CHAPTER 13
Interpersonal Relationships at Work

Section 13.1
Your Personal Traits at Work

Section 13.2
Applying Interpersonal Skills

Exploring the Photo

SHOW RESPECT One of the ways to be an effective coworker is to show respect. Why is it important to show respect in the workplace?
Chapter Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:
- Identify personal traits and interpersonal skills that will make you an effective coworker.
- Describe steps to self-improvement.
- Summarize the rules of workplace etiquette.
- Describe the process of conflict resolution.
- Define diversity and describe effective ways to work with a diverse group of people.

Writing Activity

Imagine yourself in the career of your choice. In your notebook, write a list of traits you hope to find in your coworkers. Which of those traits do you have? How will the traits you have help you in your chosen career? What other traits do you need to develop for your career?

Get Motivated! Contact three working adults in your community. Ask them to tell you what traits are the most helpful for them in the workplace. Design a poster that illustrates these traits.
Section 13.1
Your Personal Traits at Work

Reading Guide

Before You Read
Preview: Read the Key Concepts. Write one or two sentences predicting what the section will be about.

Read to Learn
• Personal traits and interpersonal skills that will make you an effective coworker
• Steps to self-improvement

Main Idea
Demonstrating the personal traits and behaviors needed to work well with others will increase your chances of success on the job.

Key Concepts
• Develop Your Personal Traits
• Be an Effective Coworker

Key Terms
• tact
• empathize

Academic Vocabulary
You will find these words in your reading and on your tests. Use the academic vocabulary glossary to look up their definitions if necessary.
• develop
• cooperation

Graphic Organizer
As you read, list the personal traits that you want to develop and brainstorm ways in which you can develop those traits. Continue adding to your list after you finish reading. Use a chart like the one shown below to help you organize your thoughts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traits</th>
<th>Ways to Develop Traits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>• Complete all assigned tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do what you say you will do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Log On: Go to this book’s Online Learning Center through glencoe.com for an online version of this graphic organizer.

Academic Standards

English Language Arts
• Read texts to acquire new information. (NCTE 1)
• Use information resources to gather information and create and communicate knowledge. (NCTE 8)
• Develop an understanding of diversity in language use across cultures. (NCTE 9)
Develop Your Personal Traits

Good relationships at work can help you enjoy your work and do your job more effectively. You can begin to develop good relationships at work by assessing your own traits.

Look back at the work you did in Chapter 2 on getting to know yourself. You have already learned about some of the positive traits you have that help you get along with others in the workplace. These traits might include a positive self-concept, friendliness, and the ability to listen to others. Write down traits you already have that help you work well with other people. What traits do you need to develop?

Important Personal Traits

As you learned in earlier chapters, the following skills are important personal qualities to have at school, in social situations, and in the workplace:

- **Responsibility**, including dependability and positive motivation
- **Self-Esteem**, including confidence
- **Sociability**, including friendliness, enthusiasm, adaptability, and respect for other workers
- **Self-Management**, including self-control and **tact**, the ability to say and do things in a respectful way
- **Integrity and honesty**, including loyalty and trustworthiness

Most people have a combination of strengths and weaknesses. For instance, you may be honest and dependable, but lack self-esteem or self-management.

Now is the ideal time to work on developing any personal traits or behaviors that need attention. Keep in mind that you strive to improve because your success at work will be an important factor in your sense of overall well-being.
**Self-Awareness on the Job**

Self-awareness can help you adjust to new work situations. If you are self-aware, you know not only your strengths, but also the traits you need to improve.

Tracy Kagan of Miami, Florida, learned a great deal about her personal traits when she was promoted from restaurant server to assistant manager. While she had been well-liked as a server, Tracy was not popular when she first became assistant manager. In her nervousness, she criticized servers in front of customers.

Fortunately, Tracy’s supervisor recognized the problem. She spoke with Tracy about her need to be tactful. Still, changing was not easy. “Whenever I felt pressured, I had to remind myself to be polite,” Tracy says. “I made it a habit to take a deep breath when I felt myself getting upset. Then I’d smile.”

In time, Tracy developed her self-management skills. Now she enjoys her job and has won back the respect of her coworkers.

**Reading Check**  ANALYZE How might the skill of self-management help you on the job?

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**Real-World Connection**

**Election Issues**

One of your teachers has suggested that you run for president of the student government. After determining that you would be able to do a good job in this leadership role and still keep up with your courses and other activities, you agree to run. However, you later learn that a good friend is the only other candidate running for president.

**Critical Thinking** What are some ways to run a successful campaign without attacking your friend? What would the consequences be for the student body if you withdrew from the election, leaving your friend as the sole candidate?

**Do Your Own Research** Interview a candidate for office or someone who has just been elected to an office. Ask how to keep a campaign focused on the issues and not on the individuals. Write a short essay about why it is important to have a choice of candidates in an election.

