

## Mentorship And Social Media

Peter is an outstanding writer who just scooped loads of prizes at the Writer's competition in his school. His mates nicknamed him *The Penpal* after he proved to be miles ahead of them when it came to creative writing. He once wrote a short story so excellent that his English teacher had to investigate if he outsourced his elder sister's skills only to discover that if anything, Peter was the one sometimes helping her with her homework. He is that exceptional. Here is what he had to say when asked how he acquired such levels of excellence:

"I have always had a thing for pen and paper. From the time I was eight or so, I started drafting poems and stories. It often felt like I had some imaginary companions whose stories I wanted to tell. It was when I picked up the pen that I would find myself creating amazing stories. By the time I turned thirteen I was sure this was my primary gift and that I wanted to develop it so I took to social media, created a page called Peter's stories, and therein started sharing my work. One day I found a comment from a prominent published author that I looked up to. It said, 'Good work but you could do much better if you cross-checked your work before posting. Editing is key.' The rest of the people were just exclaiming how good I was but with her, I had just found myself a mentor. I immediately sent her a private message asking that she would use her seasoned experience to guide me. She took days to answer and when she finally did, she subtly told me that she was too busy to help. I was a bit discouraged but soon came up with another plan where I offered to help her with whatever work she found tedious so that she could concentrate more on her writing. It was after I had insisted much that she finally gave me some of her work to read and give suggestions for improvement and that was how I landed my first job as an 'editor'. I wasn't paid for this job but the experience I gained was priceless. I finally met my wonderful mentor in person a whole year after I had worked under her and boy was I thrilled to. I thanked her so much for the guidance she had provided me with throughout this learning curve"

There is a lot we could learn from Peter about modern-day mentorship and the first thing is that there is a pool of mentors available to us now that geographic location is no longer a factor. Whatever your trade, chances are there is at least someone who has gone ahead of you and made it. Your job is to identify and pursue them for counsel. Using the search engine embedded in whatever social media platform you choose, you can type keywords that will lead you to the people doing what you desire to learn to do.

Next, you need to learn to be tenacious in your pursuit. If they are more accomplished than you are then it is not surprising if they are busier. Understand that and be humble enough to keep knocking on their door while taking precautions not to be a total nuisance in the process. They may say they will get back to you but never do, it is then up to you to give them a gentle reminder.

After doing the above, the humility spirit continues. Be prepared to start from the bottom and diligently work your way up. Be open to work for no pay while acquiring a skill that will make you good money in the future. Starting from the bottom of the chain also means doing some boring tasks like being an armor-bearer when your vision is to become one of the

strongest warriors in the army. If your trainer needs someone to carry their weapons for them do it, gain their favor but more importantly be sure to pick their brain.

The beauty of having the 'world' at the palm of your hands as a result of having access to the internet is that you can follow a mentor without all the above-described trouble. You can simply become a follower of the person whose philosophy you buy into; read their posts and books as well as watch their videos. Your vision book could be full of their quotes and they may not even know it. You can virtually sit at the feet of your favorite heroes and heroines and be molded into that champion that you yearn to become.

In your search for a mentor on social media be sure to gather all the information you need about the person in question and when you are convinced of their ability to lead you, stand firm in your decision to follow them. This I am saying because it is not unusual these days to find even the best of people being ill-spoken of by some. If you are tossed around by every wave of gossip about people you will become a distrusting cynic that cannot learn from other people.