

Building Great Work Relationships Making Work Enjoyable and Productive

How good are the relationships that you have with your colleagues?

According to the Gallup Organization, people who have a best friend at work are seven times more likely to be engaged in their jobs. And it doesn't have to be a best friend: Gallup found that people who simply had a good friend in the workplace are more likely to be satisfied.

In this article, we're looking at how you can build strong, positive relationships at work. We'll see why it's important to have good working relationships, and we'll look at how to strengthen your relationships with people that you don't naturally get on with.

Why Have Good Relationships?

Human beings are naturally social creatures – we crave friendship and positive interactions, just as we do food and water. So it makes sense that the better our relationships are at work, the happier and more productive we're going to be.

Good working relationships give us several other benefits: our work is more enjoyable when we have good relationships with those around us. Also, people are more likely to go along with changes that we want to implement, and we're more innovative and creative.

What's more, good relationships give us freedom: instead of spending time and energy overcoming the problems associated with negative relationships, we can, instead, focus on opportunities.

Good relationships are also often necessary if we hope to develop our careers. After all, if your boss doesn't trust you, it's unlikely that he or she will consider you when a new position opens up. Overall, we all want to work with people we're on good terms with.

We also need good working relationships with others in our professional circle. Customers, suppliers and key stakeholders are all essential to our success. So, it's important to build and maintain good relations with these people.

Defining a Good Relationship

There are several characteristics that make up good, healthy working relationships:

- **Trust** – This is the foundation of every good relationship. When you [trust](#) your team and colleagues, you form a powerful bond that helps you to work and communicate more effectively. If you trust the people you work with, you can be open and honest in your thoughts and actions, and you don't have to waste time and energy "watching your back."
- **Mutual Respect** – When you respect the people who you work with, you value their input and ideas, and they value yours. Working together, you can develop solutions based on your collective insight, wisdom and creativity.
- **Mindfulness** – This means taking responsibility for your words and actions. Those who are mindful are careful and attend to what they say, and they don't let their own negative emotions impact the people around them.
- **Welcoming Diversity** – People with good relationships not only accept diverse people and opinions, but they welcome them. For instance, when your friends and colleagues offer different opinions from yours, you take the time to consider what they have to say, and factor their insights into your decision-making.
- **Open Communication** – We communicate all day, whether we're sending emails and IMs, or meeting face to face. The better and more effectively you communicate with those around you, the richer your relationships will be. All good relationships depend on open, honest communication.

Where to Build Good Relationships

Although we should try to build and maintain good working relationships with everyone, there are certain relationships that deserve extra attention.

For instance, you'll likely benefit from developing good relationships with key stakeholders in your organization. These are the people who have a stake in your success or failure. Forming a bond with these people will help you to ensure that your projects and career, stay on track.

To find out who these people are, do a [Stakeholder Analysis](#) . Once you've created a list of colleagues who have an interest in your projects and career, you can devote time to building and managing these relationships.

Clients and customers are another group who deserve extra attention.

Think of the last time you had to [deal with an unhappy customer](#) ; it was probably challenging and draining. Although you may not be able to keep everyone happy 100 percent of the time, maintaining honest, trusting



relationships with your customers can help you to ensure that if things do go wrong, damage is kept to a minimum. Good relationships with clients and customers can also lead to extra sales, career advancement, and a more rewarding life.