

Human relations abilities and skills are essential for developing meaningful professional and personal relationships. These skills can help employees create a positive work environment, enhance collaboration and improve productivity. You can improve your career, leadership style and communication by developing your human relation skills. In this article, we define what human relations skills are, discuss some examples of these skills, explain how to improve them, describe their utility in the workplace and share how to highlight them while applying for jobs.

The value of "the importance of human relationships" is so much a part of what we as social workers do that it often goes unnoticed, yet it is the foundation upon which everything else is built.

In my own work as a social work practitioner and professor of social work, I know that when I focus on technique or facts and forget to connect with those around me, I fail. When I trust myself, relax, and enjoy the company I keep, the job gets done. I learned this early in my career, when interviewing an elderly Hispanic couple. I practiced the technique of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy with perfection, but alas, I forgot to attend to my audience, whose personal culture was heavily invested in the importance of human relationships. They left and never came back, and they taught me a lesson vital to helping future clients and teaching future students - attend to the relationship, stay in the present moment, and everything else will fall into place.

We rely on the strength of human relationships to survive and thrive. We are born into the world vulnerable, weak, and in need of physical and emotional nurturing. Immediately, we reach out to secure our first relationships. These original attachments are key to shaping a lifetime of connections to others. The strength of the original human relationship provides a path into the future, helping to define what is possible.

We also leave the world vulnerable and weak and, just as in infancy, we reach out for support from those around us. The level of support we get will often be based on the strength of the relationships we have created throughout our lives. Lessons from the dying include the bedrock understanding that our illusions of invincibility and independence just don't stand up to the truth of the need for connection.

Social workers support the strengthening of human relationships with those who are being born and those who are dying. The years between birth and death - when we grow, learn, create a life, and see our life carried forward through our children or those we touch - are characterized by the same need for interdependence. In these times of making a life, social workers are there to assess the strength of our connections to each other. More than any other helping field, this is social work's calling.

That calling is our territory as social workers. The best social work students, practitioners, and teachers are not those who are encyclopedic in their knowledge or flawless in their technique (if there could be such a thing), but those who show that each and every person they meet is the center of the universe at that moment. When we do that, we create and strengthen relationships, and our goals are met. May we always look into the eyes of our clients or students and see that beyond what they are asking in the moment, what they want more than anything is our connection

14 principles of management:

Henry Fayol, also known as the Father of Modern Management Theory, gave a new perception on the concept of management. He introduced a general theory that can be applied to all levels of management and every department. He envisioned maximising managerial efficiency. Today, Fayol's theory is practised by the management to organise and regulate the internal activities of an organisation. The fourteen principles of management created by Henri Fayol are explained below.

1. Division of Work

Henri believed that segregating work in the workforce amongst the workers will enhance the quality of the product. Similarly, he also concluded that the division of work improves the productivity, efficiency, accuracy and speed of the workers. This principle is appropriate for both the managerial as well as a technical work level.

2. Authority and Responsibility

These are the two key aspects of management. Authority facilitates the management to work efficiently, and responsibility makes them responsible for the work done under their guidance or leadership.

3. Discipline

Without discipline, nothing can be accomplished. It is the core value for any project or any management. Good performance and sensible interrelation make the management job easy and comprehensive. Employees' good behaviour also helps them smoothly build and progress in their professional careers.

4. Unity of Command

This means an employee should have only one boss and follow his command. If an employee has to follow more than one boss, there begins a conflict of interest and can create confusion.

5. Unity of Direction

Whoever is engaged in the same activity should have a unified goal. This means all the people working in a company should have one goal and motive which will make the work easier and achieve the set goal easily.

6. Subordination of Individual Interest

This indicates a company should work unitedly towards the interest of a company rather than personal interest. Be subordinate to the purposes of an organisation. This refers to the whole chain of command in a company.

7. Remuneration

This plays an important role in motivating the workers of a company. Remuneration can be monetary or non-monetary. Ideally, it should be according to an individual's efforts they have put forth.

8. Centralization

In any company, the management or any authority responsible for the decision-making process should be neutral. However, this depends on the size of an organisation. Henri Fayol stressed on the point that there should be a balance between the hierarchy and division of power.

9. Scalar Chain

Fayol, on this principle, highlights that the hierarchy steps should be from the top to the lowest. This is necessary so that every employee knows their immediate senior also they should be able to contact any, if needed.

10. Order

A company should maintain a well-defined work order to have a favourable work culture. The positive atmosphere in the workplace will boost more positive productivity.

11. Equity

All employees should be treated equally and respectfully. It's the responsibility of a manager that no employees face discrimination.

12. Stability

An employee delivers the best if they feel secure in their job. It is the duty of the management to offer job security to their employees.

13. Initiative

The management should support and encourage the employees to take initiatives in an organisation. It will help them to increase their motivation and morale.

14. Esprit de Corps

It is the responsibility of the management to motivate their employees and be supportive of each other regularly. Developing trust and mutual understanding will lead to a positive outcome and work environment.

In conclusion, the 14 Principles of Management are the pillars of any organisation. They are integral for prediction, planning, decision-making, process management, control and coordination.

What Are My Strengths?

Most people think they know what they are good at. They are usually wrong. More often, people know what they are not good at—and even then more people are wrong than right. And yet, a person can perform only from strength. One cannot build performance on weaknesses, let alone on something one cannot do at all.

Throughout history, people had little need to know their strengths. A person was born into a position and a line of work: The peasant's son would also be a peasant; the artisan's daughter, an artisan's wife; and so on. But now people have choices. We need to know our strengths in order to know where we belong.

The only way to discover your strengths is through feedback analysis. Whenever you make a key decision or take a key action, write down what you expect will happen. Nine or 12 months later, compare the actual results with your expectations. I have been practicing this method for 15 to 20 years now, and every time I do it, I am surprised. The feedback analysis showed me, for instance—and to my great surprise—that I have an intuitive understanding of technical people, whether they are engineers or accountants or market researchers. It also showed me that I don't really resonate with generalists.

Several implications for action follow from feedback analysis. First and foremost, concentrate on your strengths. Put yourself where your strengths can produce results.

Second, work on improving your strengths. Analysis will rapidly show where you need to improve skills or acquire new ones. It will also show the gaps in your knowledge—and those can usually be filled. Mathematicians are born, but everyone can learn trigonometry.

Third, discover where your intellectual arrogance is causing disabling ignorance and overcome it. Far too many people—especially people with great expertise in one area—are contemptuous of knowledge in other areas or believe that being bright is a substitute for knowledge. First-rate engineers, for instance, tend to take pride in not knowing anything about people. Human beings, they believe, are much too disorderly for the good engineering mind. Human resources professionals, by contrast, often pride themselves on their ignorance of elementary accounting

or of quantitative methods altogether. But taking pride in such ignorance is self-defeating. Go to work on acquiring the skills and knowledge you need to fully realize your strengths.

It takes far more energy to improve from incompetence to mediocrity than to improve from first-rate performance to excellence.

It is equally essential to remedy your bad habits—the things you do or fail to do that inhibit your effectiveness and performance. Such habits will quickly show up in the feedback. For example, a planner may find that his beautiful plans fail because he does not follow through on them. Like so many brilliant people, he believes that ideas move mountains. But bulldozers move mountains; ideas show where the bulldozers should go to work. This planner will have to learn that the work does not stop when the plan is completed. He must find people to carry out the plan and explain it to them. He must adapt and change it as he puts it into action. And finally, he must decide when to stop pushing the plan.

At the same time, feedback will also reveal when the problem is a lack of manners. Manners are the lubricating oil of an organization. It is a law of nature that two moving bodies in contact with each other create friction. This is as true for human beings as it is for inanimate objects. Manners—simple things like saying “please” and “thank you” and knowing a person’s name or asking after her family—enable two people to work together whether they like each other or not. Bright people, especially bright young people, often do not understand this. If analysis shows that someone’s brilliant work fails again and again as soon as cooperation from others is required, it probably indicates a lack of courtesy—that is, a lack of manners.

Comparing your expectations with your results also indicates what not to do. We all have a vast number of areas in which we have no talent or skill and little chance of becoming even mediocre. In those areas a person—and especially a knowledge worker—should not take on work, jobs, and assignments. One should waste as little effort as possible on improving areas of low competence. It takes far more energy and work to improve from incompetence to mediocrity than it takes to improve from first-rate performance to excellence. And yet most people—especially most teachers and most organizations—concentrate on making incompetent performers into mediocre ones. Energy, resources, and time should go instead to making a competent person into a star performer.

How Do I Perform?

Amazingly few people know how they get things done. Indeed, most of us do not even know that different people work and perform differently. Too many people work in ways that are not their ways, and that almost guarantees non-performance. For knowledge workers, How do I perform? may be an even more important question than What are my strengths?

Like one’s strengths, how one performs is unique. It is a matter of personality. Whether personality be a matter of nature or nurture, it surely is formed long before a person goes to work. And *how* a person performs is a given, just as *what* a person is good at or not good at is

a given. A person's way of performing can be slightly modified, but it is unlikely to be completely changed—and certainly not easily. Just as people achieve results by doing what they are good at, they also achieve results by working in ways that they best perform. A few common personality traits usually determine how a person performs.

Am I a reader or a listener?

The first thing to know is whether you are a reader or a listener. Far too few people even know that there are readers and listeners and that people are rarely both. Even fewer know which of the two they themselves are. But some examples will show how damaging such ignorance can be.

