



Cloud Coach | Same Mentor Messages

The Gateway Prompts suggest mentors confine their messages to three paragraphs. We know that working out how to write an impactful message in three paragraphs can be tricky. Use these sample mentor messages as idea-starters for what your message could look like.

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Week One

Hi Stephanie,

I'm really excited to be partnered with you for Cloud Coach!! My name is Matt and I am male. I grew up in Bloomington, Minnesota and I still live there now. I live by a big nature preserve (kind of like a park) with lots of bike trails. Do you like to bike? Some other things about me: I really like to read (I love Harry Potter!) and I love dogs, but I don't have one yet.

I am a Cloud Coach Program Associate for BestPrep. That means I help set up each Cloud Coach connection. I talk to teachers about how they will introduce the program to you and set dates for the Kick-Off, company presentations, and Cloud Summit. I also help write directions for mentors, so they know what to do, too. Let me know if you have questions about my job!

I know you're writing to me in class. How is school going so far? What are your favorite classes? When I started 9th grade, I was nervous that the classes were going to be really hard. They were definitely harder than middle school, but I found I actually liked the challenge (sometimes I even read my textbooks for fun – what a nerd!). I also liked that the teachers gave me more responsibility and treated me a little bit more like a grown-up. I want to know: what do you think of school?

Looking forward to hearing from you soon!

Matt

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Week 2

Hi Stephanie,

Thank you for your email! I really enjoyed American History, too! Isn't it funny to think that compared to the rest of the world, we're a pretty young country? So much has happened! If you could travel back in time to any event in American History, where would you go? About your presentation, I know it can be scary to get up and talk in front of the class. I have to give presentations now and again for work and I always get butterflies. The key is to breathe. If you find your heart is racing or it's hard to get your words out, just pause, take a breath, and continue on. You can do it!!

I'm interested in hearing about your life outside of school. When you're not in class, what are you mainly spending your time on? Personally, I'm trying to learn more about music. I took piano lessons when I was younger. Now I'm trying to slowly re-teach myself how to play. I really like Broadway musicals (do you like theater?), and right now I'm learning "Waving Through A Window" from Dear Evan Hansen. You should check it out online and tell me what you think of it! Anyways, I want to know about you. What are your interests and hobbies?

Until next time!

Matt

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Week 3

Hi Stephanie,

I really enjoyed reading your last message! Babysitting your younger sister is a big job! I'm the baby of the family, and I think I was probably so annoying to my sister and brother. Do you and your sister get along? What's your age difference?

If you like taking care of kids and you like History, maybe you'd like to be a history teacher? I say that because I'm curious if you're thinking about life after high school. What do you want to do for a job or career? What would your dream job be? When I was your age, I really wanted to be a writer. I wanted to be the next J.K. Rowling. Pretty ambitious, right? Obviously, I haven't written any mega bestsellers – yet. I'm in my current job because I also like working with students and being in a school setting. And I'm still writing on my own time.

No matter where you end up career-wise, it's a safe bet your boss will look at your educational background – and that includes high school. When I was in school, math was really, really hard for me. I could memorize the rules, but it was hard for me to understand why things are the way they are. One of my teachers suggested I go to the after-school tutoring center, and with a lot of hard work, I scraped by with a B minus. If I hadn't put in the time to improve, I don't think my application to colleges would've been as strong, and later on, my application to jobs. Do you think there's a connection between school and your future job?

Talk soon!

Matt

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Week 4

Hi Stephanie,

I'm glad to hear you're doing so well! You must feel a lot better with mid-terms behind you! I say take some time to do something fun— you deserve it! It's okay that you're not sure what you want to do career-wise. I'm a decade older than you and I'm still not sure what I want to do. You've got lots and lots of time to decide. Let's keep thinking about possible careers as we go on.

Even if you don't know what career you'll pursue, you can definitely start thinking about post-high school education now. It sounds like you're interested in attending a 4-year college, yeah? A college degree can be expensive (although there are plenty of things you can do to lower the cost), but it's worth it. I just saw a graph that said people with college degrees can earn tens of thousands of dollars more than they would with only a high school diploma. If you could go to school anywhere, where would you go? Would you want to go to school in Minnesota or go somewhere else?

I also want to talk a little bit about “soft” skills. These are the skills that are more related to your personality than what you learn in school, but they're probably just as important to your future bosses as school learning is. Being on time, demonstrating a positive attitude, politeness, managing your workload – all the skills that you learn from family and friends, those are “soft” skills. One soft skill that I've been working on is my phone “presence” (like, how I sound on the phone). Yes, that's a skill! I want people to know I'm professional even when I'm not physically in the same room. One soft skill I'm proud of is my ability to respond quickly to emails. Even little things like that can make a big impression. Can you think of any soft skills that you're proud of? Or any that you think you should work on?

