

Your Coworker Customers

Treat coworkers as though they are your most important customers and build effective relationships with them. You will manage customer stress better and have more enthusiasm to serve customers of the organization.

Begin with three relationship skills:

- 1) Avoid trying to get the last word in when arguments begin.
- 2) Seek to spot conflicts early and resolve them quickly. Don't say, "just forget it" when you know you *won't* forget it.
- 3) Avoid verbal insults, whether direct or veiled in other remarks, when you are frustrated with coworkers.

Source: adapted from *Customer Service for Dummies*

Headache Help!

You've tried everything, so what's missing from your migraine headache management plan? Perhaps it's a support group. Susan Barron, Support Group Coordinator of the National Headache Foundation (NHF), says headache sufferers often dismiss the idea of a support group. Support groups offer ideas on relief, truly effective empathy, and medical advice from professionals. If you can't find a group, free guidance to start one is available by calling NHF at 1-888-643-5552. FYI: The latest headache medication is Frova®, approved by the FDA November 9, 2001.

Managing Memories In September



If 9/11 and September are a bit unnerving because of last year's trauma, consider these tips to make the month easier.

- 1) Remember, it is normal to have difficult memories around the anniversary of a traumatic incident.
- 2) If you feel like talking, reach out to supportive friends and family.
- 3) Writing can be helpful. Consider writing a story or account about what happened that day for future generations.
- 4) To manage anxiety, try exercise, doing things that are fun, eating well-balanced meals, and getting plenty of rest.
- 5) Do not use alcohol or drugs to manage difficult memories. This can compound the problem.
- 6) Consider whether stress symptoms are lingering from last year.

Turn to the EAP for help or assistance with other problems that may be associated with 9/11.

Organizing Business Cards

Do you have a big pile of business cards, but can't remember who the people are or what you hoped would come from keeping them? Stop the insanity! Begin jotting down words, phrases, or quick notes on the back of business cards of people you meet. Later, when you flip over the card, you will know who they are and their significance to your business.

Communication Secrets of the Pros!

Who are the world's most knowledgeable communicators and relationship builders? Professional counselors of course! Professional counselors (licensed professional counselors, psychologists, social workers, etc.) take more courses and practice more techniques in effective communication than any profession. You can benefit from what they know. Build trust, demonstrate empathy, and have more effective communication with coworkers by using the following secrets of the pros:

- "The Open-Ended Question"

What: Framing a question that requires a person to give more than a one-word answer.

Effect: The coworker feels you are very interested in what they have to say.

How to Do It: Don't say, "Are you nervous about speaking today?" Say, "What is it like to speak before such a large group?"
- "The Sandwich"

What: Giving someone negative or difficult-to-hear feedback "sandwiched" between two positive statements.

Effect: Coworker hears negative feedback without feeling attacked.

How to Do It: Don't say, "The meeting you arranged had no refreshments." Say, "The meeting was well done, but refreshments would have made it outstanding. Still, I know everyone had a good time."
- "The Paraphrase"

What: Restating what a person said in order to communicate that the person was heard.

Effect: Coworker experiences a deep sense of satisfaction that he or she was heard.

How to Do It: Don't say, "Yeah, I hear you." Say, "(Repeat the person's complete statement in your own words)."

Meditation Restoration

Meditation is a relaxation exercise conducted in a quiet, calm environment in which a person focuses on breathing to limit thoughts and attention. Although meditation has its roots in Asian religious practices, it can be used as a stress management tool, particularly for anxiety, anger, and pain. *How to Do It:* Sit upright in a comfortable chair. Close your eyes gently. Relax your shoulders and inhale and exhale a few times to clear your mind of thoughts and concerns. Begin mentally repeating a chosen word (a word that ends in "m" is usually best), or simply stay focused by counting your breaths. Meditation has been shown to help reduce blood pressure, heart rate, and respiratory rate. The EAP can help you find experts in relaxation exercises and other stress management techniques.

Laugh & Labor

Practice four skills for developing a natural sense of humor:

- 1) Understand "controlled spontaneity," the art of giving yourself permission to be humorous on the spur of the moment when appropriate.
- 2) Value vulnerability. Being able to laugh at yourself and let others join in is part of the art. If you are a credible worker, you have little to fear.
- 3) Establish open relationships with peers that permit informal communication. Drop the "always being serious about everything" style and join the group a bit.
- 4) Go for it. Chances are, you think of funny things, but don't let them fly. The best humor can arise on a momentary impulse. When people laugh, you'll feel like a genius.

FAKE I.D.s

Laws have grown more severe for the use, possession, and manufacture of fake IDs. Here are a few that young people may not know:

- 1) Conviction for the use of a fake ID can result in a permanent criminal record that will appear on an employment background check. This can ruin job hunting, prevent a person from obtaining a professional license, and bar a young person from admission to a graduate school.
- 2) Lending a fake ID to another person is a misdemeanor in most states.
- 3) Manufacturing a fake ID is a felony in many states. Parents, speak to your underage teens and young adults about the consequences of using fake IDs. The national organization, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) now sells fake ID detectors -- a reflective flashlight that can detect an altered driver's license; these flashlights are also used by the police.



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