When Dwight Eisenhower was Supreme Commander of the Allied forces in Europe, he was the darling of the press. His press conferences were famous for their style—General Eisenhower showed total command of whatever question he was asked, and he was able to describe a situation and explain a policy in two or three beautifully polished and elegant sentences. Ten years later, the same journalists who had been his admirers held President Eisenhower in open contempt. He never addressed the questions, they complained, but rambled on endlessly about something else. And they constantly ridiculed him for butchering the King's English in incoherent and ungrammatical answers.

What Are My Values?

To be able to manage yourself, you finally have to ask, What are my values? This is not a question of ethics. With respect to ethics, the rules are the same for everybody, and the test is a simple one. I call it the "mirror test."

In the early years of this century, the most highly respected diplomat of all the great powers was the German ambassador in London. He was clearly destined for great things—to become his country's foreign minister, at least, if not its federal chancellor. Yet in 1906 he abruptly resigned rather than preside over a dinner given by the diplomatic corps for Edward VII. The king was a notorious womanizer and made it clear what kind of dinner he wanted. The ambassador is reported to have said, "I refuse to see a pimp in the mirror in the morning when I shave."

That is the mirror test. Ethics requires that you ask yourself, What kind of person do I want to see in the mirror in the morning? What is ethical behavior in one kind of organization or situation is ethical behavior in another. But ethics is only part of a value system—especially of an organization's value system.

To work in an organization whose value system is unacceptable or incompatible with one's own condemns a person both to frustration and to nonperformance.

Responsibility for Relationships

Very few people work by themselves and achieve results by themselves—a few great artists, a few great scientists, a few great athletes. Most people work with others and are effective with other people. That is true whether they are members of an organization or independently employed. Managing yourself requires taking responsibility for relationships. This has two parts.

The first is to accept the fact that other people are as much individuals as you yourself are. They perversely insist on behaving like human beings. This means that they too have their strengths; they too have their ways of getting things done; they too have their values. To be effective, therefore, you have to know the strengths, the performance modes, and the values of your coworkers.

That sounds obvious, but few people pay attention to it. Typical is the person who was trained to write reports in his or her first assignment because that boss was a reader. Even if the next boss is a listener, the person goes on writing reports that, invariably, produce no results. Invariably the boss will think the employee is stupid, incompetent, and lazy, and he or she will fail. But that could have been avoided if the employee had only looked at the new boss and analyzed how *this* boss performs.

Bosses are neither a title on the organization chart nor a “function.” They are individuals and are entitled to do their work in the way they do it best. It is incumbent on the people who work with them to observe them, to find out how they work, and to adapt themselves to what makes their bosses most effective. This, in fact, is the secret of “managing” the boss.

The same holds true for all your coworkers. Each works his or her way, not your way. And each is entitled to work in his or her way. What matters is whether they perform and what their values are. As for how they perform—each is likely to do it differently. The first secret of effectiveness is to understand the people you work with and depend on so that you can make use of their strengths, their ways of working, and their values. Working relationships are as much based on the people as they are on the work.

The second part of relationship responsibility is taking responsibility for communication. Whenever I, or any other consultant, start to work with an organization, the first thing I hear about are all the personality conflicts. Most of these arise from the fact that people do not know what other people are doing and how they do their work, or what contribution the other people are concentrating on and what results they expect. And the reason they do not know is that they have not asked and therefore have not been told.

This failure to ask reflects human stupidity less than it reflects human history. Until recently, it was unnecessary to tell any of these things to anybody. In the medieval city, everyone in a district plied the same trade. In the countryside, everyone in a valley planted the same crop as soon as the frost was out of the ground. Even those few people who did things that were not “common” worked alone, so they did not have to tell anyone what they were doing.

Today the great majority of people work with others who have different tasks and responsibilities. The marketing vice president may have come out of sales and know everything about sales, but she knows nothing about the things she has never done—pricing, advertising, packaging, and the like. So the people who do these things must make sure that the marketing vice president understands what they are trying to do, why they are trying to do it, how they are going to do it, and what results to expect.

If the marketing vice president does not understand what these high-grade knowledge specialists are doing, it is primarily their fault, not hers. They have not educated her. Conversely, it is the marketing vice president's responsibility to make sure that all of her coworkers understand how she looks at marketing: what her goals are, how she works, and what she expects of herself and of each one of them.

The first secret of effectiveness is to understand the people you work with so that you can make use of their strengths. **The Second Half of Your Life**

When work for most people meant manual labor, there was no need to worry about the second half of your life. You simply kept on doing what you had always done. And if you were lucky enough to survive 40 years of hard work in the mill or on the railroad, you were quite happy to spend the rest of your life doing nothing. Today, however, most work is knowledge work, and knowledge workers are not "finished" after 40 years on the job, they are merely bored.

We hear a great deal of talk about the midlife crisis of the executive. It is mostly boredom. At 45, most executives have reached the peak of their business careers, and they know it. After 20 years of doing very much the same kind of work, they are very good at their jobs. But they are not learning or contributing or deriving challenge and satisfaction from the job. And yet they are still likely to face another 20 if not 25 years of work. That is why managing oneself increasingly leads one to begin a second career.

There are three ways to develop a second career. The first is actually to start one. Often this takes nothing more than moving from one kind of organization to another: the divisional controller in a large corporation, for instance, becomes the controller of a medium-sized hospital. But there are also growing numbers of people who move into different lines of work altogether: the business executive or government official who enters the ministry at 45, for instance; or the midlevel manager who leaves corporate life after 20 years to attend law school and become a small-town attorney.

We will see many more second careers undertaken by people who have achieved modest success in their first jobs. Such people have substantial skills, and they know how to work. They need a community—the house is empty with the children gone—and they need income as well. But above all, they need challenge.

The second way to prepare for the second half of your life is to develop a parallel career. Many people who are very successful in their first careers stay in the work they have been doing,

either on a full-time or part-time or consulting basis. But in addition, they create a parallel job, usually in a nonprofit organization, that takes another 10 hours of work a week. They might take over the administration of their church, for instance, or the presidency of the local Girl Scouts council. They might run the battered women's shelter, work as a children's librarian for the local public library, sit on the school board, and so on.

Finally, there are the social entrepreneurs. These are usually people who have been very successful in their first careers. They love their work, but it no longer challenges them. In many cases they keep on doing what they have been doing all along but spend less and less of their time on it. They also start another activity, usually a nonprofit. My friend Bob Buford, for example, built a very successful television company that he still runs. But he has also founded and built a successful nonprofit organization that works with Protestant churches, and he is building another to teach social entrepreneurs how to manage their own nonprofit ventures while still running their original businesses.

People who manage the second half of their lives may always be a minority. The majority may "retire on the job" and count the years until their actual retirement. But it is this minority, the men and women who see a long working-life expectancy as an opportunity both for themselves and for society, who will become leaders and models.

There is one prerequisite for managing the second half of your life: You must begin long before you enter it. When it first became clear 30 years ago that working-life expectancies were lengthening very fast, many observers (including myself) believed that retired people would increasingly become volunteers for nonprofit institutions. That has not happened. If one does not begin to volunteer before one is 40 or so, one will not volunteer once past 60.

Similarly, all the social entrepreneurs I know began to work in their chosen second enterprise long before they reached their peak in their original business. Consider the example of a successful lawyer, the legal counsel to a large corporation, who has started a venture to establish model schools in his state. He began to do volunteer legal work for the schools when he was around 35. He was elected to the school board at age 40. At age 50, when he had amassed a fortune, he started his own enterprise to build and to run model schools. He is, however, still working nearly full-time as the lead counsel in the company he helped found as a young lawyer.

There is one prerequisite for managing the second half of your life: You must begin doing so long before you enter it.

There is another reason to develop a second major interest, and to develop it early. No one can expect to live very long without experiencing a serious setback in his or her life or work. There is the competent engineer who is passed over for promotion at age 45. There is the competent college professor who realizes at age 42 that she will never get a professorship at a big university, even though she may be fully qualified for it. There are tragedies in one's family life: the breakup of one's marriage or the loss of a child. At such times, a second major

interest—not just a hobby—may make all the difference. The engineer, for example, now knows that he has not been very successful in his job. But in his outside activity—as church treasurer, for example—he is a success. One’s family may break up, but in that outside activity there is still a community.

In a society in which success has become so terribly important, having options will become increasingly vital. Historically, there was no such thing as “success.” The overwhelming majority of people did not expect anything but to stay in their “proper station,” as an old English prayer has it. The only mobility was downward mobility.

In a knowledge society, however, we expect everyone to be a success. This is clearly an impossibility. For a great many people, there is at best an absence of failure. Wherever there is success, there has to be failure. And then it is vitally important for the individual, and equally for the individual’s family, to have an area in which he or she can contribute, make a difference, and be *somebody*. That means finding a second area—whether in a second career, a parallel career, or a social venture—that offers an opportunity for being a leader, for being respected, for being a success.

The challenges of managing oneself may seem obvious, if not elementary. And the answers may seem self-evident to the point of appearing naive. But managing oneself requires new and unprecedented things from the individual, and especially from the knowledge worker. In effect, managing oneself demands that each knowledge worker think and behave like a chief executive officer. Further, the shift from manual workers who do as they are told to knowledge workers who have to manage themselves profoundly challenges social structure. Every existing society, even the most individualistic one, takes two things for granted, if only subconsciously: that organizations outlive workers, and that most people stay put.

