



Bill Zeigler—Professor, Mentor, Friend

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There are people who pursue the occupation of teacher from the start, and there are those who come to it later in life. One such man was Bill Zeigler. He made a name for himself in the world of Akron business working up the ranks at Goodyear Tire & Rubber for forty years until his retirement. But retirement didn't quite suit him, so he embarked upon the adventure of becoming a part-time professor at The University of Akron in the School of Business in the 1990s.

Hundreds of students reaped the reward of his decision as he helped us gain a better understanding of how to

market a product and develop a brand. Yet it wasn't even the academic stuff that would become his legacy for many of us. It was his personal attention and commitment to mentorship.

With the help of his accomplished and tremendous wife, Pat, he got to know his students, took them under his wing, and was a listening ear and second opinion beyond the confines of the classroom. As parents to two daughters, he and Pat were particularly passionate about promoting opportunity for women in business. They would invite us to their home for dinner, discuss potential career paths, introduce us to decision makers at Fortune 500 companies, and give us any guidance they could in landing a job to secure a successful career.

In my life I've had dozens of professors at several institutions, and there have only ever been two who truly took on the role of mentor to the highest level. Bill Zeigler was one of them. He was always willing to listen and lend a hand. He was there for graduations, job interviews and for me, even my wedding, offering an encouraging word with an unrelenting passion for helping his students.

Sadly, Bill passed away in 2012. I can only hope that future University of Akron students are gifted a professor as accomplished and caring as Mr. Zeigler. He certainly had an impact on my life, as I'm sure he did on many others.