

Management Tips: How to Build Positive Relationships at Work (Joel Garfinkle)

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Drake Editorial Team

Building positive workplace relationships is vital for career success.

Relationships can affect your satisfaction with the job, as well as your ability to advance and gain recognition for your achievements. When you build positive relationships, you feel more comfortable with your interactions and less intimidated by others. You feel a closer bond with the people you spend the majority of your time working with.

For a lot of people, relationship building isn't natural or easy to do. Most refuse to admit this is a concern because it is a basic common-sense concept, and they assume they already know how to do it. However, everyone, even the most outgoing engaging personalities, can improve their skills in this critical area.

To build positive workplace relationships, apply these ten tips to interactions with your boss, team members, project managers, senior management, vendors, clients, customers, direct reports, and administrators.

1. **Share more of yourself at meetings**

One of the best ways to build relationships is to let others know who you are. You can achieve this by sharing your expertise, knowledge, and personality at meetings. Other people will get to know you, like you, or want to hear more from you. They will find you more approachable, and the chance of building relationships begins to occur. If you are fearful of sharing at meetings, prepare yourself ahead of time with what you want to say.

2. **Speak positively about the people you work with especially to your boss**

Always speak positively to others and provide quality feedback about the people you work with. Shared information — positive or negative — often comes back to the person being discussed. People enjoy hearing that you have said supportive things about them and will know that you are on their side. That will build trust. Beware of workplace gossip, which is usually so prevalent, and don't contribute to it.

3. **Support other people's work**

Ask how you can get involved. This will form a closer connection because you are working directly with others to help them meet their goals. They will appreciate your support and get to know you better, which is vital to creating a more connected working relationship.

4. **Ask others to become involved in your projects or activities**

Don't be afraid to ask others for help and to bring them onto your projects. The more they can participate in the activities you are working on, the better you get to know each other. You'll enjoy working with others as well as getting more things done.

5. Write thank-you notes

Write notes of appreciation to the people who are doing exemplary work, making positive contributions, and going above the call of duty. These notes can be hard-written, sent via email, or done by voice mail. Send them to people above you, below you, or at the peer level. Colleagues like to be appreciated and will feel closer to you by having been noticed and thanked for their contributions.

6. Initiate conversations by asking questions

Meeting someone new can be a bit intimidating, as you may not know what to say or how to say it. Asking questions is a great way for you to listen and let the other person share. They will feel closer to you when they have shared and you have demonstrated you're interested in what they have to say. Then share something about yourself to make the relationship a two-way interaction to help form a bond.

7. Initiate repeated interactions and communications

An important part to building relationships is to continue interacting with the person you have met. As you get to know each other better, personally and professionally, you establish a closer connection that can greatly increase your satisfaction.

8. Participate in activities with others that don't involve work

As you get to know someone, you may find similar interests that warrant activity outside of work and begin the process towards friendship. Go out to lunch together during the work day or do things in the evenings or weekends. If you are married, you can visit with other couples to establish more connection at work.

9. Share information

The information you share can be directly related to others' work, or it can be about a subject you know they will enjoy learning about. You are showing that you are thinking of them and helping them by providing information or content.

10. Introduce yourself at social work events

Social events — lunches or dinners with colleagues, retreats, conferences, and holiday parties — are good opportunities to interact in an informal setting. If you can reach out and introduce yourself to some of the people you work with or want to know better, you'll find they are more inclined to let down their guard. It will be easier for you to get to know them and share who you are.

Building positive relationships often provides increased resources to help you get your job done and to be more efficient. You'll enjoy greater satisfaction at work, and so will those around you.

Reprinted with the permission of Joel Garfinkle, a top US leadership coach who has worked with many leading companies, including Google, Amazon, Starbucks, Deloitte, Cisco Systems, Oracle, Ritz-Carlton, Citibank, and Microsoft. He has written seven books, including *Getting Ahead: Three Steps to Take Your Career to the Next Level*. Visit www.GarfinkleExecutiveCoaching.com to learn about his books and executive coaching services, access over 300 free articles, or subscribe to his Fulfillment@Work newsletter and receive the free e-book, *41 Proven Strategies to Get Promoted Now!*

Building positive relationships and working well together is important for employee motivation and engagement, as well as for reducing turnover costs. [Drake P3](#) is an online assessment solution that reveals a person's natural tendencies, communication styles, emotional intelligence, motivational needs, decision-making abilities, energy levels, and more.