available for pre order. And I just want to read you one of the endorsements that we got this one is from the CEO of MasterCard, he



says, I applaud Jacob, for pushing us all to understand that there isn't a one size fits all approach to vulnerability, the insights and experiences from these leaders have the potential to strike a nerve, no matter your title or tenure. Again, this is from the CEO of MasterCard, we got a lot of other fascinating endorsements, you can pre order your copy and get access to the bonuses by going to lead with vulnerability.com. Why is vulnerability so important for leadership and for work,

28:16

if you have prepared to be vulnerable people find you ultimately more authentic,

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my views. It's one of the ways that you build trust, you get people to be willing to open up to you.

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Our mission as a company is to unleash the potential of every team. But for teams to be effective, you have to have psychological safety. And so for us, it's really just without psychological safety, without humility, without authenticity, vulnerability, all those areas like you can't have psychological safety.

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Or let's jump to the absorber. And maybe we have time for I don't know, maybe we'll get to two or three more. What's the absorber? Why is that important role?

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Yeah, this really is the role of the questioner. The listener kind of combined role for as the questioner, but this one is you're setting up good questions by also being a great listener. So Rule four is the question or rule three is the absorber, but you can't play Rule Four, if you don't play rule three. Well, and this is about great listening skills, which again, I think is generally counterintuitive to a lot of leaders. Because if you're like me and you're a leader, you're often in persuasion mode, selling mode, influence mode, communicating goals and accomplishments and what's next and setting a vision. And as a mentor, you're hoping to you're helping to craft a vision for your mentees life, but you first have to listen. And this may sound a little bit corny, but you're listening with your ears and your heart, your mind. Your eyes. What are their fears? What narrative other? Are they telling themselves? What kind of language do they use? What kind of mindset do they have? So fixed mindset is a growth mindset, is it a scarce mindset is an abundance mindset? And you're just you're listening for empathy. Most of us interrupt frequently, because we are on our own timeframe, our own narrative, our own agenda, our own field of experience, this is a tough one, just to absorb. Try to listen 80% and talk 20% and counterintuitive.

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Yeah, and I like that you blended those two together the absorber and the question are so the absorber is the listening one. And the questioner is obviously the one who's a little bit more active and asking the questions. And, you know, to the observer absorber point to the, you know, there's a big difference, I think, between listening and hearing that a lot of people forget, you know, and listening is that that conscious act of paying attention and focusing and removing distractions and paying attention to body language. But just hearing something is just the unconscious act of letting sound enter your ear, right? I

mean, you can just like I hear a bird knocking on my window right now, so that there is a big difference. And people can tell if you're listening to them, or if you're hearing to them. And I think in that mentor mentee relationship, you know, I think there's a quote, right, the greatest sign of love and respect that you can show somebody's by is to listen to them. And I think it's for good reason. It makes you feel valued, respected. And that that you matter. So for that mentor, being able to do that, I think is huge.

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Jacob, I think you're listening to learn so much, right? What kind of words do they use? They talk in the future, they talk in the past? They speak in the present, nothing's wrong with any of those? Do they communicate facts or emotions, feelings, opinions, and experiences, because they're not always the same time sometimes a lot of us conflate our feelings with facts. And so you're just listening to understand, why do they think that way? Why do they talk that way? What's their journey bend. And you'll learn a lot about someone based on the words they use their inflection, their eye contact their body language, you don't have to be an expert, to watch and listen someone to learn a lot about their self esteem, their self confidence, how they view their self worth. This is a number three for a reason, because it is hard for most people because to quote Dr. Covey my hero and mentor for many years, most of us listen with the intent to respond. Not with the intent to understand. But valuable.

32:41

Yeah, no, that's a very powerful quote. Okay, so we did the absorber and the question are kind of combined there. I really like this one as well, the challenger. Why is this an important role for a mentor to have and what is the challenger.