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**Be an Effective Coworker**

In most jobs, you will not work alone. You will need to get along with coworkers, supervisors, customers, and colleagues in order to do your job effectively. These four traits are essential for being an effective coworker:

- Respect for others
- Understanding and empathy
- Communication skills
- A sense of humor

Being effective in your job is essential to advancing in your career.

**Respect Others**

Being respectful in your actions and your words shows others that you value them. Treat all your coworkers with respect, regardless of age, job title, or position. Showing courtesy and tolerating differences are two ways to show respect for others.

**Avoid Negative Traits**

Some negative traits that keep people from demonstrating respect to others are arrogance, prejudice, and jealousy. Arrogance is the feeling that you are superior to someone else. Remember that each worker has something important to contribute. Prejudice is a negative attitude toward a certain group of people.
The 21st Century Workplace

India Inc.

India’s educated and skilled workforce, well-developed information technology industry, and stable economy and government have made it a popular country for outsourcing work. Along with English, Hindi is India’s most-spoken official language. The language can be traced back to the 7th century, and today it is spoken by more than 437 million people around the world.

CRITICAL THINKING

Although English is spoken by many people in India, why would it be useful to be able to read or speak a few phrases in Hindi when working in India?

In Your Community

India has the second largest film industry in the world. Research what film festivals, concerts, and other events take place in your community. How could they help you learn about a new culture? Share what you learned with the class.

COMMON HINDI

WORDS AND PHRASES

- hello/ goodbye: namaste
- yes: haan
- no: naa
- please: kripyaa
- thank you: dhanyavaad
- good/better: accha

Extend Your Learning: Hindi is only one of many languages spoken in India. For links to Web sites about the languages of India, go to this book’s OLC through gianccee.com.

Jealousy can be damaging in the workplace. Jealous workers may view their coworkers as rivals, and cooperation can become difficult. A jealous worker may refuse to admit that others deserve praise or promotions.

Remember that respect is a two-way street. In most cases, the more you give, the more you will gain in return. Show respect for those who are different than you will help you get along.

Understand Others

Understanding others helps you get along and work together. You can develop understanding by showing interest in others.

- Ask your coworkers about their career goals and interests.
- Try to empathize with your coworkers. To empathize means to try to see things from another’s point of view and to gain an understanding of that person’s situation.
- Pay attention to body language. Facial expressions or how a person sits, stands, or moves can express emotions.

Communicate with Others

In communication, how well you listen is as important as what you say. Both listening and speaking well are especially important when you are working as part of a team. If you do not listen well, you will not benefit from being part of the team. Failure to convey information promptly and clearly can disrupt a project. It can make everyone on the team look bad.
Creative Business Practices

JPMORGAN CHASE

Networking

The financial services corporation JPMorgan Chase & Co. provides several networking groups for employees. These networking groups also offer employees many advantages. For example, the groups provide support for people of diverse cultures and lifestyles. The groups help employees learn more about coworkers from different backgrounds. The groups also allow senior employees to mentor or advise newer employees and to help employees with professional development.

More than 20,000 employees worldwide are active in at least one of the groups. Some of the networking groups include Administrative Professionals, Asian-Pacific Americans, Cultural Exchange, Employees with Disabilities, Hispanics/Latinos, Native Americans, Women, and Women of Color.

CRITICAL THINKING What would you expect to receive from a networking group within your workplace?

Connect to the Real World For more information about JPMorgan Chase, visit the company’s Web site via the link on this book's OLC through glencoe.com.

Do not be reluctant to speak up and ask a coworker or supervisor for help if you need it. Remember that being effective means producing results. A coworker can often provide the guidance you will need to overcome problems and get the job done.

Communicating, however, does not mean talking about your private life. You can be warm and friendly without revealing personal secrets. As you get to know your coworkers, it can be tempting to talk about personal matters. However, it is best to leave personal issues at home and spend time discussing work-related matters.

Keep Smiling

A sense of humor is the ability to see the lighter side of things. It can make it easier to get along with others, can make people feel better about themselves, and can help unite a team. Having a sense of humor means being able to laugh even when the joke is on you.

Improve Your Personal Traits

Find ways to improve your personal traits. One strategy is to keep a journal on how effectively you practice the traits you want to improve. Follow these steps to self-improvement:

• Focus on one trait at a time. For example, you might decide that you want to be more responsible, so you will focus on personal responsibility.

HOT JOBS!

Social Investing Associate

Social investing associates help investors invest in businesses whose values align with their own. For example, if you care about the environment, you may want to invest in a company whose business practices include recycling. Job requirements for social investors include strong math and finance skills, and awareness of current issues.
• Make a plan and follow it. For example, you might make a list of several chores you could do at home. Make sure you take responsibility for at least one of the chores each day.
• Keep track of your progress. For example, check your progress each night by keeping a record of every responsibility you fulfilled that day. Also write notes to yourself about areas in which you might improve. Once a week, ask an observer how you are doing.
• Move on to a new challenge once you feel you have made progress toward your goal. Choose another trait on which to focus. For example, you might decide to focus on sociability by reading to students in a local elementary school or by participating in extracurricular activities.

