

Ten Tips for Creating Respect in Your Workplace

Author: Barbara Richman

The workplace is a reflection of society at large. Today, we see a gamut of behaviors that demonstrate a lack of respect and civility, both inside and outside the workplace. Studies and polls indicate that Americans view incivility as a serious problem that is getting worse. One study found that 60% of employees believe that co-workers' annoying behaviors negatively impact the workplace and, as a result, 40% reported that they are looking for new employment. These and other findings illustrate that disrespectful and uncivil behaviors drain productivity and negatively influence both an organization's bottom line and the overall economy.

If each employee develops an awareness of respectful behaviors and necessary skills, it is anticipated that employees will serve as role models and that these behaviors will spread in the workplace and beyond. The following are ten tips to assist you in accomplishing this objective:

1. Before acting, consider the impact of your words and actions on others.
2. Create an inclusive work environment. Only by recognizing and respecting individual differences and qualities can your organization fully realize its potential.
3. Self-monitor the respect that you display in all areas of your communications, including verbal, body language, and listening.
4. Understand your triggers or "hot buttons." Knowing what makes you angry and frustrated enables you to manage your reactions and respond in a more appropriate manner.
5. Take responsibility for your actions and practice self-restraint and anger management skills in responding to potential conflicts.
6. Adopt a positive and solution-driven approach in resolving conflicts.
7. Rely on facts rather than assumptions. Gather relevant facts, especially before acting on assumptions that can damage relationships.
8. Include others in your focus by considering their needs and avoiding the perception that you view yourself as the "center of the universe."
9. View today's difficult situations from a broader (big picture) and more realistic perspective by considering what they mean in the overall scheme of things.
10. "Each one influence one" by becoming a bridge builder and role model for civility and respect. Act in a manner whereby you respect yourself, demonstrate respect for others, and take advantage of every opportunity to be proactive in promoting civility and respect in your workplace.