



Do relationships matter?

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“In many ways, effective communication begins with mutual respect, communication that inspires and encourages others to do their best.” – Zig Ziglar

Dale Carnegie once said, “people do business with people they know, like and trust.”

The idea behind this can be a powerful starting point for growing your client base **and** building high-caliber connections with your team. This concept is the foundation for any strong relationship, which is required to create a culture that motivates and inspires people to give their very best effort every day.

Just think of the relationships with your closet friends, your spouse, or an investment partner. Chances are that they all started with these simple principles.

Let’s break them down.

The dictionary defines the word “know” as “to be acquainted or familiar with.” In a business sense, this doesn’t have to translate into what you did as a little kid growing up or what’s your favorite food.... although, there is a lot to be said for catering in a gluten-free option for any team members that have an allergy.

To “know” stresses the importance of letting people learn what’s important to you and discovering what is truly important to others.

This might sound like the following.

- What are the things you are most passionate about in this role?
- What strengths have you been utilizing the most to achieve these unbelievable results?

- How do you see yourself providing the most value to the organization while finding the most fulfillment?
- What is the best way for me to share observations with you that will help you achieve even greater results?

It could also sound like this.

- I really appreciate it when teammates show respect and participate in the workplace. This looks like making eye contact and listening while others speak. It sounds like asking questions and highlighting other people’s great work.
- I work best when someone puts time on my calendar. This isn’t to say that emergencies won’t come up, but I’d appreciate you scheduling time to discuss less urgent but important items related to our project.
- I wanted to let you know that my daughter has gymnastics, so during the months of December through March, I’ll be asking for a few days off to support her.

“You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people that you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.” – Dale Carnegie

This is getting to know each other. This is learning and sharing how people (including yourself) work best.

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In fact, I'd encourage everyone to implement these discussions before, if possible, someone starts and consistently revisit over time. Having thoughtful conversations with potential candidates can be a powerful way to uncover people with the right attitude that align with your company's vision and values.

It is also a way for you to attract recruits that crave connection in the workplace. It signals to employees that their unique talents and perspectives are welcomed.

"If you believe a business is built on relationships, make building them your business." – Scott Stratten

Next, we must "like" the person. This can be tricky for some, but I'd argue that it is rather simple in practice.

This doesn't mean you agree with everyone on everything. It simply means you enjoy something; in this case, it's time.

Does your team enjoy being around you and each other? If the answer is no, then I'd encourage you to seek input on how to enhance your relationships within the organization.

The bigger question is, what makes someone enjoy being around you (in a professional sense)?

By asking this question, you can first consider what you enjoy from other people's company to start.

Consider, for example, that you like people who show a genuine interest in you as a person and

your professional success, listen to your opinions or ideas, can respectfully challenge you or encourage you to think differently about a situation, and show you support, encouragement, and accountability in a way that best suits you.

Perhaps you like people who are authentic, vulnerable, and humble. And you enjoy being around others who are comfortable being themselves and who show respect to people regardless of their title or position in life.

"The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Listed below are some specific leadership behaviors you can develop to enhance your own skillsets for being "liked" in your professional environment, as well as your personal life.

These are key components to fostering a robust connection with your entire team.

- **Listening** – Fully focusing on understanding what others are communicating without interruption or judgment.
- **Empathy** – Showing compassion for other people's perspectives.
- **Attitude** – Approaching situations with a positive, open mind that allows you to adapt, grow, and overcome challenges.

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- **Determination** – Consistently doing what’s necessary to accomplish a goal regardless of setbacks.
- **Energy** – Bringing vitality and enthusiasm to actions and interactions with others.
- **Respect** – Valuing other people by acknowledging their worth, opinions, and unique experiences.
- **Servant** – Prioritizing the growth, well-being, and achievements of others by providing what is essential for them to succeed.
- **Humility** – Being open to learning from others and never seeing yourself as more important than anyone else.
- **Intention** – Taking deliberate, purposeful action that aligns with your vision and values.
- **Passion** – Inspiring others to be their best by demonstrating your deep belief and commitment to their development.

“Everyone has an invisible sign hanging from their neck saying, ‘Make me feel important.’ Never forget this message when working with people.” – Mary Kay Ash

Lastly, comes trust.

The definition of trust is the firm belief in the reliability, integrity, and ability of someone or something else. In this case, it’s you. Trust is your ability to build confidence that others can rely on you.

This looks like honoring your commitments and respecting the boundaries that others set. It is about being fully present and available when people need your assistance and giving others clear timelines and expectations so they can do their work without interruption or constant oversight.

It must also include your commitment and ability to help others achieve their own success, celebrating their achievements, and providing unwavering support through the various challenges they may face.

“Become the kind of leader that people would follow voluntarily, even if you had no title of position. – Brian Tracy

Trust involves taking responsibility for mistakes. It includes recognizing people for what they do right just as much as advising them on how they can improve. Trust makes others feel comfortable receiving your feedback and safe sharing their concerns without fear of judgment or retaliation.

As a leader, it is your responsibility to build trust and recognize that this is an ongoing effort. It requires being consistent with your words and actions.

The good news is that when you put these simple principles into place, you will build stronger relationships within your team. You will be creating a culture centered around respect and cultivating an environment that inspires others to bring their best selves to work.

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