

# **Building and Maintaining Relationships and Generations in the Workplace**

**22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Support Staff  
Conference for Administrative  
Professionals**

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Teresa Pruden, Saginaw ISD

## **Welcome!**

- **Relax and get comfortable**
- **Nature calls**
- **Introductions**
- **Share and ask questions**

## **Topics**

- **Building healthy relationships**
- **How we communicate**
- **Conflict resolution and win-win relationships**
- **Generations working together**
- **Achieving balance in our lives**

## **Key relationships**

- **Identify your key relationships**
- **Who do you interact with regularly?**
  - Spouse/partner, parent, child, sibling, friend, co-worker, boss, the in-laws, etc.
- **Do you have some key relationships you would like to improve?**

## **What's it like being in a relationship with you?**

- **Do you keep promises and honor commitments?**
- **Do you acknowledge and apologize for your mistakes?**
- **Are you loyal to the “absent?”**
- **Do you speak to everyone the same, regardless of the person or situation?**

## **What's it like being in a relationship with you?**

- **Do you honor confidential and sensitive information?**
- **Do you give credit where credit is due?**
- **Do you share knowledge and information with people who need it?**

## **Relationship Breakers**

- **Blaming others for a difficult relationship.**
- **Making decisions based on a history of mistrust.**
- **Excluding the feelings and needs of others.**
- **Giving unclear expectations or setting someone up for failure.**

“You can’t talk your way out of problems you behaved yourself into.” - Stephen Covey

## **Relationship Makers**

- **Treating others with respect.**
- **Avoiding sarcasm.**
- **Listening and paying attention.**
- **Acknowledging others.**
- **Maintaining confidentiality.**
- **Setting the “tone” at work and at home.**

## **Building emotional bank accounts**

- **Making regular deposits to build trust in a relationship through. . .**
  - **Kindness and courtesy**
  - **Keeping promises**
  - **Honoring expectations**
  - **Being loyal**
  - **Apologizing when we're wrong**
  - **Seeking first to understand**
  - **Forgiveness**

## **Your legacy...**

- **What “tribute” would you receive upon your retirement or at your 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party?**

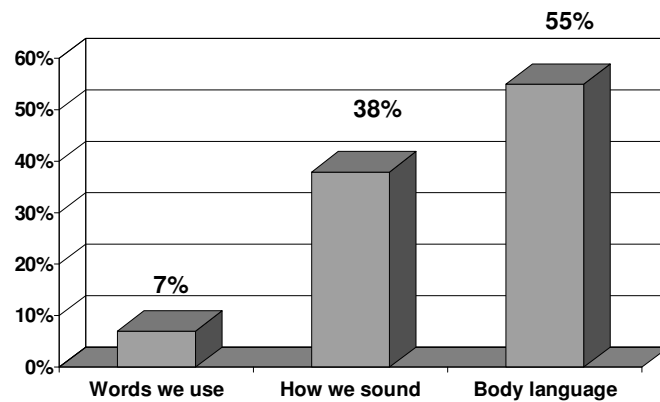
## **Relationships with parents, grandparents, guardians, citizens**

- **Smile (even if it hurts), be kind and respectful regardless of the situation**
- **Their situation is real to them, even if we have heard the same issue or complaint many times before.**
- **We all know how we like to be treated when we're "determined" to be heard.**
- **Be a good listener, especially if the situation is emotional.**

## **First Impressions**

- **How many opportunities do we have to make a good first impression?**
- **What are some of the reasons it is important to make a good first impression in the school business today?**

## How we communicate



## What this tells us

- Our body language, our stance, our facial expressions and the tone of our voice are far more important than the words we say.
- Communication skills must be built on a caring attitude and a sincere desire to understand.
- 60% of misunderstanding in day-to-day business is due to miscommunication.

## Listening

- The listener does most of the work
- 25% skill and 75% ATTITUDE
- Types of listening (and body language)
  - Pretend
  - Selective
  - Attentive
  - Empathic (often required in emotional situations)

## Listening

- Trying to listen to someone while we're checking our email or reviewing paperwork makes the person we're speaking to feel unimportant.
- AND...when people feel we're not paying attention to what they're saying, they spend four times as long saying it.

## Our Character “Communicates”

- Integrity
  - Honest and trustworthy
- Maturity
  - Keep emotions under control
- Abundance vs. scarcity mentality
  - There’s enough (attention, recognition) to go around vs. jealousy and envy

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Grown up bullies



## Characteristics of grown-up bullies

- Aggressive
- Arrogant
- Intimidating
- Sometimes “charming”

## How to defuse a bully

- Don't take the bait and try very hard to stay in control
- Remember your body language – maintain eye contact and a calm voice
- Listen before responding
- Try not to let the bully interrupt you

## How to defuse a bully

- Most importantly, use your “freedom of choice”
  - You are in control of how you respond
- It is our response to what a bully does to us that hurts us the most.

## Generations Working Together

- Flexibility is key.
- In a recent web poll, 69% of the respondents answered “yes” to the question, “Does your workplace suffer from a generation rift?”
- Understand other people’s frame of reference in life.
  - Veterans, Baby Boomers, GenXers, Nexters

## **Veterans 60-80 years old**

- **Dedicated, respectful of authority, hard working, stick to the “rules.”**
- **But... resist change, uncomfortable with conflict, reserved**
  - Respect their experience
  - Value their knowledge
  - Value their perseverance

## **Baby Boomers 43-60 years old**

- **Willing to go the extra mile, good team players, want to please, service oriented**
- **But...not “budget minded,” somewhat self-centered and materialistic, overly sensitive to feedback**
  - Account for 53% of the workforce!
  - Knowing they are valued is important
  - Desire to be appreciated for their “uniqueness”
  - Want your approval

## **GenXers 23-43 years old**

- **Technology literate, creative, unintimidated by authority, multi-taskers**
- **But...impatient, somewhat cynical about world events, lower than average “people” skills**
  - Works well in a creative environment with few rules
  - Likes a non-corporate environment
  - Wants to do it “their way”
  - Loves to hear “We’ve got the newest hardware and software.”

## **Nexters – 3-23 years old**

- **Optimistic, civic minded, high achievers, street smart, diverse**
- **But...needs supervision and structure, difficulty with handling “people” issues due to inexperience**
  - 1/3 of Nexters born to single, unwed mothers
  - Want to work with other “bright and creative people.”
  - Wants to “turn things around.”
  - Wants to be a hero.

## **Positives of Multi-Generations in the Workplace**

- **Increase the potential for creative energy.**
- **Personal and professional growth.**
- **Helps foster positive change in the workplace like more flexibility and recognition.**
- **Better problem solving.**

## **Healthy Relationships & You**

- **Where do we find the energy?**
- **How do we build capacity and find balance?**
  - **Physical needs – nutrition, exercise**
  - **Mental needs – reading, relaxation, education**
  - **Spiritual needs – nature, prayer, Yoga**
  - **Social needs – be a better person and make regular deposits in emotional bank accounts**

## Credits

- The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey
- Generations at Work, Zemke, Raines, Filipczak
- The North American Employee Review, Randstad
- Organization Development and Learning, Florida International University
- Communicating with coworkers: Easy ways to make it work, Mardy Grothe, PhD
- Training Journal, Nick Heap