But today the opposite is true. Knowledge workers outlive organizations, and they are mobile. The need to manage oneself is therefore creating a revolution in human affairs.

Attitude

Attitude is a person's evaluation of a person, object, idea, or situation, and can be positive or negative. It can also be defined as a tendency to respond in a certain way to a stimulus. Attitudes are made up of beliefs, emotional responses, and behavioral tendencies. They are often assumed to be based on past behaviors, emotions, and beliefs associated with the object being evaluated.

Perception is how people interpret information and understand the world around them. It is influenced by many factors, including:

- **Perceiver factors**

These include the perceiver's self-concept, attitudes, motives, interests, experience, and expectations.

- **Target factors**

These include the characteristics of the object being observed, such as its size, motion, sound, and background.

- **Situational factors**

These include the time, location, social setting, context, and overall business environment.

- **Cultural factors**

These include the culture in which the perceiver lives, which can affect how they view the world.

- **Emotional factors**

These include the perceiver's emotions, which can change how they perceive events.

- **Physical factors**

These include the perceiver's physical state, such as how they feel, which can affect how well they understand things around them.

- **Stimulus factors**

These include the intensity, magnitude, and repetition of the stimulus. For example, people are more likely to perceive a loud noise than a quiet one.

Understanding perception is important for understanding human behavior. People's behavior is based on their perceptions of reality, not on reality itself.

Conflict Management: Definition, Strategies, and Styles

Conflict management is an umbrella term for the way we identify and handle conflicts fairly and efficiently. The goal is to minimize the potential negative impacts that can arise from disagreements and increase the odds of a positive outcome.

At home or work, disagreements can be unpleasant, and not every dispute calls for the same response. Learn to choose the right conflict management style, and you'll be better able to respond constructively whenever disputes arise.

What is conflict management?

Conflict management refers to the way that you handle disagreements. On any given day, you may have to deal with a dispute between you and another individual, your family members, or fellow employees.

Although there are many reasons people disagree, many conflicts revolve around:

- Personal values (real or perceived)
- Perceptions

- Conflicting goals
- Power dynamics
- Communication style

5 conflict management styles

It's human to deal with conflict by defaulting to what's comfortable. According to University of Pittsburgh professors of management Ken Thomas and Ralph Kilmann, most people take one of two approaches to conflict management, assertiveness or cooperativeness [1]. From these approaches come five modes or styles of conflict management:

1. Accommodating

An accommodating mode of conflict management tends to be high in cooperation but low in assertiveness. When you use this style, you resolve the disagreement by sacrificing your own needs and desires for those of the other party.

This management style might benefit your work when conflicts are trivial and you need to move on quickly. At home, this style works when your relationship with your roommate, partner, or child is more important than being right. Although accommodation might be optimal for some conflicts, others require a more assertive style.

2. Avoiding

When avoiding, you try to dodge or bypass a conflict. This style of managing conflicts is low in assertiveness and cooperativeness. Avoidance is unproductive for handling most disputes because it may leave the other party feeling like you don't care. Also, if left unresolved, some conflicts become much more troublesome.

However, an avoiding management style works in situations where:

- You need time to think through a disagreement.
- You have more pressing problems to deal with first.
- The risks of confronting a problem outweigh the benefits.

3. Collaborating

A collaborating conflict management style demands a high level of cooperation from all parties involved. Individuals in a dispute come together to find a respectful resolution that benefits everyone. Collaborating works best if you have plenty of time and are on the same power level as the other parties involved. If not, you may be better off choosing another style.

4. Competing

When you use a competitive conflict management style (sometimes called 'forcing'), you put your own needs and desires over those of others. This style is high in assertiveness and low in cooperation. In other words, it's the opposite of accommodating. While you might think this style

would never be acceptable, it's sometimes needed when you are in a higher position of power than other parties and need to resolve a dispute quickly.

5. Compromising

Compromising demands moderate assertiveness and cooperation from all parties involved. With this type of resolution, everyone gets something they want or need. This style of managing conflict works well when time is limited. Because of time constraints, compromising isn't always as creative as collaborating, and some parties may come away less satisfied than others.

Disagreements can arise in any organization. Having people in the workplace who know how to manage conflict is key to keeping turnover low, productivity high and customers satisfied.

Though many of us tend to view conflict as a negative occurrence, it has both positive and negative aspects, which arise both during and as a result of interactions between conflicting individuals or groups.

The Positive Aspects of Conflict

In *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Settlement*, Dean Pruitt and Jeffrey Rubin identify five positive or beneficial aspects of conflict.¹

- Conflict contributes to social change ensuring both interpersonal and intergroup dynamics remain fresh and reflective of current interests and realities
- Conflict serves to “discourage premature group decision making,” forcing participants in the decision making process to explore the issues and interests at stake
- Conflict allows for the reconciliation of the parties’ concerns, which can lead to an agreement benefiting both parties’ needs, and often their relationship and organizations
- Conflict strengthens intragroup unity by providing an outlet for group members to discuss and negotiate their interests within the group. Without intragroup conflict, the health of the group typically declines
- Conflict between groups produces intra-group unity as the conflict provides the opportunity for increased intra-group cooperation while working towards the group’s common goal for the conflict’s outcome

The Negative Aspects of Conflict

Pruitt and Rubin also note that, despite most conflicts being resolved peacefully with positive outcomes, conflict has definite negative and sometimes even severe consequences.

- Conflict can distract individuals and groups from their primary purposes, leaving them with less time and resources for other activities. When conflict involves the use of “heavy contentious tactics,” it can cause the individuals or groups involved in the conflict as well as individuals or groups not involved in the conflict to divert time and resources away from other needs
- Conflict can have both short term and long term effects on the physical and psychological health of the individuals involved in or affected by the conflict. In worst case scenarios the psychological consequences can include deep trauma and diminished coping mechanisms

- Conflict can lead to “collective traumas,” which lead to “chosen trauma” and can be transmitted to future generations in the form of resentment against one’s ancestors’ enemies. Chosen trauma gives rise to group identity and keeps the flame of conflict burning

Positive conflict, also known as healthy conflict, is constructive and leads to beneficial outcomes, while negative conflict is hostile and leaves the parties worse off.

Here are some characteristics of positive conflict:

- **Open communication:** People exchange differing views in a productive way, acknowledging differences and attempting to understand the other side
- **Collaborative process:** People work together to resolve issues
- **Respectful debate:** People debate respectfully and reach mutually agreed-upon solutions
- **Creativity:** People explore opposing ideas and come up with new ideas
- **Skill expansion:** People and teams have the opportunity to expand their skills

Here are some characteristics of negative conflict:

- **Lack of communication:** People ignore each other's point of view and don't seek understanding
- **Unwillingness to compromise:** People are more interested in winning than in problem-solving
- **Stifles innovation:** People can't get past their differences, which kills productivity and innovation

Negative conflict can be destructive and have negative effects on individuals, groups, and organizations:

- **Characteristics**

Negative conflict can be characterized by a lack of desire to find a solution, a focus on assumptions instead of facts, and a failure to address differences or control expectations.

- **Effects**

Negative conflict can lead to a toxic work environment, increased stress, and reduced collaboration. It can also have negative effects on the physical and psychological health of those involved, including trauma and diminished coping mechanisms.

- **Examples**

In the workplace, negative conflict can include personal conflict, such as bringing personal issues to work, or harassment, which can be sexual, physical, or verbal.

- **Culture**

A negative conflict management culture can lead to resentment, distrust, and frustration. In contrast, a positive conflict management culture can lead to trust, engagement, and innovation.

- **Responses**

Some negative responses to conflict include criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling.

Conflict management is the process of handling disagreements in a way that minimizes negative impacts and increases the likelihood of a positive outcome. It's a crucial skill for leaders to have, and can help improve the health and productivity of an organization.

Here are some tips for conflict management:

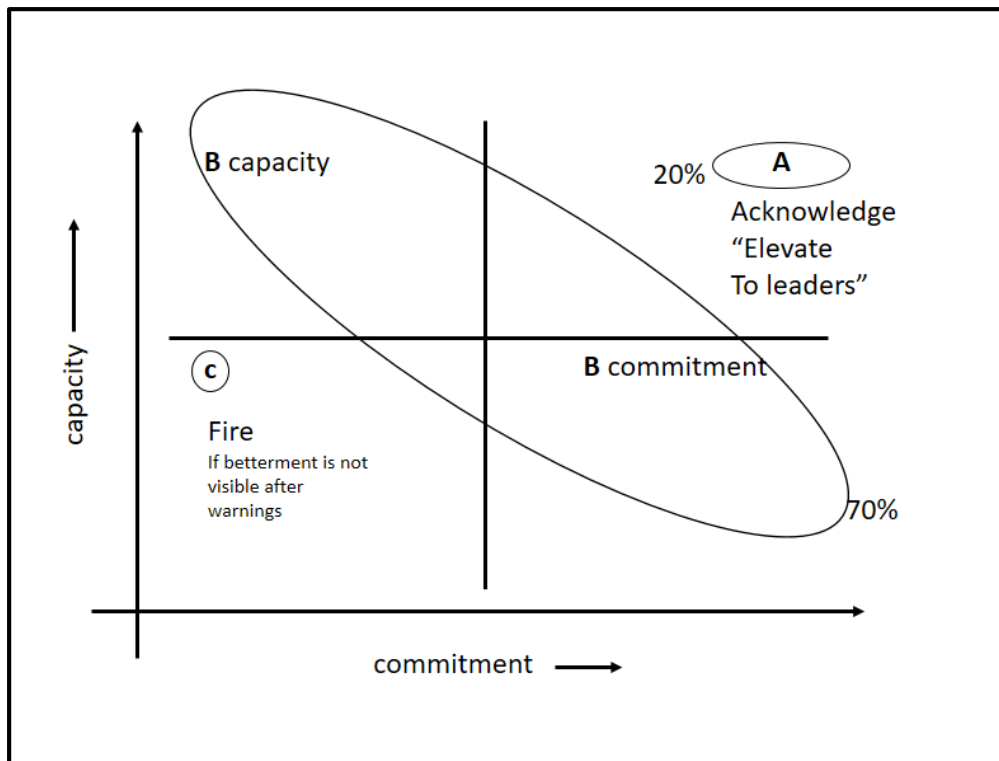
- **Acknowledge the problem:** Don't ignore the issue, even if it seems like a good idea.
- **Clarify the source:** Find out exactly what's going on by checking your sources.
- **Bring the parties together:** Act as a mediator to bring the involved parties together to talk.
- **Identify a solution:** Emphasize the importance of a win-win scenario.
- **Monitor and follow up:** Check back in to see if everyone is abiding by the agreement.
- **Speak individually and confidentially:** Listen actively to make sure you understand their point of view.
- **Don't prejudge:** Avoid jumping to conclusions.

