



Unlock the Mystery of the Product



- The product is an extension of the essential question
- Your research results in either something tangible or something you can DO
- The product involves a Community Mentor
- The product should take about 15 hours

Things to Do

Hands On!

design. . . create. . . build. . . repair. . . collect

Present Something!

conference . . . teach. . . produce. . . direct. . . sponsor. . . entertain

Train for Something!

intern. . . examine. . . train. . . shadow. . . assist

Publish Something!

proposal. . . advertisement. . . article. . . handbook. . . brochure

Help Someone!

little kids. . . elderly. . . low-income. . . non-native speakers. . . sick

My Essential Question is: _____

Test It! Is it . . .

- Open-ended, with no clear “right” answer?
- Debatable from different points of view? Could even experts disagree on the best answer?
- “Researchable”? Will you be able to find facts and statistics?
- “Edgy”? Does it ask people to think of this issue in a NEW way?
- Complex in its moral or ethical implications?
- Something YOU will have to propose a “best answer” for after looking at different opinions and facts?

IF SO. . . YOU HAVE A GOOD ESSENTIAL QUESTION

PRODUCT IDEAS

Top 4 Product Ideas	
Types of Product	My Ideas
Hands-on: design-create-build-repair-collect	
Presentation: conference-teach-produce-direct-sponsor	
Work-Based Learning: intern-examine-train-job shadow	
Publish: Proposals-advertisements-articles-handbooks-brochures	
Other	

What kind of Mentor do I need?

- 21 years of age or older
- Professional training or expertise in student's field of interest
- Not a member of student's immediate family
- May be . . .neighbor, business associate of immediate family, or member of the community
- Must be willing to consult with the student for at least 15 hours on the project.

Virtual Mentor	Face-to-Face Mentor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail or phone contact only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-to-face contact at job site, school, or home • Mentor MUST have Off-Campus Volunteer Clearance with WCPSS. . . .Mentor may do this by visiting any school and filling out the Volunteer form at http://www2.wcpss.net/businessapps.htm
Student Must. . .	Student Must. . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail or call prospective Virtual Mentor to request interviews • Get approval of a Virtual Mentor by phone or e-mail. • Complete the Mentor Confirmation Form via e-mail or fax. Submit to homeroom teacher. • Keep track of contact hours on log and get e-mail verification from the Virtual Mentor by the due date. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail or call prospective Face-to-Face Mentor to ask if s/he is willing to serve as a F2F Mentor. Follow up by sending the Mentor Information Form for Volunteer Registration with Wake County Schools. • Complete the Mentor Confirmation Form. Return to your homeroom teacher. • Visit your Mentor at job site, school, or home for interviews and other support. • Keep track of hours on log and get Mentor's signature at each visit. Submit to Graduation Project Coach by the due date.



STEP OUT!

FIND YOUR MENTOR!

Step One: Ask a teacher who teaches about your topic: **Do you know someone who can help me with this topic _____?**

Step Two: Ask a teacher who teaches about your topic: **Do you belong to a professional organization or civic organization where there might be someone who can help me with this topic _____?**

Step Three: As your counselor/coach/youth leader/boss/religious leader/neighbor: **Do you know someone who can help me with this topic _____?**

Step Four: Google professional organizations and businesses related to your topic. Send an e-mail to the contact person and ask: **Is there someone in your organization who can help me explore this topic _____?**

Step Five: Follow up with all leads and ask them the same questions. Maybe they can help. If not, ask them: **Could you give me the name of someone else who can help?**

Step Six: Follow up with new leads and ask them the same questions. Maybe they can help. If not, ask them: **Could you give me the name of someone who can help?**

Step Seven: Ask the person who says “yes” whether s/h will sign up to be a **Face-to-Face Mentor** or prefers to be a **Virtual Mentor**. Then send/give them the **Mentor Confirmation Form** and set up a time to discuss your project.

First Steps First

Make a list of 5 "Possibilities" for your Community Mentor.

Ask around! Most contacts are only 3 "degrees of separation" away!

Do your "homework."

Impress your Possible Mentor by already knowing about him/her!

Find out...full name...job title...expertise...career history...awards

Write out a script.

This way, you won't be fumbling for words.

Draft a follow-up e-mail that you can send right after you talk.

You will impress your Potential Mentor by being organized and ready for action!

Be sure to speak to the right person. Leave a voice mail if you need to.

Don't give in and talk to a "lower down." Ask to speak with the person you want.

Make an appointment for the "real" conversation.

You will call back at a mutually agreeable time to ask the Interview questions.

If your 1st Possible Mentor is too busy to commit, don't take it personally.

People are busy! Say a heartfelt "thank you." Maybe this person will help you later.

Before you hang up, ask if this person can recommend someone else for you to contact.

Call them!...or move on to another person on your Possibilities list.

Leave a good impression.

