

GETTING ALONG

CREATING WORK ENVIRONMENTS THAT BRING OUT OUR BEST

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Creating Environments for Them

1. Be protective of and respectful to clients, even if you believe they may not deserve it.
2. Build trust in your own ability to maintain confidentiality.
3. Set and monitor boundaries for dealing with clients and co-workers.
4. Create the environment for dealing with clients that represents the best of your position, and the best of your self.

Creating Environments for Us

1. You have the power to create your "best" environment at work.
2. We cannot assume that others have similar thoughts, preferences, or boundaries as we do.
3. We need not be friends nor share personal information in order to be friendly.
4. Speaking in ways that demean, degrade, or deface diminishes our own sense of integrity and personal stature.
5. We can "be our best" by knowing what boundaries are best for us, as well as for our workplace environments.

Creating Environments for You

1. Acknowledge the role you play in peace or turmoil, harm or help, distraction or focus.
2. Recognize that difficulties may teach you what you most need to learn.
3. Be willing to reframe how you see others' behaviors: is it misbehavior or just behavior?
4. Speak for your self with impeccable words: substitute observational feedback for compliments or criticisms.
5. Speak assertively with peacefulness and powerfulness that represent the best of you.

5 Levels of Verbal Assertiveness

The goal is to achieve the peacefulness and powerfulness of Levels 2, 3, and 4. When we understand how to speak with peaceful yet powerful messages, we offer ourselves and others *healthy* ways to build social integrity and personal authenticity.

Level 1: In Level 1, we say something nice or complimentary, but we don't really mean it. We offer the socially courteous, publicly generous response, but we are inauthentic.

Level 2: In Level 2, we may say any and all of the statements that we made in Level 1, *but we mean them*. Level 2 has us being genuinely understanding, conciliatory, apologetic, and contrite. In this level, we are both peaceful and powerful. There is no need for assertiveness because the conflict is easily and quickly resolved *within us*.

Levels 3 and 4: In Levels 3 and 4, we become as assertive as we need to be, using our words to *help rather than harm*. Calm, strong responses that convey information rather than criticism can bring both peace and power to all parties involved in a conflict. **Level 3** is matter-of-fact, straight-forward. **Level 4** is more assertive, more insistent. The differences between Level 3 and 4 can sometimes be tone of voice, facial expression, and general intensity *rather* than the words themselves.

Level 5. In Level 5, we deliver our message with extreme anger, oppression, rage, sarcasm, or aggression. We are harsh, abrasive, and harmful with our words. Bennett, 2011

Select Quotes

[According to cultural historian Warren Susman] "In the Culture of Character, the ideal self was serious, disciplined, and honorable. . . .But when [society] embraced the Culture of Personality, Americans started to focus on how others perceived them. They became captivated by people who were bold and entertaining. 'The social role demanded of all in the new Culture of Personality was that of a performer,' Susman famously wrote. 'Every American was to become a *performing self*.'" Susan Cain, 2012, p. 21 (*Quiet*)

Work is a mess: "The reality is that there is no solution to work's inherent chaos and messiness. Work by its very nature will always be uncertain. The good news is that work's messiness and uncertainty need not be distressing. They may, in fact, be just what we are looking for." Michael Carroll, 2006, p. 51 (*Awake at Work*)

"....negative states of mind . . . destroy our mental happiness; once you harbor feelings of hatred or ill feeling toward someone, once you yourself are filled by hatred or negative emotions, then other people appear to you as also hostile. So as a result there is more fear, greater inhibition and hesitation, and a sense of insecurity. Dalai Lama, 1998, p. 39 (*The Art of Happiness*)

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Topics Referenced

Conation [how we do things]	http://www.kolbe.com/theKolbeConcept/what-is-conation.cfm
Character Strengths	https://www.viapro.org/www/
Misbehavior/behavior	SongWorks 1 (Bennett & Bartholomew)
Feedback	SongWorks 1 (Bennett & Bartholomew)
Praise	http://www.peggydbennett.com/songworks-for-children-articles/

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