Some conflict management styles include: accommodating, avoiding, compromising, collaborating, and competing.

Conflict can be positive if it's managed properly. It can promote: team-building skills, critical thinking, new ideas, and alternative resolutions.

Teamwork

Teamwork is when a group of people work together to achieve a common goal, with each member contributing their part to the whole. It can lead to better relationships, increased productivity, and improved morale



TUCKMAN'S STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Stages of Group Development

These stages are commonly known as: Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and Adjourning. Tuckman's model explains that as the team develops maturity and ability, relationships establish, and leadership style changes to more collaborative or shared leadership.

Tuckman's original work simply described the way he had observed groups evolve, whether they were conscious of it or not. In CORAL, the real value is in recognizing where a team is in the developmental stage process, and assisting the team to enter a stage consistent with the collaborative work put forth. In the real world, teams are often forming and changing, and each time that happens, they can move to a different Tuckman Stage. A group might be happily Norming or Performing, but a new member might force them back into Storming, or a team member may miss meetings causing the team to fall back into Storming. Project guides will be ready for this, and will help the team get back to Performing as quickly as possible.

1. Forming

The initial forming stage is the process of putting the structure of the team together. Team members feel ambiguous and conflict is avoided at all costs due to the need to be accepted into the group. Team members look to a group leader for direction and guidance, usually CORAL project guides.

Observable Behaviors

- Politeness
- Tentative joining
- Orienting with others personally
- Avoids controversy
- Cliques may form
- Need for safety and approval
- Attempts to define tasks, processes, and how it will be decided here
- Discussion of problems not relevant to the task

Feelings and Thoughts

- Many feel excited, optimistic, and full of anticipation
- Others may feel suspicious, fearful, and anxious working with others
- What is expected of me
- Why are they here
- Uncertainty and Apprehension

Team Needs

- Team mission and vision
- Establish specific objectives and tasks
- Identify roles and responsibilities of team members
- Establish team ground rules
- Team member expectations
- Operational guidelines for team
- Effective in class meetings
- Effective Chat meetings
- 1st set of feedback from project guides

Leadership Required

- Project Guides & Instructors
- provide structure and task direction
- Allow for get-acquainted time
- Create an atmosphere of confidence and optimism
- Active involvement
- Team members believe an appointed leader necessary to make decisions
- One-way communication from leader to team-members

To advance from this stage to the next stage, each member must relinquish the comfort zone of non-threatening topics and risk the possibility of conflict.

2. Storming

This stage begins to occur as the process of organizing tasks and processes surface interpersonal conflicts. Leadership, power, and structural issues dominate this stage.

Observable Behaviors

- Arguing among members
- Vying for leadership
- Differences in points of view and personal style are evident
- Lack of role clarity
- Team organizing itself
- Power struggles and clashes
- Lack of consensus-seeking behaviors
- Lack of progress
- Establishes unrealistic goals
- Concern over excessive work

Feelings & Thoughts

- Feel Defensive
- Confusion, loss of interest can result
- Resistance to tasks
- Fluctuations in attitude about the team
- Unsure if I agree with teams mission and purpose
- Question the wisdom of team members
- Increase in tension and jealousy
- Unsure about my personal influence and freedom in the team
- We're not getting anywhere

Team Needs

- Inter & intra personal relationships
- Identify stylistic and personal differences
- Effective listening
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Conflict resolution
- Clarify and understand the team's purpose
- Reestablish roles and ground rules
- How to deal with 'some' team members violating team codes of conduct
- Receiving Feedback from project guide

Leadership Required

- Project guide & Instructors acknowledge conflict
- Project Guides suggest that consensus among team members
- Get members to assume more task responsibility
- Concept of Shared Leadership emerges
- Teach conflict resolution methods
- Offer support and praise
- Actively involved Team members begin consulting one another – shared leadership emerging but have difficulty with decision making

In order to progress to the next stage, group members must move from a "testing and proving" mentality to a problem-solving mentality. The most important trait in helping teams move to the next stage is the ability of team members to listen to their team mates - what are they trying to say?

3. Norming

In this stage, team members are creating new ways of doing and being together. As the group develops cohesion, leadership changes from 'one' teammate in charge to shared leadership. Team members learn they have to trust one another for shared leadership to be effective.

Observable Behaviors

- Processes and procedures are agreed upon
- Comfortable with relationships
- Focus and energy on tasks
- Effective conflict resolution skills
- Sincere attempt to make consensual decisions
- Balanced influence, shared problem solving
- Develop team routines
- Sets and achieves task milestones

Feelings & Thoughts

- Sense of belonging to a team
- Confidence is high
- Team members feel a new ability to express criticism constructively
- Acceptance of all members in the team
- General sense of trust
- Assured that everything is going to work out okay
- Freedom to express and contribute

Team Needs

- Develop a decision making process
- Be prepared to offer ideas and suggestions
- Problem solving is shared
- Utilizing all resources to support the team effort
- Team members take responsibility in shared leadership skills
- Receiving Feedback from project guides

Leadership Required

- Shared leadership
- Give feedback and support from Project Guides
- Allow for less structure
- Promotes team interaction
- Asks for contributions from all team members
- Collaboration becomes clearer
- Encouraging others in making decisions
- Continues to build strong relationships

The major task function of stage three is the data flow between group members: They share feelings and ideas, solicit and give feedback to one another, and explore actions related to the task. Creativity is high. Collaboration emerges during this stage when team work ethic and shared leadership is understood.

The major drawback of the norming stage is that members may begin to fear the inevitable future breakup of the team; they may resist change of any sort.

4. Performing

True interdependence is the norm of this stage of group development. The team is flexible as individuals adapt to meet the needs of other team members. This is a highly productive stage both personally and professionally.

Observable Behaviors

- Fully functional teams
- Roles are clearer
- Team develops independence
- Team able to organize itself
- Flexible members function well individually, in subgroups or as a team
- Better understand each other's strengths and weaknesses and insights into group processes

Feelings & Thoughts

- Empathy for one another

- High commitment
- Begin understanding collaborative work ethic
- Tight bonds emerge
- Fun and excitement
- Lots of personal development and creativity
- General sense of satisfaction
- Continual discovery of how to sustain feelings of momentum and enthusiasm

Team Needs

- Project guides assure team is moving in collaborative direction
- Maintain team flexibility
- Measure knowledge performance – post test
- Provide information
- Giving and Receiving
- Feedback and Dialogue with project guides

Leadership Required

- Shared Leadership being practiced
- Observing, Inquiring, Fulfilling, team needs
- Collaborative efforts among team members
- Project guides provides little direction
- Team members offer positive reinforcement and support
- Share new information

The Performing stage is not reached by all groups. If group members are able to evolve to stage four, their capacity, range, and depth of personal relations expand to true interdependence. In this stage, people can work independently, in subgroups, or as a total unit with equal competencies.

5. Adjourning

In this stage typically team members are ready to leave (course termination) causing significant change to the team structure, membership, or purpose and the team during the last week of class. They experience change and transition. While the group continues to perform productively they also need time to manage their feelings of termination and transition.

Observable Behaviors

- Visible signs of grief
- Momentum slows down

- Restless Behavior
- Bursts of extreme energy usually followed by lack of energy

Feelings & Thoughts

- Sadness
- Humor (that to outsiders could appear cruel)
- Glad it is over – relief

Team Needs

- Evaluate the efforts of the team
- Tie up loose ends and tasks
- Recognize and reward team efforts

Leadership Required

- Project guides help team develop options for termination
- Good listening
- Reflection and carry forth collaborative learning to next opportunity

The final stage, adjourning, involves the termination of task behaviors and disengagement from relationships. A planned conclusion usually includes recognition for participation and achievement and an opportunity for members to say personal goodbyes. Concluding a group can create some apprehension – in effect, a minor crisis. The termination of the group is a regressive movement from giving up control to giving up inclusion in the group.

