**Interpersonal or “Soft” Skills Tips**

Here are some tips, on how to improve our Interpersonal Skills.

* **Smile.** Few people want to be around someone who is always down in the dumps. Do your best to be friendly and upbeat with your coworkers. Maintain a positive, cheerful attitude about work and about life. Smile often. The positive energy you radiate will draw others to you.
* **Be appreciative.** Find one positive thing about everyone you work with and let them hear it. Be generous with praise and kind words of encouragement. Say thank you when someone helps you. Make colleagues feel welcome when they call or stop by your office. If you let others know that they are appreciated, they’ll want to give you their best.
* **Pay attention to others.** Observe what’s going on in other people’s lives. Acknowledge their happy milestones, and express concern and sympathy for difficult situations such as an illness or death. Make eye contact and address people by their first names. Ask others for their opinions.
* **Practice active listening.** To actively listen is to demonstrate that you intend to hear and understand another’s point of view. It means restating, in your own words, what the other person has said. In this way, you know that you understood their meaning and they know that your responses are more than lip service. Your coworkers will appreciate knowing that you really do listen to what they have to say.
* **Bring people together.** Create an environment that encourages others to work together. Treat everyone equally, and don't play favorites. Avoid talking about others behind their backs. Follow up on other people's suggestions or requests. When you make a statement or announcement, check to see that you have been understood. If folks see you as someone solid and fair, they will grow to trust you.
* **Resolve conflicts.** Take a step beyond simply bringing people together, and become someone who resolves conflicts when they arise. Learn how to be an effective mediator. If coworkers bicker over personal or professional disagreements, arrange to sit down with both parties and help sort out their differences. By taking on such a leadership role, you will garner respect and admiration from those around you.
* **Communicate clearly.** Pay close attention to both what you say and how you say it. A clear and effective communicator avoids misunderstandings with coworkers, colleagues, and associates. Verbal eloquence projects an image of intelligence and maturity, no matter what your age. If you tend to blurt out anything that comes to mind, people won’t put much weight on your words or opinions.
* **Humor them.** Don’t be afraid to be funny or clever. Most people are drawn to a person that can make them laugh. Use your sense of humor as an effective tool to lower barriers and gain people’s affection.
* **See it from their side.** *Empathy* means being able to put yourself in someone else’s shoes and understand how they feel. Try to view situations and responses from another person’s perspective. This can be accomplished through staying in touch with your own emotions; those who are cut off from their own feelings are often unable to empathize with others.
* **Don't complain.** There is nothing worse than a chronic complainer or whiner. If you simply *have* to vent about something, save it for your diary. If you must verbalize your grievances, vent to your personal friends and family, and keep it short. Spare those around you, or else you’ll get a bad reputation.