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So I'll take my wife, for example, my wife, Stephanie is a full time stay at home mom to our three sons, and runs Miller land, as I call it, right, all the bills and finances and tuitions and all that. And my wife's very well educated, and my wife tends to be conflict avoidant, she does not tend to deal with challenges very well. And she, she would avoid something for fear of offending you now, on the opposite. She thinks that I seek conflict out like she thinks I'm a heat seeking missile, like a patriot system, looking for conflict. So I can wrestle it to the ground. And she probably is right. But at the end of the day of the chapter, I write what I call the Challenger continuum, right, everything from avoidance and passive aggressiveness to like literally shutting people down mid sentence. And so I think it's important for you to know first, what is your natural, challenging style, and to find a healthy balance for the nature of this relationship? Because if someone has an idea that you know, is unethical, or illegal, or just suspect or just as based on ignorance or something they heard, you know, that is factually not true. You need to be able to call a timeout and say, Hey, can I ask you a question? I heard you say this, like, Who told you that? Like, how do you know that? What evidence do you have? Because my experience has been different than that. And maybe your experience will prove me wrong. But I'd like to learn more about that. Because I think that's an important pivot. Let's get clear on the validity of this. Because if you were to act on that information, it could be wildly successful early debtor deleterious to your goal. I just, it's that maturity, to balance courage, with diplomacy, and most of us err on to courageous or to diplomatic. And we want to have a nice balance of both of these calibrated on the sophistication and the emotional maturity of your mentee.

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Hmm. So would you describe them the chat challenger, I mean, obviously being able to push back is important there. But how? How do you know when to challenge? I like if I'm a mentor and you know, mentoring somebody, and you know, trying to push back to challenge get them to think differently, is there are a time and a place when to challenge and when to not,

35:21

again, sound convenient. I think it's situational. One is, I think, to ask yourself, how often are you challenging, right? I mean, are you putting up a roadblock on everything they say, because they're just, you know, 35 years behind you, and life skills, and they just don't understand that would be frustrating, I wouldn't want my mentor to challenge me every four sentences. I also want my mentor to be scared to challenge me for fear they might offend me, and therefore they give me license to run rogue, and I'm chasing dreams that are preposterous, right? I mean, let's face it, Scott Miller isn't going to be a chemical engineer. My credit score is in fact higher than my LSAT score is. And so I think there's some times to understand what's the right challenge level for your mentee, based on their sophistication, and on your own self awareness of your natural proclivity? I like phrases like this, I give a bunch in the book. Hey, can I push back on you for a moment? Or? Hey, can we pause for a moment? Can I repeat what I just heard? Because I might have misunderstood but I think you said this, or that's an interesting thought. Can you like, unpack that? And tell me? No judgement? Why do you believe that? Did someone tell you that Did you see that come alive? in someone's life wasn't your own actual experience. And the more you can get people to unpack to peel the onion at their speed, the more you know when to push back. Now, another role is the flagger. Later on, the flagger is sort of the Challenger done more clearly where you say, Hold on, Jacob, don't go any further. That's preposterous. That's actually not true.

37:03

That's insane. Don't be an idiot. Let's take it back. Well,

37:07

that's not the way the income income tax code works. I know this for a fact, right? You have to pay quarterly, whatever, you have to file quarterly, or whatever, whatever. So there is a time for you to metaphorically put the car in park, turn it off, take the keys out and say, Hey, we're going for a walk. And that's kind of the Challenger becoming the flagger.

37:30

Yeah, I like the distinction between the two. Between the the Challenger and the flaggers. The Challenger is kind of like a more tame version of the flagger. And the flagger is kind of the ref that's out there with the red card like, Nope, that's enough. You've gone too far. Right?

37:45

That's exactly right. I think you earn the right to be the flagger later on in the relationship, as you've kind of calibrated your challenging style. And you know, the types of feedback your mentee can appreciate, do they boost heart and heal fast? Does any feedback, cripple them emotionally? You know, it all kind

of comes down to the family dynamic and how they dealt with feedback, and criticism or insight? How were they were weren't validated.

38:12

Yeah. So maybe to give it another analogy, the challenger would be the yellow card, the flagger would be the red card.

38:16

You tend to be a co author on my book.

**Jacob Morgan** 38:19

Yeah. And I get \$1 for every copy that sold by the way. Alright, let's jump into the next one. Maybe we have time to grab one more in here. And that is the Navigator. So I also and I like how some of these you were able to combine together like the absorber the question or the flag or the challenger. The Navigator is also an important one. And and perhaps this also ties and can connect to the visionary right, together. So how do you see the role of the Navigator for the mentor? I mean, helping people find their way I think, is a very important aspect of mentorship.