Look back at the list of important personal traits on page 291 and the list of traits essential for being an effective coworker on page 292. In a notebook or journal, write down which traits you think are your strong points and which you would like to improve. Include a plan for improving the traits you want to improve.

Section 13.1 After You Read

Review Key Concepts
1. Give an example of a positive personal trait and explain how it can help you get along with others.
2. Name a personal trait you would like to develop and describe the method you would use to do that.
3. Describe how you would demonstrate respect for a coworker in a job-related situation.

Practice Academic Skills
English Language Arts
4. You have been chosen to plan a “get to know your coworkers” day in your company. Write a one-page outline that explains what types of activities you have planned for the day.
5. Write a one-page memo that describes two or more suggestions for improving your personal traits.

Check your answers at this book’s OLC through glencoe.com.
Section 13.2

Applying Interpersonal Skills

Reading Guide

Before You Read
Preview: Read the Key Terms. Write one or two sentences predicting what the section will be about.

Read to Learn
- The rules of workplace etiquette
- The process of conflict resolution
- What diversity is and how to work with a diverse group of people

Main Idea
Being prepared for common workplace situations will help you to handle them effectively.

Key Concepts
- Workplace Etiquette
- Conflict Resolution
- Diversity in the Workplace

Key Terms
- etiquette
- conflict resolution
- compromise
- diversity
- stereotype

Academic Vocabulary
You will find these words in your reading and on your tests. Use the academic vocabulary glossary to look up their definitions if necessary.
- mediation
- distorted

Graphic Organizer
As you read, make notes on ways to practice good interpersonal skills in the workplace. Continue adding information in your own words after you finish reading. Use a list like the one shown to help organize your information.

Good Workplace Interpersonal Skills
- be courteous
- respect privacy
- practice conflict resolution

Log On: Go to this book’s Online Learning Center through glencoe.com for an online version of this graphic organizer.

Academic Standards

English Language Arts
- Read texts to acquire new information (NCTE 1)

Mathematics
- Understand meanings of operations and how they relate to one another

Science
- Unifying Concepts and Processes: Constancy, change, and measurement
Workplace Etiquette

Etiquette means having good manners in your dealings with people. How do you identify the right behavior for your workplace? Treat people as you would want them to treat you. When in doubt, observe experienced and successful coworkers. How do they conduct themselves at work? What do they do to get along with other people? What kinds of actions or responses do they avoid?

Here are a few basic rules of etiquette that apply to all workplaces:

• **Be courteous.** Greet your coworkers when you come to work and address people by name whenever you can. Do not interrupt private conversations, and do not talk so loudly that you disturb other people, especially those working near you. Avoid tying up equipment that other people may need to use.

• **Dress appropriately.** Whether or not your job has a dress code, you should wear neat, clean clothes. As a new employee, do not use your wardrobe or hairstyle to attract attention. Let your job performance speak for itself.

• **Be punctual.** Be at work on time, arrive at meetings promptly, and meet your deadlines. If you promise someone that you will call at a certain time, be sure to keep your word.

• **Avoid gossip.** Gossiping wastes valuable work time and can result in the spread of false or hurtful rumors.

• **Respect privacy.** Treat your coworkers’ phone calls, faxes, e-mail, and voice mail as you would treat private mail. Do not read or listen to them unless they are addressed to you. If you work in a quiet environment, keep your voice at an appropriate volume.

BE COURTEOUS Good workplace etiquette includes dressing appropriately, not reading documents that are not addressed to you, and keeping your voice at an appropriate volume. In what kinds of workplaces might louder voices be part of the working environment?
Etiquette and Your Supervisor

You should treat your supervisor with the same proper respect and courtesy you do your coworkers. However, you face the added element of wanting and needing your supervisor’s approval. Here are some things you can do to develop and maintain a good working relationship with your supervisor:

- Deal with any criticism from your supervisor in an objective and professional manner. Do not become defensive.
- Show initiative instead of bothering your supervisor with details that do not need approval.
- Whenever you can, offer to help your supervisor.
- If you have a work-related issue, discuss it with your supervisor. Be prepared to suggest your own solution.

Reading Check

Evaluate

How could changing your behavior now help you in your future career?

Conflict Resolution

Even when coworkers practice good communication, conflict can still occur. A conflict is a strong disagreement that occurs when people have different needs or ideas. When conflicts arise in the workplace, you will have to decide how to deal with them.