5 E's of Effective Leadership: Envision, Engage, Empower, Enable, Execute

Leadership is more than just a title or position. It's about influence, inspiration, and the ability to drive a team towards achieving common goals. In a fast-paced and ever-evolving business landscape, effective leadership has never been more important. To lead with impact and create lasting change, leaders must master a new set of skills and strategies. That's where our topic of the five E's of Effective Leadership: Envision, Engage, Empower, Enable, Execute, comes into play. Each 'E' represents a crucial aspect of leadership that not only helps create a conducive work environment but also facilitates personal and professional growth, fostering sustainable success. It's time we delve into these finer aspects that can redefine the approach to leadership.

6. Envision: the Power of Vision in Leadership

Vision is a powerful force that drives effective leadership. A clear and inspiring vision can guide leaders and their teams towards success, setting the direction and creating a sense of purpose. It is like a mental picture of the future, a picture of what can be achieved.

Why is vision important in leadership? A strong vision shows leaders where they are headed and provides motivation to keep going, even in the face of obstacles. It gives leaders focus, helping them to prioritize what is important and avoid getting caught up in the small details. A well-articulated vision also provides meaning and purpose, allowing leaders to connect with their work on a deeper level.

But how can leaders create a vision that inspires and motivates? First, leaders must start with their own values and beliefs. What is important to them? What do they want to achieve? A vision must be grounded in these values to make it authentic and compelling.

Second, leaders should clearly communicate their vision to others. They must share the picture of the future and help others understand why it is important. By listening to and embracing diverse voices, leaders make their teams feel valued and respected, fostering a sense of collaboration and unity.

Leaders also need to promote upskilling to bridge critical skills gaps and keep employees motivated. By fostering a culture of learning and providing resources for growth, leaders enable their teams to thrive and adapt to the changing landscape of work.

Sharing the vision is key. Leaders must create a realistic but ambitious vision and articulate it clearly to others. This shared vision creates a sense of common purpose and excitement, making it easier to align efforts and work towards a common goal.

Effective leaders also pursue self-development. They understand the importance of constant growth and improvement. By staying on top of industry trends, learning from others, and continuously investing in their own development, leaders can bring their best selves to their work.

Lastly, leaders must encourage others. They must be a source of hope and inspiration for their teams. By recognizing and celebrating achievements, leaders not only boost morale but also create a positive and inclusive work environment.

A clear and inspiring vision is a fundamental aspect of effective leadership. It provides direction, motivation, focus, and purpose. When leaders have a powerful vision and effectively communicate it, they can lead their teams towards success. By promoting upskilling, sharing the vision, pursuing self-development, and encouraging others, leaders can create a culture of growth, innovation, and high performance. So, let's unleash the power of vision and become the leaders that inspire and make a difference!

2. Engage: Encouraging Active Participation from Team Members

Effective leadership goes beyond simply delegating tasks and making decisions. It involves engaging and empowering team members to contribute their best and achieve outstanding results. When team members are actively engaged, they become more invested in the team's goals and are motivated to go above and beyond to accomplish them. In this section, we will explore how leaders can encourage active participation from team members to foster an environment of collaboration, creativity, and high performance.

A. Create a Supportive and Inclusive Environment

To promote active participation, leaders need to create a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected. Foster open communication and encourage team members to share their ideas, opinions, and concerns. Listen actively and show genuine interest in what they have to say. By creating a safe and non-judgmental space, team members will feel more comfortable and empowered to contribute.

B. Provide Clear Expectations and Goals

Clearly communicate the team's objectives and expectations to each team member. Make sure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities and how their contributions align with the overall goals of the team. Provide regular feedback and recognition to reinforce their efforts and keep them engaged. When team members have a clear understanding of what is expected from them, they are more likely to actively participate and strive for excellence.

C. Foster Collaboration and Teamwork

Encourage collaboration and teamwork among team members. Create opportunities for them to work together on projects, share ideas, and learn from each other. Facilitate brainstorming sessions and group discussions where everyone's input is encouraged and valued. By fostering a sense of unity and cooperation, team members will feel more motivated to actively participate and contribute to collective success.

D. Encourage Innovation and Creativity

Promote an environment of innovation and creativity by encouraging team members to think outside the box and explore new ideas. Support their experimentation and risk-taking. Celebrate failures as opportunities for growth and learning. By encouraging innovative thinking and providing a platform for creative expression, team members will feel empowered to actively participate and contribute their unique perspectives.

E. Empower and Delegate

Empower team members by delegating tasks and granting them autonomy. Provide them with the necessary resources, training, and support to accomplish their assigned tasks. Trust their abilities and give them room to take ownership and make decisions. When team members feel empowered and trusted, they will be more motivated to actively participate and take initiative.

F. Recognize and Appreciate Contributions

Acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of team members. Celebrate their successes and milestones. Recognize their efforts and show gratitude for their hard work. By acknowledging

and appreciating individual and team efforts, you foster a culture of recognition and positive reinforcement. This encourages team members to actively participate and continue to give their best.

Engaging team members for active participation is a crucial aspect of effective leadership. By creating a supportive and inclusive environment, providing clear expectations and goals, fostering collaboration and teamwork, encouraging innovation and creativity, empowering and delegating, and recognizing and appreciating contributions, leaders can inspire and motivate their team members to actively participate and contribute to the team's success. When team members are engaged and invested, the team can achieve outstanding performance and deliver exceptional results.

3. Empower: Granting Power and Confidence to Your Team

In order to become an effective leader, it is essential to empower your team by granting them power and confidence. Empowering your team means giving them the authority and autonomy to make decisions and take ownership of their work. This not only builds trust and boosts morale but also enhances their motivation and engagement. Here are some strategies to empower your team and foster effective leadership:

A. Delegate Responsibility

Assign tasks and projects to individuals and provide them with the authority to make decisions related to their work. By delegating responsibility, you demonstrate your trust in their abilities and give them a sense of ownership over their work.

B. Provide Opportunities for Growth

Offer learning and development opportunities to your team members. This can include training programs, workshops, and mentoring. By investing in their professional growth, you show that you value their potential and are committed to their success.

C. Encourage and Support

Create a supportive and encouraging environment where team members feel comfortable sharing their ideas, opinions, and concerns. Actively listen to their input and provide constructive feedback. Celebrate their successes and provide guidance during challenging times.

D. Foster Collaboration

Encourage collaboration and teamwork among your team members. Create opportunities for them to work together on projects and share their expertise and knowledge. This not only enhances their sense of belonging but also promotes innovation and creativity.

E. Provide Resources and Tools

Ensure that your team members have access to the resources and tools they need to excel in their work. This can include technology, training materials, and support from other

departments. By equipping them with the necessary resources, you empower them to achieve their goals effectively.

F. Recognize and Reward

Acknowledge and appreciate your team members' hard work and achievements. Recognize their contributions in team meetings and through other forms of recognition, such as awards or bonuses. This boosts their confidence and motivates them to continue performing at their best.

G. Lead by Example

Be a role model for your team by demonstrating the behaviors and values you expect from them. Show integrity, transparency, and accountability in your own actions. Lead with empathy and treat everyone with respect and fairness. Your behavior sets the tone for the team and inspires them to follow your lead.

Empowering your team is a crucial aspect of effective leadership. By granting them power and confidence, you create an environment in which they can thrive and contribute to the success of your organization. Remember, effective leadership is not about controlling or micromanaging but about empowering and supporting your team members to be their best selves.

4. Enable: Fostering a Culture of Learning and Growth

In order to be an effective leader, it is crucial to enable a culture of learning and growth within your organization. This means creating an environment where employees are encouraged to constantly develop their skills and knowledge. Here are some ways you can enable a culture of learning and growth for effective leadership:

A. Invest in Development Programs

Allocate resources to leadership development programs that provide employees with opportunities to learn and grow. These programs can include workshops, seminars, online courses, and mentoring programs. By investing in the development of your employees, you are showing them that their growth and success are valued.

B. Provide Continuous Feedback

Regularly provide your employees with constructive feedback and support. This feedback should focus not only on their performance, but also on their personal and professional growth. By offering continuous feedback, you are helping them to identify areas for improvement and providing them with the guidance they need to succeed.

C. Encourage Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

Create opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing among your employees. This can be done through team projects, cross-departmental meetings, and regular knowledge-sharing sessions. By encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing, you are fostering an

environment where employees can learn from one another and build upon each other's strengths.

D. Lead by Example

As a leader, it is important to lead by example and demonstrate a commitment to learning and growth. Take the time to develop your own skills and knowledge, and share your experiences and insights with your team. By leading by example, you are showing your employees that continuous learning is a priority.

E. Foster a Growth Mindset

Encourage a growth mindset among your employees – the belief that their abilities and intelligence can be developed through dedication and hard work. By fostering a growth mindset, you are empowering your employees to embrace challenges, learn from setbacks, and continually strive for improvement.

F. Recognize and Reward Growth

Recognize and reward the efforts of employees who actively engage in learning and growth. This can include acknowledging their achievements in team meetings, providing them with opportunities to take on new responsibilities, and offering promotions or raises. By recognizing and rewarding growth, you are reinforcing the importance of continuous learning and encouraging others to follow suit.

By enabling a culture of learning and growth, you are setting the stage for effective leadership within your organization. When employees are encouraged to continually develop their skills and knowledge, they are more engaged and motivated, and the organization as a whole benefits from their increased performance and innovation. So, make sure to invest in development programs, provide continuous feedback, encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing, lead by example, foster a growth mindset, and recognize and reward growth. Embrace the 5 E's of effective leadership and create a culture of learning and growth that will propel your organization to success.