38:56

You know, when I opened I cautioned your listeners, like the golden rule of mentorship is to not try to live vicariously through your mentee, to resist the natural temptation to want to accomplish the things that you screwed up or you wish you'd gone to, you know, Harvard Law School, so you keep suggesting it to them, even though they gotta go to, you know, BYU law school or wherever. So do resist that temptation to navigate them on your journey versus their journey. And most people will dismiss this feedback, but it's probably the best feedback I give in the book in all my keynotes is resist the natural proclivity to have your navigation be on yours versus their journey. The navigator really is just about being a day ahead. I interviewed a school teacher is a friend of mine, he's at tick tock sensation in of all places in South Dakota. His name is Gabe Dan Unbreak. And I think he's like a science teacher when he really should be a math teacher or vice versa. Doesn't matter but he's wearing or the district needs him to be. And I asked him, like, how do you give a good education to kids when you're teaching, not your natural subject, he says, honestly, you only have to be a day ahead of them. And he wasn't phoning it in. He's just reiterating that I don't have to know calculus to teach algebra one, I just need to be a day ahead of them. And I think that's a great metaphor for the navigator is you're just kind of staying a day ahead. You're kind of like in that cave, with a flashlight on your helmet. You're just kind of guiding the path. You're saying, Well, what if we went here? What would happen? What if we went there? What would happen? Oh, wait, there's a cliff, let's kind of push back a little bit. You're not always holding their hand, you're just making sure that they're making good steps. You're choosing when to advise and when to just listen, when to validate when to challenge. And you're not over prescribing because the next role is the role of visionary. And I love this role. But it's a dangerous role. Because Jacob I'm notorious for saying, Jacob Manley where you live Jacob,

41:07

Los Angeles,

41:08

Los Angeles, Jacob, oh my gosh, snow skiing, it's so easy pop on a plane, get to get to Utah. By noon, I'll have you skiing Black Diamonds by 10 o'clock. I mean, I'm there Taurus for over selling. Like, oh, you can speak to 10,000 people in an arena, I do all the time, I spend two hours coaching you. And so I think it's important, vital, you can crush a mentee, if your vision is too big for them, if they truly don't have the skills to learn how to ski black diamonds in two hours, because you did it doesn't mean they can do it, and you think you're helping them. But sometimes you can crush someone, if you're painting a vision that is based on your skills, or your passion or your know how, or your ambition or your work ethic, and it's not right for them. You also could paint too small of a vision. And you could frustrate them. So I think this requires, again, a level of self awareness and maturity, sophistication, to calibrate a vision, that together you feel as right for who they are, and what they want to accomplish, not who you wish you were and who what you did it and who and what you didn't accomplish.

42:18

Yeah, that those are great. I mean, the kind of juxtapose juxtaposition of having a vision that's too big versus too small, I would imagine is a pretty dangerous and a probably a common pitfall. So let's transition now to last 15 minutes to the show something I call it the leaders toolkit, where we talk about maybe some action items and dive a little bit deeper in some of these things. But before we do that, I wanted to ask you about one more roll on there. And that's the bonus roll that you have in the book, which is the jerk. And I think this is a very important one. What is the role of the jerk?

42:49

I didn't think anybody would even read this far. Now, I might regret writing this. So let's be clear. The book is called The Ultimate Guide to great mentorship 13 rolls to making a true impact. And then I added a bonus role called the jerk. And this is basically just the things not to do right like steamrolling over people, assuming everything you say, is profound and wise and accurate, and really making it about yourself as the mentor and not about the mentee. So it was meant to be a light pithy, funny chapter to say, Hey, don't do any of this.

43:28

Simple, straightforward. Alright, let's talk a little bit about maybe the rules that you think are most important. So you have 13 in there are there some that you think are more important or valuable for mentors to be focusing on than others? I don't know if there are, there are like two or three out there that really stand out that are kind of like a cornerstone of great mentorship.

**Jacob Morgan** 43:54

You are not going to want to miss my conversation with Scott Jeffrey Miller as it continues for subscribers on [greatleadership.substack.com](https://greatleadership.substack.com). And for subscribers there. We're going to continue talking about some of these critical roles. Specifically, we're gonna look at the most important ones, and how to take steps to actually implement some of the things that we talked about in that first segment of the show, including validation how to be good at validating how to focus on what people are doing right and why this is so crucial. So if you are in a leadership role, and you are looking to focus on how to coach and how to lead your people and be a better coach and figure out how to be coached, you are

not going to want to miss this bonus episode. Again, head over to [great leadership.substack.com](https://greatleadership.substack.com) And subscribe and you'll be notified as soon as this bonus episode goes alive. Hope to see you there.