

Be a BUILD Mentor!

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What qualities do you look for in a mentor?

A: It's important that our mentors believe in higher education and the importance of access to college for all youth, regardless of their circumstances. We also want mentors that are consistent, patient, positive and reliable.

Q: Who are BUILD students?

A: BUILD students are between the ages of 14 – 18 years old and attend one of our partner high schools. BUILD students are usually from under-resourced communities and are disengaged in the classroom. Many BUILD students go on to be the first in their families to enroll and graduate from college.

Q: How does mentoring work?

A: At BUILD, we have a group mentoring model. Mentors work in pairs and are matched with a team of students ranging in size from 4 – 8 students. Mentors work with the same team of students for at least one academic year and meet with students at least once a week in the evenings. Mentor sessions are facilitated by a BUILD staff member or teacher and all mentors are provided with an agenda and clear deliverables for each session.

Q: What skills do I need to be a mentor?

A: Our most successful mentors are those who are interested in working with high school students, believe in our mission, and are able to make the time commitment. Patience is important too! Our students are teenagers and are likely facing issues at school, home and in their communities. You do not need to have business skills or a formal business education to be a successful mentor because all of the mentor training and business content is provided by BUILD staff and/or teachers.

Q: What do mentors actually do?

A: As a mentor you'll support a team of students as they create, launch and run their own business. All of the mentor sessions are facilitated by a BUILD teacher or staff member and your role encompasses being a coach, motivator and advisor for your team. As a mentor, it's important to guide students through the entrepreneurial process and allow students to fail as part of the process. Your job is to help them learn from failure and celebrate their successes.

Q: What is the time commitment?

A: The time commitment is 2 hours a week on the same day each week, for an academic year. You will also be expected to attend approximately 3 – 5 special events outside of your usual 2 hours a week which you will know about well in advance.

Q: What are some examples of student businesses?

A: Student business ideas are 100% student generated and can be anything they want. Some examples of past businesses are: shoe cleaning kits, duct tape wallets, customized apparel, organic lip balm, and creative phone case designs.

Q: What do BUILD students do after the program?

A: Our most recent data shows that 96% of students that finish the 4-year program graduate from high school. And 94% of our high school graduates go on to enroll in college.

