

Who is the right mentor for me?

It is fairly common to hear about the importance of having a mentor or mentors in our industry. Some of us have been fortunate enough to have worked for someone or with someone we consider to be a mentor. However, what made them valuable to us?

Many times we have looked to someone and wanted them to be a mentor because of their reputation or stature in the golf business--maybe they were a top merchandiser, or an accomplished teacher, or just seem to have had all the right jobs in the industry. Certainly from a knowledge standpoint, there is much to be learned from those individuals who have seen great success, and we all should take advantage of that when given the opportunity.

The acclaimed late American poet Maya Angelou described a great mentor in a very different way, "in order to be a mentor, and an effective one, one must care. You must care. You don't have to know how many square miles are in Idaho, you don't need to know what is the chemical makeup of a molecule, or of blood or water. Know what you know and care about the person, care about what you know and care about the person you're sharing with."

There is a recurring theme in what she says here. In fact, she uses a single word five times in her description of a mentor. The word is care. From her standpoint, then the best mentor you can seek out in golf is someone who has shown a genuine interest in you as a person and your future as a golf professional.

I encourage all of you to seek out mentors that challenge you to think for yourself and guide you to find your own voice.