Building Positive Relationships at Work

It is a human quality to seek the friendship and interaction of others, social interaction has the ability to influence the state of our mental health; therefore it is important to have positive relationships at home and in the workplace. It has been researched that the more content a person is in the workplace, the more productive they will be. Having positive and healthy relationships within the workplace also benefits us in many other ways. Our work becomes more enjoyable when we get along with our co-workers, we become more innovative and resourceful, and we are more likely to engage with changes that may be implemented.

What defines a positive relationship?

Trust
This is the foundation to good relationships. If you form a trusting environment with co-workers, you create a strong connection that will assist you to communicate more effectively, being direct and honest in your opinions and actions. If trust exists with your co-workers, less time is wasted on workplace conflict or miscommunication.

Respect
If you respect your co-workers, you value their involvement and ideas, and in return they will value yours. By working together, you create solutions built on a shared understanding, knowledge and vision.

Awareness
People who are self-aware are mindful of others, and attend to what they say without letting their own negative feelings affect others around them. Therefore taking responsibility for your own words and actions is critical.

Encouraging Diversity
Those with positive relationships not only accept diverse people and views, but they welcome and encourage them. An example of this is taking the time to reflect on the different opinions of friends and co-workers, and actually considering what it is they have to say when you're faced with decision-making circumstances.

Open Communication
Communication is something we do every day in a variety of forms and methods such as over the phone, email, or meeting face-to-face. Communication can be both verbal and non-verbal, so it is important to be aware of your tone and body language, as well as the actual words you say and write when speaking to your colleagues. The more effectively you communicate with the people around you, the more positive and healthy your relationships will become. Just remember that honest and open communication equals a positive and healthy relationship.

How to build a positive work relationship:

Identify Your Relationship Needs
Look at what you need in a relationship. Do you know what it is you need from others? And are you aware of what they need from you? Being mindful of these needs can contribute in building more positive relationships.

Organise Time to Build Relationships
Try and dedicate a portion of your day towards building better relationships with those around you. Twenty minutes out of your day can go a long way when it comes to creating a more positive bond with your colleagues.

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colleagues, and could be the change you need to enjoy your time spent at work. For instance, try popping into someone’s office during lunch, or asking a co-worker out for a quick cup of coffee. These small interactions assist you to build the foundation of a positive relationship, particularly if they’re face-to-face.

Appreciate Others
It’s always polite to express your appreciation whenever someone helps you. Everyone wants to feel that their work is appreciated, no matter what the job is. Taking the time to sincerely compliment the people around you when they do something well will open the door to achieving positive relationships in the workplace.

Be Positive
Focus on being positive. Positivity is not only attractive but contagious as well, and it will help you to strengthen your relationships with your co-workers. No one wants to be around someone who’s constantly negative.

Manage Your Boundaries
It is important to set boundaries, and make sure that you manage them appropriately. It’s natural to want to create friendships at work, but sometimes a friendship can start to effect our jobs, particularly when it begins to dominate the majority of our time. If you can feel this is starting to occur, it’s important to be clear about your boundaries, and be wary of how much time you dedicate throughout the day for social interactions.

Avoid Gossiping
Office politics and gossip are major relationships killers in the workplace. If you find yourself experiencing conflict with a colleague, talk to them directly about the matter and don’t gossip! Gossiping to other co-workers about the situation will only make matters worse, causing mistrust and hostility between you and the person you are having issues with.

Listen
Make sure you listen when talking to your colleagues. People respond to those who really listen to what they have to say. If you focus on listening more than you talk, you’ll find that you will quickly become known as someone who can be trusted.

You may occasionally come across a colleague you don’t particularly get along with - It is essential to maintain your professionalism. Make an effort to get to know them, and focus on the things you do like about them - You may find that you actually have something in common. With most people spending more than half of their waking hours at work, it is important to build the best possible relationships with those around you. Just remember – not all relationships will be great; but you can make sure that they are, at least, workable!

References: