



## Relationship Management

“Relationship management is your ability to use your awareness of your own emotions and those of others to manage interactions successfully. This ensures clear communication and effective handling of conflict. Relationship management is also the bond you build with others over time” (p. 44).

## Strategies

### **Be Open and Be Curious**

- Being open about yourself is key when it comes to developing a relationship with someone. Along with being open, you need to be curious about the other person as well.

### **Enhance Your Natural Communication Style**

- Take some time to notice how you communicate naturally with others. List some of these characteristics and consider some of the strengths and weaknesses that come with this style.

### **Avoid Giving Mixed Signals**

- Mixed signals are confusing for people so make sure that you are communicating effectively with the people around you.

### **Remember the Little Things That Pack a Punch**

- Sometimes the smallest gestures like saying “Please,” “Thank you” and “You’re Welcome” go a long way in building and maintaining relationships.

### **Take Feedback Well**

- Feedback is one of the most difficult things to hear sometimes, but how we take it reveals a lot about our character. Practice controlling your reactions to feedback.

### **Build Trust**

- Trust is very hard to build and very easy to break. Trust can be built through open communication, actions, and consistent behavior over time.

### **Have an “Open-door” Policy**

- Open-door policies allow “any employee to talk to anyone at any level, fostering upward communication through direct and easy access to everyone below” (p. 193).



### **Only Get Mad on Purpose**

- There is a time and a place to get angry, so make sure you know when it is appropriate. Anger can show passion and enthusiasm, but it can also show a lack of control over emotions.

### **Don't Avoid the Inevitable**

- Sometimes there are just some relationships that seem beyond the point of repair. In situations like this, focus instead on working effectively with this person and keeping things professional.

### **Acknowledge the Other Person's Feelings**

- This is a great first step in developing relationships. It goes a long way to just simply acknowledge that someone may be feeling a certain way and ask if there is anything you can do for them.

### **Compliment the Person's Emotions or Situation**

- Choosing a complimentary response doesn't require you to match or mirror emotions (p. 204). Your role is to use your social awareness to recognize someone's state and find a way to respond that is helpful to that person's situation.

### **When You Care, Show It**

- We can often overlook or under appreciate the work that people do, especially if they do it on such a consistent basis. It is important to thank them for the things they do even if it is by doing something very small. It will go a very long way.

### **Explain Your Decisions, Don't Just Make Them**

- If you take the time to explain your decisions to the people around you instead of just making them, you'll be surprised at the support you receive. Explaining your decisions makes other people feel like they are a part of the process.

### **Make Your Feedback Direct and Constructive**

- Just like receiving feedback is just a part of life, so is giving feedback and it can be equally as difficult. Make sure that when you give feedback it is thoughtful as well as direct and constructive.

### **Align Your *Intention* with your *Impact***

- Intention is a very important part of your actions, but you must also consider the impact that those actions make as well.

### **Offer a "Fix-it" Statement during a Broken Conversation**

- It's natural that some conversations start to go downhill and become ineffective. During times like these, offering a "fix-it" statement like "I know this is a lot, are you okay?" is enough to redirect the conversation.

### **Tackle a Tough Conversation**

- We often want to avoid having tough conversations, but they are an inevitable part of life. While they are daunting, don't let that hold you back from having them because a lot of weight will be lifted off your shoulders once you do.