Say Thank You, and mean it! You never know when you might come across them again.

Professional networking is all about keeping doors open for later.

Step Up! Write a Script!

The First Call . . .

Hello, Mr./Mrs. _____. I appreciate you taking my call.

My name is _____. I am a junior at Apex High school. I am currently working on my graduation project on _____. Are you familiar with the Graduation Project? (*If not, explain the 4 P's and the fact that the GP is REQUIRED for you to graduate.*)

I need to connect this topic to the "real world" which will align to my research paper. I understand that you are _____ [*include some professional details here*] and I know that your expertise will help me understand the issues at the heart of my graduation project.

I know you are busy, so I would like to set up an appointment to ask you some questions over the phone about my topic. When would be a good time for you?

Or . . . would you rather I send you my questions by e-mail? What e-mail address would you like me to use? (*Write it down!!*)

For my project, I need to verify that we have actually talked. May I send you the information I need?

Thank you for your time. I look forward to talking with you on _____ at _____ [*appointment time*].

The First Interview . . .

Hello Mr./Mrs. _____. This is _____, calling about my graduation project topic. I appreciate you taking my call.

The things I need to find out today have to do with _____ [Give the general focus of this particular interview].

[Ask your questions slowly. Repeat the answers as you write them down.]

[Ask follow-up questions to make sure you understand the information.] Does this mean that _____ or is it actually _____?

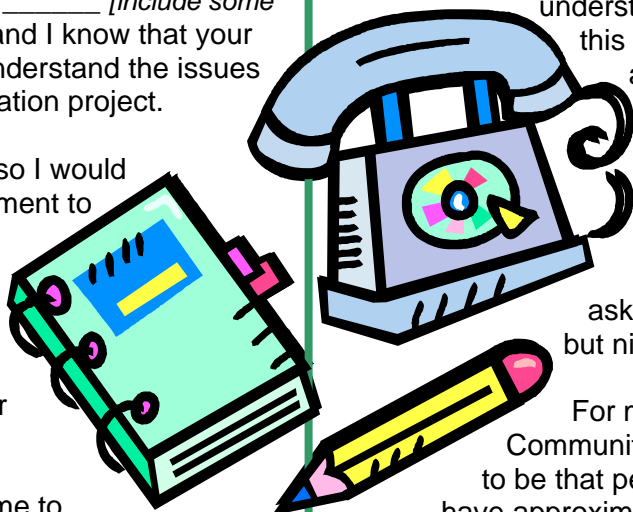
Do you mind explaining that again? [Feel free to ask the source to pause so you can get the information. Also you may ask them to repeat something. . . but nicely!!]

For my product, I need to have a Community Mentor. If you are willing to be that person for me, I would need to have approximately 3-5 meetings with you to be sure that my product has a good connection to my research. Would you mind being named my Community Mentor? [*Explain that a Virtual Mentor would not meet face-to-face. However, if your mentor would be willing to meet face-to-face, explain how to come in to school and register as an approved WCPSS volunteer.*]

I look forward to connecting your information to my project. I will send you the mentor confirmation form and Graduation Project information.

Thank you for your time. I'll get in touch with you again in another week or so.

Thank you again for your help, I appreciate your time.





Apex High School

Business Etiquette

The Top Five

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Be on time. | Call ahead if you will be late. |
| Dress appropriately for the office. | Not sure? Visit similar offices to check it out. |
| Use standard English. | Avoid language that could lead to stereotyping you. |
| Be generous with "Thank You". | Before, during, and after. Say at least 3 thank you's. |
| Be the best version of yourself. | Don't chew gum |

Be Respectful. . .

- . . .of others' time.
They are doing you a favor!
- . . .of others' opinions.
Don't argue! Ask questions.
- . . .of others' expertise.
You are not the expert here!
- . . .of others' property.
Hands off their desk, etc.
- . . .of others' positions.
In the real world, observe the power structure of the office.

What To do When You Have an Appointment

- Get there ten minutes early
- Identify yourself to the receptionist
- Sit quietly while you wait
- When greeting your mentor, shake hands firmly and look the professional in the eye. Speak clearly but not overly loud.
- Say thank you before, during, and after
- Show interest and ask follow-up questions
- Don't overstay your welcome

On The Phone . . .

- Write out your script ahead of time
- The receptionist will answer. Identify yourself: full name, with whom you would like to speak, and why.
- Don't be put off if you are sent to voicemail.
- Speak slowly and clearly, especially when giving telephone numbers. Don't mumble and don't rush through your message.
- If you are connected directly to your professional resource, tell him/her everything you told the receptionist.
- Say thank you before, during, and after. Make your mentor glad s/he's spending time with you.
- Ask if this is a good time to talk. If not, set a telephone appointment. Call back.
- Be pleasant and avoid sarcasm.
- Ask if you can call back if you have questions.

Write a courtesy note, thanking them for their time!