

Leadership Tips, Winter 2005

Respect Goes a Long Way

Respect Others

Respect is a key core value for productive and cohesive teams. Respecting others means valuing them for their diversity and uniqueness. You may be tempted to spend time with people who are like you, who share your values and interests and who have similar backgrounds. The challenge is to show fairness and respect for those who are different from you.

Check yourself on this respect quiz to see if you may have some behaviors that could be misinterpreted. Answer the questions with a *yes*, *sometimes*, or *no*.

Respect Quiz

- Do you check to see if someone is free before “interrupting” his or her work?
- Do you get impatient when you have to repeat instructions and do you get an irritated tone in your voice?
- Do you ever make fun of someone who is different from you or your friends?
- Do you usually take breaks with your friends and not reach out to include others?
- Do you get impatient with someone who is slower to learn something than you are?
- Do you get impatient when others don’t agree with you and insist on doing things differently than you would do them?
- Do you ever feel uncomfortable with people who are from a different generation and have different interests or values?
- Do you ever tell off-color jokes or jokes that use racial, religious, or gender slurs?

If you answered *yes* or *sometimes* to any of the questions, set a goal to enhance your awareness and sensitivity toward others. Meet people from different ethnic backgrounds, or different ages, or those with different skills. Seek opportunities to learn from diverse people. Work on developing a broader appreciation of diversity.

Respect Yourself and Coach Others to do the Same

Think of a time when you experienced a high sense of your worthiness or usefulness. Maybe you went out of your way to help someone. Maybe you took extra time to help a co-worker who seemed frustrated. Whenever you help

someone else and go the extra mile, your self-esteem and self-respect tend to soar. Giving out rather than waiting to receive plays a big part in self-respect.

Self-respect relates to your feelings of worthiness—when you feel good about yourself and experience a sense of accomplishment, when you feel proud of what you have done and believe that you have made a contribution to others.

The more you give of yourself, the more your self-respect will grow. This doesn't mean acting like a doormat or giving in when you disagree with the basic values or principles involved. It is giving from a generous place—giving your all and feeling proud of yourself, your skills, your abilities, and who you are.

Here are some steps you can take to reinforce your sense of self-esteem and self-respect. Also use these to coach others:

- Acknowledge successes, yours and others.
- Do one thing every day out of kindness, without thought of reward or recognition. Encourage others to do the same.
- View mistakes as opportunities to learn and grow.
- Commit to self-improvement.
- Set goals and make plans to achieve them.
- Think and speak positively.
- Smile often and be courteous.
- Take time for yourself everyday. Take care of yourself physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Respect the Protocol

Everyone deserves respect and fair and equal treatment. Your boss, team leaders, and other supervisors and managers often have the right to direct your work, your priorities, and your schedule. There are times when you might resent this, especially if your boss is your age or younger. It is tempting to become buddies and forget protocol.

In the workplace, protocol exists for many valid reasons:

- Assures accountability and affixes responsibility with the right person.
- Affords respect for those who have earned the title of “manager.” Most managers have paid their dues and worked hard to get their promotions. They have greater responsibilities than you do. If you make mistakes, *they* have to answer to *their* boss about it.
- Means that you respect your boss's input and direction. You can add your input and question something, but you should support your boss's final decisions.

- Requires you to discuss issues directly with your boss. If you can't get things resolved, you can suggest that the two of you go to your boss's boss to discuss it. Avoid criticizing your boss to others.

Feel free to forward this e-mail and use it for a team discussion. Let us know if you would like more information about our team building workshops and services.

Warmly,

Marilyn and The Consulting Team

(Contents of this newsletter taken from, *Developing as a Professional*, by Dr. Marilyn Manning and Patricia Haddock. Please e-mail us if you would like an autographed copy \$13.95 + shipping. Also available through Amazon.com)

Drawing: Send us an e-mail describing your favorite "Communication Tip" by February 1st and your name will be entered in a drawing for a copy of *Developing as a Professional*.

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