5. Execute: Putting Plans into Action

Now that you have envisioned your goals, engaged your team, empowered them, and enabled them with the necessary resources, it is time to execute your plans and bring your vision to life. Execution is where the rubber meets the road and where you will see the real impact of your leadership.

Executing your plans requires taking action and making things happen. It is about following through on your commitments and delivering the expected results. Here are some key steps to help you effectively execute your plans:

A. Set clear objectives

Clearly define what needs to be achieved and communicate it to your team. Make sure everyone understands their role and what is expected of them.

B. Create an action plan

Break down your objectives into smaller, actionable steps. Identify the tasks that need to be done, assign responsibilities, and set deadlines. This will help keep everyone focused and accountable.

C. Monitor progress

Regularly review and monitor the progress of each task. Track milestones, milestones, and checkpoints to ensure that everything is on track. Take corrective action if necessary and provide support to your team members when needed.

D. Stay flexible and adaptable

Be prepared to adjust your plans as new information or challenges arise. Adaptability is key in a rapidly changing environment. Be open to feedback and input from your team and be willing to make necessary adjustments to achieve your goals.

E. Celebrate success

Recognize and celebrate the achievements and milestones along the way. Acknowledge the hard work and effort of your team members. Celebrating success not only boosts morale but also reinforces the importance of execution and encourages a culture of excellence.

Execution is not just about getting things done; it is about getting things done right. As a leader, it is up to you to set the standard for excellence and ensure that your team is focused on delivering high-quality results.

By effectively executing your plans, you not only achieve your objectives but also inspire your team to strive for excellence. Your ability to execute leads to increased trust and confidence from your team, as they see your commitment to following through on your promises.

Execution is a critical component of effective leadership. By setting clear objectives, creating an action plan, monitoring progress, staying flexible, and celebrating success, you can effectively execute your plans and bring your vision to life. So, roll up your sleeves, take action, and make a meaningful impact as a leader.

Through this guide, we've navigated the importance of each 'E', the steps involved, and the impact they can have on your leadership. Envisioning sets the course; it gives your leadership and your team a compelling vision to follow. Engaging ensures your team doesn't just follow this vision, but actively contributes and participates in its realization. Empowering fosters an environment of trust where members have the confidence to take ownership of their work. Enabling creates a culture of growth and fosters learning, equipping your team with the skills

and knowledge to adapt and excel. And finally, viable plans mean nothing without successful execution.

- **Gender stereotypes at school and work**

Stereotypes are how societies expect people to act based on their gender. For example, girls should stay at home and help with housework and childcare, should dress modestly and not stay out late at night. People are often judged by how well they adhere to the gender stereotypes.

These stereotypes can often bleed out into school and work, where girls are less likely to be encouraged into science and technology subjects or leadership roles, due to the perceived ‘male nature’ of these pursuits. Likewise, seemingly positive stereotypes and gender roles such as men being the ‘provider’ or ‘protector’ of the family, put an unnecessary burden on men and boys that could more positively be shared in an equal partnership.

These attitudes limit girls’ power by rendering them less able to help contribute to making the world around them a better place.

- **Objectification and poor representation**

Objectification is when a person is treated as a commodity or an object without regard to their personality or dignity. It commonly happens in the media where women are photoshopped and airbrushed leading to much more emphasis and value being put on their external appearance above other capacities. This affects girls’ body image, their self-esteem and ultimately the value they put on themselves.

However, girls are also often represented poorly in entertainment and the media in ways that reinforce damaging gender stereotypes and traditional roles. Objectification must be called out and girls must be encouraged to tell their own stories – ones that reflect their power, potential and diversity.

Gender discrimination describes the situation in which people are treated differently simply because they are male or female, rather than on the basis of their individual skills or capabilities.

The following is a list of discriminatory acts you may come across among your peers, at home, at school or in the workplace.

There are many challenges to tackle gender bias, including:

- **Gender bias in the workplace**

Women leaders often face gender bias and stereotypes in the workplace, which can make it difficult to be taken seriously.

Gender pay gap is another consideration that can be solved by providing equal pay for equal work consciously.

One also need to implement inclusive hiring practices at work place.

The organisations should offer flexible work arrangements, promote the mentorship programs and also everyone should address the unconscious bias.

- **Gender bias in education**

Gender bias in textbooks and teaching materials can affect students' self-esteem, academic performance, and career aspirations.

- **Gender-based violence and harassment**

Gender-based violence and harassment are major barriers to achieving gender equality.

- **Child marriage**

Child marriage is a symptom and result of gender inequalities and restrictive gender norms.

- **Gender disparities in agriculture**

Women in rural areas face gender bias, lack of awareness, and lower access to modern technologies.

Some ways to overcome gender bias include:

- Learning to recognize gender bias
- Checking your own interactions for bias
- Auditing your media choices
- Representing female role models
- Sharing learning and speaking up
- Implementing regular gender bias training
- Education

Stress is the natural reaction your body has when changes or challenges occur. It can result in many different physical, emotional and behavioral responses. Everyone experiences stress from time to time. You can't avoid it. But stress management techniques can help you deal with it.

Stress is part of being human, and it can help motivate you to get things done. Even high stress from serious illness, job loss, a death in the family, or a painful life event can be a natural part of life. You may feel down or anxious, and that's normal too for a while.

Stress is the body's reaction to a challenge or change, and many factors can contribute to it, including both physical and mental aspects:

Physical factors that can cause stress include

- **Physical environment:** Noisy streets or an unsafe living space can cause stress.
- **Relationships:** Breakups, arguments about personal beliefs, or the death of a loved one can cause stress.
- **Work:** Work-related stress can be a negative impact on mental health.
- **Life situations:** Major life changes, such as getting married, having a baby, or retiring, can cause stress.
- **Brain centers:** The amygdala, hippocampus, and prefrontal cortex are brain centers that play a role in stress responses. Dysregulation of these centers can lead to stress-related disorders like anxiety, depression, and PTSD.
- **Drugs and alcohol:** Using drugs and alcohol can create more stress instead of relieving it.
- **Obesity:** Excess weight can cause physical stress and mental fatigue.

Mental factors that can cause stress include:

- **Internal stressors:** Feelings of failure, worthlessness, hopelessness, uncertainty, being overwhelmed, or unlovability
- **Relationships:** Arguments, disagreements, lack of recognition, or feeling betrayed and powerless
- **Health:** Aging, a new disease diagnosis, or complications from an existing illness
- **News consumption:** Spending too much time following news on television or social media
- **Caffeine:** Drinking too much tea or dark chocolate, which can contain as much caffeine as coffee
- **Language barriers:** Feeling uncomfortable with differences in syntax, vocabulary, body language, or ways of showing respect

Other factors that can cause stress include:

- Feeling under pressure
- Facing major life changes
- Having responsibilities that feel overwhelming
- Not having enough work or activities
- Experiencing discrimination, hate, or abuse
- Bereavement
- Divorce or separation
- Job loss
- Unexpected money problems

Talk to your doctor if you feel down or anxious for more than several weeks or if it starts to interfere with your home or work life. Therapy, medication, and other strategies can help.

In the meantime, there are things you can learn to help you manage stress before it gets to be too much. These tips may help you keep stress at bay:

- Keep a positive attitude.
- Accept that there are events that you cannot control.
- Be assertive instead of aggressive. Assert your feelings, opinions, or beliefs instead of becoming angry, defensive, or passive.
- Learn to manage your time more effectively.
- Set limits appropriately and say no to requests that would create excessive stress in your life.
- Make time for hobbies and interests.
- Don't rely on alcohol, drugs, or compulsive behaviors to reduce stress. Drugs and alcohol can stress your body even more.
- Seek out social support. Spend enough time with those you love.
- Seek treatment with a psychologist or other mental health professional trained in stress management or biofeedback techniques to learn more healthy ways of dealing with the stress in your life.
- There's a lot more you can do to help manage stress. Consider these lifestyle changes:
 - **Exercise**
 - To start with, physical activity can help improve your sleep. And better sleep means better stress management. Doctors don't yet know exactly why, but people who exercise more tend to get better deep "slow wave" sleep that helps renew the brain and body. Just take care not to exercise too close to bedtime, which disrupts sleep for some people.
 - Exercise also seems to help mood. Part of the reason may be that it stimulates your body to release a number of hormones like endorphins and endocannabinoids that help block pain, improve sleep, and sedate you. Some of them (endocannabinoids) may be responsible for the euphoric feeling, or "runner's high," that some people report after long runs. People who exercise also tend to feel less anxious and more positive about themselves. When your body feels good, your mind often follows.

If you don't have the time for a formal exercise program, you can still find ways to move throughout your day. Try these tips:

- Bike instead of driving to the store.
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park as far as you can from the door.
- Hand-wash your car.
- Clean your house.
- Walk on your lunch break.

Diet

The benefits of eating health foods extend beyond your waistline to your mental health. A healthy diet can lessen the effects of stress, build up your immune system, level your mood, and lower your blood pressure. Lots of added sugar and fat can have the opposite effect. And junk food can seem even more appealing when you're under a lot of stress.

To stay healthy and on an even keel, look for complex carbohydrates, lean proteins, and fatty acids found in fish, meat, eggs, and nuts.

Antioxidants help too. They protect your cells against damage that chronic stress can cause. You can find them in a huge variety of foods like beans, fruits, berries, vegetables, and spices such as ginger.

