

Dog Breeding: Being a Good Mentor

Taking a closer look at the roles mentors must fill.

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Third, by identifying timeframes and benchmarks of success the mentorship's success can be more readily measured and its efforts more clearly focused.

In some cases such an agreement may aim for eventual partnership and equality between the two parties. In other cases it may simply look at individual goals, such as having a first litter, finishing a first champion, attending a national specialty, buying a dog from another line, etc. Regardless, such a plan affords a great deal of structure in what can be an otherwise winding and unpredictable path. It outlines the roles of each of the participants and forces both to take ownership of their expectations and responsibilities to make it happen. The agreement should be reviewed regularly, perhaps even annually, as often the source of contention in relationships stems from diverging expectations that have not been clearly communicated.

TrustIn the end, mentors who find themselves unable to trust their proteges over time need to seriously reevaluate whether that individual is a worthy student, or what their own attitudes are toward the relationship. After all, a mentorship without trust has limited possibilities in the long run.

Knowing when your student is ready to strike out on his or her own and providing him or her with the opportunity and encouragement to do so is the greatest gift a mentor can give. This transition is key. Sure, he or she will make mistakes, just as you havebut they will learn and grow even more in the doing than they ever could have through your telling.