Best,

Matt

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Week 5

Hi Stephanie,

Thank you for that thoughtful reply! You're right, managing your time is such an important soft skill! Like you, I was involved in a ton of different activities in high school. Once I forgot to show up for a practice session with my Speech & Debate coach. She had traveled a long way to get to my school, so it was pretty rude of me not to show. I hurt my chances of becoming captain and had to do a lot of extra work to make up for it. How do you manage your time? Do you keep a calendar on your phone?

We've been talking a lot about the future. Let's talk a little about right now. Do you have a goal or something you want to accomplish this year? When I was around your age, I had a goal to increase my math grade from a C (mid-terms) to a B (final grade). Part of my plan was to try and do at least half of the extra practice problems my teacher handed out before a test. The other part of my plan was to go to after-school tutoring once a week. I'm not sure I always followed my plan, but I was pretty good about doing it most of the time. Sure enough: B minus (which is close enough, right? Haha).

The best goals are realistic, specific, valuable, and timebound. A goal shouldn't be too hard (like climbing mount Everest) or too easy (climbing your front steps). It should also be something that's important to you and have an end date. That way you'll know if you accomplished it or not. What do you think a good goal for you could be? Do you see any potential obstacles that might keep you from achieving it? How could you plan for those now?

Can't wait to hear from you soon!

Matt

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Week 6

Hi Stephanie,

I enjoyed reading about your goal! I think getting a 5 on your AP US History exam is a great goal, and you have some great plans laid out to help you achieve that. Does your school have a career or college advisor? Sometimes they have study aid books that you can borrow.

This week we're talking about Personal Branding. Here's a little about what I think a Personal Brand is. Think of your best friend. What adjectives come to mind when you think of them? Cool, funny, nice? If you asked them to for a favor, how would they respond? What about if a teacher asked them for a favor? You have an idea of who this person is. That's their Personal Brand: everything you expect them to be or do when you interact with them. It might be helpful to give an example of someone I admire, like J.K. Rowling. For her, I think: smart, funny, creative and composed. That's her brand.

I want people to think I am professional, kind, hardworking, and approachable. That's my brand. But I can't just say I'm these things, I have to show people I am through my actions. That's why I always try to make my work as high-quality as possible, and to be friendly to others when they ask for my help. I ask myself: is my work as thorough as it can possibly be? Have I followed up on every loose thread? Now I have some questions for you. If you had to describe your Personal Brand using 3-5 adjectives, what would you say? If you can't decide, can you think of a celebrity whose brand you admire?

I'm eager to hear what you have to say!

Matt

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Week 7

Hi Stephanie,

Can you believe it's week seven already?! Time flies! I'm really happy to hear that you got an A on that presentation. I know that you worked really hard, and now all of that hard work has paid off. Also, what you said about your Personal Brand is so true. I would absolutely describe you as smart, conscientious, and a good leader. I would even add responsible to the list. You are clearly someone people can rely on.

I wanted to briefly touch on how mistakes and failure relate to our Personal Brands. Everybody has moments where they fall short of their best self. How you react to making mistakes says a lot about you as a person. Think about someone you know or admire who has experienced failure. How did they react? What does that say about their Personal Brand? Here's an example: pro tennis player Andy Roddick once told a line judge that his opponent's shot was good (it was within the lines). Because of that call, he lost the game, but he proved that he had integrity and showed he was trustworthy for future calls. People (myself included) really admired his willingness to be fair, even when it hurt him.

Now that we've talked about interests, goals, skills, and personal brand, I want to know your thoughts about our time together. One thing I learned about you (and admire) is that you make sure that the people around you are alright. You've talked to me multiple times about how you've made sure your History class group understands the material. Keep doing that! Being sensitive to different needs and abilities is something good leaders do. In fact, you inspired me to be a better leader in my workplace. I'm going to spend more time thinking about how I can change my communication style to best communicate with my co-workers. What about you? Have you learned anything new about yourself?

Best,

Matt

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Week 8

Hi Stephanie,

Thank you for writing to me these past weeks! It has been so much fun getting to know you! I was so happy to hear that you've started to think about becoming a History teacher. I think that is an excellent career path for you! Even if you change your mind, it is good to be thinking about your possibilities now. I know you have an amazing future ahead of you—you just need to make sure you keep putting in the time and effort now. It all pays off down the road (if not always in the way you expect).

Best wishes as you work toward your goal to get a 5 on the AP US History exam. That study group you mentioned sounds like a great idea. And once you accomplish this goal, keep setting new ones! I think you'll find that they naturally build off each other. The important part is to keep doing your best.

I know connecting with someone through writing can be a little awkward, and I appreciate you sticking it out and writing such great messages to me every week. I hope you enjoyed our discussions as much as I did and I wish you all the best for the future. Keep up the great work!

Best,

Matt