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Inspiration and ideas come from all around us. The ability to integrate new thoughts and make the strategy + communications + leadership link helps companies and executives alike elevate their performance.

Because it's challenging at the top, [The Aerie Company](#) offers you useful and thought provoking ideas to help you soar to new heights. Enjoy these latest insights.



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## Pay It Forward Market Leadership

*"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself.  
When you become a leader, success is all about growing others."  
- Jack Welch*

With the recent passing of my first professional mentor, I have been thinking about many insights she shared. Her advice was more than just about helping me make more strategic business moves or navigate a career. It was about basic leadership. Anxious to express my gratitude she'd always reply, "The way you thank me is to continuously make a contribution to others being generous with your time and advice." That's been a great guiding principle.



People often confuse mentoring and coaching, and though related they are not the same. A mentor may coach, but a coach is not a mentor. Mentoring is more relational, where mentors provide both professional and personal support. Coaching is more functional – managers should coach all of their staff as a required part of the job.

My earliest mentor-protégé relationship began when I started studying music at eight years old and throughout my career I've continued to find great value from mentors. The concept is ancient, memorably featured in Homer's "Odyssey."

**Mentoring** actually comes from the Greek word that means *enduring*. Both mentors and protégés can greatly benefit in

these relationships as mentors can pass along valuable insights and past experiences while the mentees gain guidance and practice by doing. Both organizations and individuals profit from formal and informal mentoring as it:

- **Builds** the next generation to carry forward company missions
- **Demonstrates** professional and corporate commitment to ongoing learning and development
- **Improves** communication skills
- **Celebrates** contributions and sets an example for the current and future workforce in how to cultivate market leadership

The *share it with others* advice from my first mentor has led me to many interesting opportunities. Most recent was a formal mentoring program with a national industry organization. Among my colleagues in the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association ([hbanet.org](http://hbanet.org)), there were amazing achievements by both mentors and mentees including strengthened leadership, career distinction and successful professional transitions that reaped



business as well as personal benefits.

As part of a pay it forward commitment, I was also honored this year by the [Hot Mommas Project](#) at George Washington University School of Business Center for Entrepreneurial Excellence. The Hot Mommas Project is a renowned leadership research venture that includes seminars and the world's largest women's case study library providing online mentorship for women and girls. Research on resources from this program have been proven to boost self-confidence in women ages 18 and over between 10 and 200 percent. As a Top 25 Case Author, my case study on professional and personal milestones and turning points is part of [HotMommas.org](#) used to help teach and motivate and is available free of charge to women and girls, educators, thought leaders, trainers and parents around the world.

Like any good relationship, mentoring takes investment and work. It's worth it, particularly in smaller and mid-sized companies where development resources may be more limited. Research and anecdotal evidence prove its impact. For Jack Welch it's clearly a part about how we achieve success. For why it's important to us as human beings, Winston Churchill said it best – "we make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give."

## New Links

A great starting point for both mentors and protégés - [Five Questions Every Mentor Must Ask](#)

See our website at [www.aeriecompany.com](http://www.aeriecompany.com) for more links.

## About The Aerie Company

**Because it's challenging at the top**, The Aerie Company collaborates with organizations and executives to identify, articulate and communicate their value.

For more information on how we can help you build market leadership that demonstrates your distinctive benefits and communications impact, visit our website or contact us at [info@aeriecompany.com](mailto:info@aeriecompany.com).



*Suzanne Jones*

**Click [here](#) to check out previous insights from The Aerie Company on best practices, advice on communication and building market leadership**