



GUIDE TO BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

In these challenging and difficult times, building strong relationships and staying connected are particularly important and the benefits are recognised as far-reaching. There's a fundamental rule that "People deal with people they know, like and trust." However, that is only part of the story, people also want value from their relationships – whether business or personal.

This guide has been especially designed to help individuals develop their personal strategy for building relationships, and will provide a useful overview of how to connect well with others. By the end of working through the guide you will be able to:

- • Accept and celebrate people's differences
- • Listen and be present when you are with someone
- • Develop positive communication skills
- • Build trust and respect for others
- • Recognise the importance of empathy and kindness

To get best value from the self-managed guide we recommend that you work away from your desk if possible and find a quiet comfortable place where there are no distractions.

Let's look at a quote from Theodore Roosevelt

"The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people."

Building Relationships

When you cultivate positive and supportive relationships in your life you will feel happier and more fulfilled. It can be a very happy experience when relationships work well. However, you may well experience situations when relationships break down and you find yourself in a negative situation. This can be draining and disappointing and have a detrimental effect on your well-being by creating unnecessary frustration and stress.

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“Invest time into building strong relationships and give yourself and the people you are dealing with a huge boost.”

The advantages of building positive relationships include:

- Helps you to collaborate and work better with others
- Encourages personal growth and development
- Provides you with support during tough times
- Contributes more meaning to your life
- Increase your sense of purpose
- Makes you feel happier

Building positive relationships is essentially a combination of:

1. Establishing mutual respect and trust
2. Being fully present when you are with someone
3. Communicating in a way that works for both sides of the relationship

Stephen Covey, author of the multi million selling book “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”, told us:

“The most important ingredient we put into any relationship is not what we say or what we do, but what we are”

So how do we build relationships?

Great relationships don't just happen, and it is important to invest time and effort into building a positive and supportive network. This can help to support a collaborative workplace and create harmony at home. There are a few key behaviours that will help you to develop positive relationships and here are ten key approaches that will help you.

Next Steps

The ability to build relationships has the power to help you incredibly. There is no one magic technique that creates these partnerships but rather a variety of methods and approaches. Through the course of this article, we've looked at the art of building relationship you need to succeed. Take what works for you and apply it liberally to give you and your relationships a significant lift. Remember, the success you achieve is entirely up to you. When you put the time and energy into building strong relationships, you give yourself and the people you are dealing with a huge boost.

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Key Behaviours

1) Appreciate differences

You may feel more comfortable when you are with other people who “get” you and see things from our point of view. Life, however, would be very dull if we were all the same and, whilst you may find it initially easier, the novelty of sameness would soon wear off. Our diversity is what makes us special and appreciating and celebrating differences is a great place to start.

2) Give people your time

Giving time to people is precious. In a world where time is of the essence and we are trying to fit in so much, we don't always have time to give to our loved ones, friends, and work colleagues. The connection we make with other people is the very touchstone of our existence so devoting time and energy into nurturing those relationships is well worth the investment.

3) Be present

It is very easy to be distracted when you are with people. Whether this is because of mobile technology, other stuff that is going on around you or your own internal mind chatter. Being present and engaged when you are with someone will make them feel valued, special, and respected.

4) Really listen

Active listening is a crucial skill in boosting another person's self-esteem, the silent form of flattery that makes people feel supported and valued. Listening for feelings and understanding what others communicate to us is the most important part of successful interaction and vice versa.

5) Understand and clarify

Communication occurs when someone understands you, not just when you speak. One of the biggest dangers with communication is that we can work on the assumption that the other person has understood the message we are trying to get across. Poor communication in the workplace can lead to a culture of back-stabbing and blame, which, in turn can affect our stress levels, especially when we don't understand something or feel we have been misled.

6) Collaborate

Successful relationships are not a competition, they are a collaboration. Working together to achieve a great outcome can be so much easier when you get involved with other people and share the load. The experience can also be bonding and enriching for everyone who is involved. Identifying and embracing each other's unique skills and talents is very important in terms of getting the best results. When we help each other, everyone benefits!

7) Learn from others

Everyone you meet has the potential to teach you something. Being open-minded and willing to learn from other people will help you to grow as a person. It will also strengthen the connection that you have and build the respect.

8) Trust and respect

Trust and respect are fundamental to any positive relationship. The more you trust and respect someone the more you will share. Trust and respect are not something that is given easily, and it must be earned.

9) Empathise

Empathy and understanding builds connection between people. It is a state of perceiving and relating to another person's feelings and needs without blaming, giving advice or trying to fix the situation. Empathy also means “reading” another person's inner state and interpreting it in a way that will help the other person and offer support and develop mutual trust.

10) Be kind

One of the greatest benefits of kindness is that you will make other people feel good. There are scientifically proven advantages to being kind that show that when you do something kind for others you will also feel better about yourself. By making others feel good, you can also inspire them to want to do something kind for you, or for someone else so your kindness will have a ripple effect.

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