Stick to a healthy diet with a few simple tips. Make a shopping list. Carry healthy snacks with you when you leave the house. Stay away from processed foods, and try not to eat mindlessly.

Scientists have pinpointed some nutrients that seem to help lessen the effects of stress on the body and mind. Be sure to get enough these as part of a balanced diet:

- Vitamin C
- Magnesium
- Omega-3 fatty acids

Sleep

A common side effect of stress is that you may struggle to fall asleep. If this happens three times a week for at least 3 months, you may have insomnia, an inability to fall and stay asleep. Lack of sleep can also add to your stress level and cause a cycle of stress and sleeplessness.

Better sleep habits can help. This includes both your daily routine and the way you set up your bedroom. Habits that may help include:

- Exercise regularly.
- Get out in the sunlight.
- Drink less alcohol and caffeine close to bedtime.
- Set a sleep schedule.
- Don't look at your electronics 30-60 minutes before bed.
- Try meditation or other forms of relaxation at bedtime.

The role of your bedroom in good sleep hygiene also is important. In general, your room should be dark, quiet, and cool. Your bed also plays an important role. Your mattress should provide support, space and most of all, comfort.

Relaxation Techniques

Yoga. This is a form of exercise, but it can also be a meditation. There are many types of yoga. The ones that focus on slow movement, stretching, and deep breathing are best for lowering your anxiety and stress.

Meditation. It has been around for over 5,000 years for a reason. Meditation works well for many people and has many benefits. It can lower stress, anxiety, and chronic pain as well as improve sleep, energy levels, and mood. To meditate, you will need to

1. Find a quiet place.
2. Get comfortable (sitting or lying down).
3. Focus your attention on a word, phrase, object, or even your breath.
4. Let your thoughts come and go and do not judge them.

Deep breathing. When you practice deep breathing, you turn on your body's natural ability to relax. This creates a state of deep rest that can change how your body responds to stress. It sends more oxygen to your brain and calms the part of your nervous system that handles your ability to relax.

Try belly breathing. Get comfortable, close your eyes, and place one hand on your stomach and the other on your chest. Take a deep breath in through your nose. You should feel your belly rise more than your chest. Now, exhale through your nose and pay close attention to how your body relaxes. Repeat.

Biofeedback. Learn how to manage your heart rate, muscle tension, and blood pressure when stress hits. Biofeedback gives you information about how your body reacts when you try to relax. Sensors are placed on your body that call out changes in everything from your brain-wave pattern to your muscle tone. Working with a biofeedback therapist, you can start to take control of the signals by changing how your body reacts to the sensor.

Connect with people. Spend time with a friend or family member who will listen to you. It is a natural way to calm you and lower your stress. When you connect with people in person, your body releases a hormone that stops your fight-or-flight response. You relax.

Behavior. How you respond to people directly impacts your stress levels. Manage your response with these tips:

- Try not to overcommit yourself
- Share the responsibility
- Count to 10 before you respond
- Walk away from a heated situation
- Distract yourself with music or podcasts

Inner voice. Nothing affects your stress levels like the voice inside your head. The good news is you are in control. You can exchange negative thoughts for positive ones. There are more benefits to positive self-talk than reducing stress. These include a longer life, lower levels

of depression, greater resistance to the common cold and cardiovascular disease, and better coping skills for when hard times hit.

Laugh therapy. When you laugh, you take in more oxygen. Your heart, lungs, and muscles get a boost and your body releases those feel-good hormones. Laughter also improves your immune system, lessens pain, and improves your mood for long periods of time.

Talk therapy. Long-term talk therapy helps some people deal with stress. One approach, cognitive behavioral therapy, helps you change negative thought patterns. Your therapist can guide you toward other approaches that might be helpful.

A healthy lifestyle can help you thrive throughout your life. Making healthy choices isn't always easy, however. It can be hard to find the time and energy to exercise regularly or prepare healthy meals. However, your efforts will pay off in many ways, and for the rest of your life.

- Be physically active for 30 minutes most days of the week. Break this up into three 10-minute sessions when pressed for time. Healthy movement may include walking, sports, dancing, yoga, running or other activities you enjoy.
- Eat a well-balanced, low-fat diet with lots of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Choose a diet that's low in saturated fat and cholesterol, and moderate in sugar, salt and total fat.
- Avoid injury by wearing seatbelts and bike helmets, using smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the home, and using street smarts when walking alone. If you own a gun, recognize the dangers of having a gun in your home. Use safety precautions at all times.
- Don't smoke, or quit if you do. Ask your health care provider for help. UCSF's Tobacco Education Center offers smoking cessation and relapse prevention classes as well as doctor consultations for smokers trying to quit.
- Drink in moderation if you drink alcohol. Never drink before or while driving, or when pregnant.
- Ask someone you trust for help if you think you might be addicted to drugs or alcohol.
- Help prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS by using condoms every time you have sexual contact. Condoms aren't 100 percent foolproof, so discuss STI screening with your provider. Birth control methods other than condoms, such as pills and implants, won't protect you from STIs or HIV.
- Brush your teeth after meals with a soft or medium bristled toothbrush. Also brush after drinking and before going to bed. Use dental floss daily.
- Stay out of the sun, especially between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. when the sun's harmful rays are strongest. You are not protected if it is cloudy or if you are in the water — harmful rays pass through both. Use a broad spectrum sunscreen that guards against both UVA and UVB rays, with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Select sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of the sun's rays.

Here are three ways to stay physically healthy:

- **Exercise**

A moderate exercise program can help maintain strength, balance, and flexibility. It can also help prevent or slow problems with muscles, joints, and bones.

- **Eat healthy**

Eat a well-balanced, low-fat diet with lots of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Eat regularly, eat enough, and eat all types of foods in moderation.

- **Get enough sleep**

Sleep provides the mind and body the time to recover and restore. Not getting enough sleep can lead to less muscular strength and make you less physically active.

Other ways to stay physically healthy include: drinking more water, managing stress, avoiding tobacco, controlling food portions, and eating mindfully.

Women today have busy, demanding lives. You may feel pulled in different directions and experience stress from dealing with work, family and other matters, leaving little time for yourself. Learning to balance your life with some time for yourself will pay off with big benefits — a healthy outlook and better health.

Steps you can take:

- Stay in touch with family and friends.
- Be involved in your community.
- Maintain a positive attitude and do things that make you happy.
- Keep your curiosity alive. Lifelong learning is beneficial to your health.
- Healthy intimacy takes all forms but is always free of coercion.
- Learn to recognize and manage stress in your life. Signs of stress include trouble sleeping, frequent headaches and stomach problems; being angry a lot; and turning to food, drugs and alcohol to relieve stress.
- Good ways to deal with stress include regular exercise, healthy eating habits and relaxation exercises, such as deep breathing or meditation. Talking to trusted family members and friends can help a lot. Some women find that interacting with their faith community is helpful in times of stress.
- Get enough sleep and rest. Adults need around eight hours of sleep a night.
- Talk to your health care provider if you feel depressed for more than a few days; depression is a treatable illness. Signs of depression include feeling empty and sad, crying a lot, loss of interest in life, and thoughts of death or suicide. If you or someone you know has thoughts of suicide, get help right away. Call 911, a local crisis center or (800) SUICIDE.
- Watching what you put into your body, how much activity you get, and your weight are important for keeping your body working properly. Positive physical health habits can help decrease your stress, lower your risk of disease, and increase your energy. Flip each card below

for checklists on how to improve your health in each area. Click on the images to read articles about each topic. You can also print the checklists separately or all together to share with others or as a reminder to yourself.

- Yoga is a mind and body practice that can build strength and flexibility. It may also help manage pain and reduce stress. Various styles of yoga combine physical postures, breathing techniques, and meditation.
- YogaTrusted Source is an ancient practice that may have originated in India. It involves movement, meditation, and breathing techniques to promote mental and physical well-being.
- There are several types of yoga and many disciplines within the practice.
- This article explores the history, philosophy, health and wellness benefits, and various branches of yoga.
- Yoga is an ancient practice that involves physical poses, concentration, and deep breathing.
- A regular yoga practice can promoteTrusted Source endurance, strength, calmness, flexibility, and well-being.
- Yoga is now a popular form of exercise around the world. According to a 2017 national surveyTrusted Source, one in seven adults in the United States practiced yoga in the past 12 months.
- Yoga is an ancient practice that has changed over time.
- Modern yoga focuses on poses designed to stimulate inner peace and physical energy. Ancient yoga did not place as much emphasis on fitness. Instead, it revolved around cultivating mental focus and expanding spiritual energy.
- There are many different types of yoga available. The style a person chooses will depend on their expectations and level of physical agility.
- People with certain health conditions, such as sciatica, should approach yoga slowly and with caution.
- Yoga can help support a balanced, active lifestyle.

- **History**

- The first mention of the word “yoga” appears in *Rig Veda*, a collection of ancient texts. Yoga comes from the Sanskrit word “yuj,” which means “union” or “to join.”
- Yoga can be traced back to northern India over 5,000 years ago.
- Indian monks spread their knowledge of yoga in the West during the late 1890s. Modern yoga teachings became widely popular in Western countries by the 1970s.

The overall philosophy of yoga is about connecting the mind, body, and spirit.

There are six branches of yoga. Each branch represents a different focus and set of characteristics.

