

Teach Our Children Well, and Learn Something in the Process

Becoming a mentor isn't just an obligation, it's an opportunity

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Many professionals complain about the work ethic of recent graduates and how our education system may be failing our youth. Some of these problems are very real, but as business professionals and entrepreneurs, we can step up to the front of classrooms (or work behind the scenes) to ensure that the next generation is well-schooled.

I never cease to be delighted by the wonderful people I meet through activities in the education sector. The kids I meet are full of ideas and passion, and as I teach them about business, they inspire me too.

Last week, I had a chance to meet some great high school students at Lincoln High School's Academy of Finance, part of the national [NFTE](#) program. I taught the 11th graders how to deliver a firm handshake and an elevator speech. Then, I went to a reunion of New York City school graduates and met some of the terrific folks who work for and with [PENCIL](#). They are recruiting business leaders to work with both students and faculty to improve the quality of education in our city. I ended the week with a fundraising party for [Yonkers Partners in Education](#). Among their many accomplishments is the opening of [college centers](#) in schools that never had them before. My company also now has a high school intern through [Her Honor](#), a program that matches high-potential high school seniors with professional women mentors.

We all [remember those teachers](#) we had throughout our school days and early days of our careers; the people who filled our heads with ideas, skills, inspiration, and discipline (when we needed it). As we get older (and hopefully wiser), we have an opportunity - maybe even an obligation - to share our knowledge with the people who will be leading, inventing, building, and inspiring in the future. The kids are all right...but they will be better with your help.

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