As a worker, you may find yourself involved in a process called conflict resolution, a problem-solving strategy for settling disputes and finding solutions that will allow each side to save face and create the least amount of ill feeling. Figure 13.1 shows the steps in conflict resolution.

Conflict resolution begins with defining the problem. For example, employees may feel that the employer refuses to compensate or reward them for overtime, but still expects them to stay late. Both the employees and the employer need to explain their points of view.
After defining the problem, each side suggests a solution to the problem. For example, the employer might suggest providing incentives such as quarterly bonuses or dinner. The employees may state they want to be paid wages for overtime worked.

Next, the parties have to evaluate different solutions. Both sides explain what they can or cannot agree on in order to find a solution. Both sides try to reach an agreement. This is the time to think creatively and brainstorm different ways to come up with a solution. Both sides probably will have to compromise, which means to give up something.

**Figure 13.1 STEPS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

- **Define the Problem**
  - Each party takes a turn describing the problem from his or her point of view. Participants should show respect for each other.

- **Suggest a Solution**
  - Each party suggests a solution to the problem.

- **Evaluate the Solutions**
  - The solutions are discussed. Each party explains those parts of the solutions with which they agree and those parts they cannot accept.

- **Seek Mediation**
  - If no solution is reached, the parties invite a third party to listen and make suggestions.

- **Seek Arbitration**
  - Arbitration is used when the parties cannot agree on what the solution should be. The parties submit the conflict to a third party who will make the final decision.

- **Compromise**
  - If the parties are fairly close to agreeing, they may compromise or settle the dispute by each agreeing to give something up.

- **Think Creatively**
  - If the parties cannot compromise, they brainstorm different ways to approach the problem and try again to reach a compromise.

**Finding Solutions**
Conflict resolution is a way for the people involved in a dispute to work out a solution to their problem. They try to work together to bring the conflict to an end. Why do you think this diagram shows a choice of steps for finding a resolution?
Sometimes the people involved in conflict resolution cannot reach a solution. They have to seek mediation. In mediation, a third party is asked to listen to both sides and try to find a solution. Sometimes even mediation fails and the parties have to seek arbitration. In arbitration, a third party is asked to hear the case, much like in mediation. In arbitration, however, both sides must agree to the solution the third party suggests.

Conflict resolution focuses on the issues, not on the personalities of the people involved. You can prepare yourself for conflict resolution by practicing your communication and problem-solving skills in school and in any disputes you may have with friends.

**Reading Check**  **ANALYZE** In what types of careers would conflict-resolution skills be useful?

**Diversity in the Workplace**

The United States has always been a nation of diversity or variety, in which each individual contributes something special. In most workplaces in this country, many different kinds of people come together for a common purpose—to get a job done and to earn a living.

**Respect Differences**

Showing respect for differences in culture, religion, age, gender, and viewpoint can minimize conflict at work. It shows that you are part of a community of workers with common needs and goals. It is also a way to broaden your understanding, and perhaps make some exciting discoveries as well.
Overcoming Stereotypes

To succeed in the diverse global workplace, today’s workers must look beyond stereotypes. A stereotype is an oversimplified and distorted belief about a person or group. Negative stereotypes can be harmful.

Many businesses today sponsor diversity training programs to help employees overcome stereotyping in the following areas:

- **Cultural Distinctions** People from different ethnic backgrounds have different customs. What is polite in one culture may be rude in another (such as certain gestures or forms of address). It is important to remember, however, that cultural blunders happen even among those who have the best intentions. Learn by reading and observing, and apologize if you are unintentionally impolite.

- **Gender Distinctions** Effective coworkers have mutual respect for one another regardless of gender. Remember that it is wrong—and illegal—to harass or discriminate against someone because of his or her gender.

- **Generational Distinctions** People of one age group sometimes feel they have little in common with people in other age groups. As a young person, your point of view may differ from that of older people. You can bridge any difference in opinions by listening carefully to the other person’s point of view and finding ideas on which you can agree.

By keeping an open mind and treating people fairly, you will pave the way for smooth working relationships based on mutual respect.

Section 13.2 After You Read

Review Key Concepts

1. Describe how you would handle this situation: You just picked up a memo from your boss to another manager detailing the reasons a coworker should be fired.
2. Explain why creative thinking is a big part of the conflict resolution process.
3. Name four behaviors that can help you deal with diversity on the job.

Practice Academic Skills

**Mathematics**

4. Half of the 40 people in Mara’s office are women. If 30% of the women are Latina, how many Latina women work in her office?

- **ONLINE** **Multiplying Percents** To multiply percents, first change the percents to decimals. Be sure to place the decimal point in the product correctly.

  **Step 1:** Multiply the percent of employees who are women (50%) by the percent of the women who are Latina (30%).
  
  **Step 2:** Multiply the answer to Step 1 by the total number of employees.

For more practice, go to this book’s OLC through glencoe.com.