The six branches are:

- **Hatha yoga:** This is the physical and mental branch that aims to prime the body and mind.
- **Raja yoga:** This branch involves meditation and strict adherence to a series of disciplinary steps known as the eight limbs of yoga.
- **Karma yoga:** This is a path of service that aims to create a future free from negativity and selfishness.
- **Bhakti yoga:** This aims to establish the path of devotion, a positive way to channel emotions and cultivate acceptance and tolerance.
- **Jnana yoga:** This branch of yoga is about wisdom, the path of the scholar, and developing the intellect through study.
- **Tantra yoga:** This is the pathway of ritual, ceremony, or consummation of a relationship.

Chakras

The word “chakra” means “spinning wheel.”

Yoga maintains that chakras are center points of energy, thoughts, feelings, and the physical body. According to yogic teachers, chakras determine how people experience reality through emotional reactions, desires or aversions, levels of confidence or fear, and even physical symptoms and effects.

When energy becomes blocked in a chakra, it triggers physical, mental, or emotional imbalances that manifest in symptoms such as anxiety, lethargy, or poor digestion.

Asanas are the many physical poses in Hatha yoga. People who practice yoga use asanas to free energy and stimulate an imbalanced chakra.

There are seven major chakras, each with its own focus:

- **Sahasrara:** The crown chakra, which is at the crown of the head, symbolizes spiritual connection.
- **Ajna:** Located between the eyebrows, the third eye chakra has to do with intuition.
- **Vishuddha:** The throat chakra corresponds to immunity and verbal communication.
- **Anahata:** The heart chakra, which is in the center of the chest, influences professional and personal relationships. Any imbalances in this chakra will affect oxygen, hormones, tissue, and organ control.
- **Manipura:** The solar plexus chakra is in the stomach area. It corresponds to self-confidence, wisdom, and self-discipline.
- **Svadhishthana:** The sacral chakra, which is beneath the belly button, connects pleasure, well-being, and vitality.
- **Muladhara:** The root chakra, which is at the base of the spine, connects the mind and body to the earth to keep a person grounded. It controls the sciatic nerves and the parasympathetic nervous system.

Modern yoga focuses on exercise, strength, agility, and breathing. It can help Trusted Source boost physical and mental well-being.

There are many styles of yoga. A person should choose a style based on their goals and fitness level.

Types and styles of yoga include:

Ashtanga yoga

This type of yoga practice uses ancient yoga teachings. However, it became popular during the 1970s.

Ashtanga applies the same poses and sequences that rapidly link every movement to breath.

Bikram yoga

People practice Bikram yoga, also known as hot yoga, in artificially heated rooms at a temperature of nearly 105°F and 40% humidity. It consists of 26 poses and a sequence of two breathing exercises.

Hatha yoga

This is a generic term for any type of yoga that teaches physical poses. Hatha classes usually serve as a gentle introduction to the basic poses of yoga.

Iyengar yoga

This type of yoga practice focuses on finding the correct alignment in each pose with the help of a range of props, such as blocks, blankets, straps, chairs, and bolsters.

Kripalu yoga

This type teaches practitioners to know, accept, and learn from the body. A student of Kripalu yoga learns to find their own level of practice by looking inward.

The classes usually begin with breathing exercises and gentle stretches, followed by a series of individual poses and final relaxation.

Kundalini yoga

Kundalini yoga is a system of meditation that aims to release pent-up energy.

A Kundalini yoga class typically begins with chanting and ends with singing. In between, it features asana, pranayama, and meditation that aim to create a specific outcome.

Power yoga

In the late 1980s, practitioners developed this active and athletic type of yoga based on the traditional Ashtanga system.

Sivananda

This system uses a five point philosophy as its foundation.

This philosophy maintains that proper breathing, relaxation, diet, exercise, and positive thinking work together to create a healthy yogic lifestyle.

People practicing Sivananda use 12 basic asanas, which they precede with Sun Salutations and follow with Savasana.

Viniyoga

Viniyoga focuses on form over function, breath and adaptation, repetition and holding, and the art and science of sequencing.

Yin yoga

Yin yoga places its focus on holding passive poses for long periods of time. This style of yoga targets deep tissues, ligaments, joints, bones, and fascia.

Prenatal yoga

Prenatal yoga uses poses that practitioners have created with pregnant people in mind. This yoga style can help people get back into shape after giving birth, and support health during pregnancy.

Restorative yoga

This is a relaxing method of yoga. A person spends a restorative yoga class in four or five simple poses, using props such as blankets and bolsters to sink into deep relaxation without exerting any effort when holding the pose.

Benefits of yoga

According to a 2012 survey [Trusted Source](#), 94% of adults who practice yoga do so for wellness reasons.

Yoga has many physical and mental benefits, including [Trusted Source](#):

- building muscle strength
- enhancing flexibility
- promoting better breathing
- supporting heart health
- helping with treatment for addiction
- reducing stress, anxiety, depression, and chronic pain
- improving sleep
- enhancing overall well-being and quality of life

It is advisable to consult a medical professional, if possible, before starting a yoga practice.

Getting ahead in your career:

1. Start your job thinking about the next level in your career.

I know, it sounds counter-intuitive. Shouldn't you start by demonstrating you're good at your current job? Absolutely! But you can do both.

Starting with the next level in mind means having a strategy at hand, so you can make better decisions as you navigate your day-to-day.

For example: if an opportunity comes along to join a new project you can easily decide if you want to spend your time on it. You'll just have to ask yourself: will it move me closer to my goal? If the answer is yes, go for it. If the answer is no, spend your time elsewhere.

2. Define your goal.

Getting ahead is very vague. Would a 3% increase in pay be enough? Would added responsibility feel like you are getting ahead? Do you want to level up, pivot, or move horizontally? Getting ahead can mean different things, depending on your definition of success.

Be very clear about what you want: what is the exact role and title, and what is the salary you are looking for? What type of responsibilities will constitute getting ahead?

My advice: write it down in one sentence:

I want to be a [role, seniority], at a [company type, size, industry] and make [salary expectations].

3. Make a plan.

Having a clear goal is the first step, but how do you know what you'll need to do to achieve your goal? How do you plan your work and create opportunities?

Simple. You reverse engineer the steps required to get to the next level.

By reviewing job descriptions

By talking to people who are already at the next level to learn from their experiences

By asking your manager or looking at your company's levels guide

You'll end up with a list of 3-7 skills and experiences you need to gain. Now you'll need to create opportunities to gain those skills.

4. Understand the business, not just your discipline.

This is a game-changer in driving growth. When you understand how the different parts of the organization work, the business model, and the company's goal, you can make decisions that will have a greater impact on the company. For example, when I worked for Microsoft I got very curious about the organization I was part of (a division within Microsoft). As a marketer, I didn't have revenue goals, but I got acquainted with our sales targets. I asked myself, how could I impact those goals with my work? The answer was sales training. This project wasn't listed as one of my responsibilities but initiating it helped me get valuable experience, and made a big impact on the business.

The more value you add, the more valuable you become. If you can make a bigger impact, you'll get ahead faster.

5. Dig for opportunities

I didn't stumble on that idea to impact sales by mistake. I used a monthly routine to review my plan and ask these questions to see if I could identify opportunities to make a bigger impact:

What gaps have I identified through my interactions with others?

Is there an opportunity for me to innovate or initiate a new process?

Are there any tasks I can take from my manager?

Are there any changes in the industry that we can capitalize on?

6. Strategically go beyond your job description.

That means saying no to things that don't move you toward your goals and saying yes to things that will contribute to your goal, even if they scare you.

7. Have a conversation about leveling up

Closed mouths don't get fed.

If you want something you need to ask for it. While you may be doing an incredible job, your manager probably has 698 things to think about that has nothing to do with you. Make their life easier and tell them what you want. Share your goals with your manager early, so it's not a surprise. Keep them updated about your progress and every now and then remind them about your goal.

Following this strategy helped me receive multiple promotions.

Even with the best efforts, there are some elements that are not in your control.

Does that mean you shouldn't even try?

Absolutely not!

You just need to reduce the risk.

1. Verify there is a business need for the role you want to level up into (not necessarily headcount, but need).
2. Share your plans with your manager and agree on the KPIs that will justify a promotion.
3. Look at the people around you - who is getting promoted and why? If it's not the people who add the most value and actually do the work, you may have to level up elsewhere.

It doesn't matter where you are starting from, being more intentional about your career will help you grow faster.

Don't worry, I've got you. I have a full guide that will help you define your goals and create your plan.

Environmental Awareness

Environmental awareness is having an understanding of the environment, the impacts of human behaviors on it, and the importance of its protection.

What is Environmental Awareness?

To define environmental awareness, we must first understand the environmental movement.

Environmentalism is an ideology that evokes the necessity and responsibility of humans to respect, protect, and preserve the natural world from its anthropogenic (caused by humans) afflictions.

Environmental awareness is an integral part of the movement's success. By spreading awareness to others that the physical environment is fragile and indispensable, we can begin fixing the issues that threaten it.

Before you can begin promoting environmental awareness in your community, you must first make sure that you have a thorough understanding of environmental issues. Stay up to date on environmental news, read books and other materials, and learn about the issues affecting your own community. It's much easier to talk to others about the environment if you've already taken the time to educate yourself.

Environmental awareness is the understanding that the natural environment needs to be sustainable for human survival. It also involves being informed about how to make choices that benefit the planet.

Environmental awareness is a movement that teaches the need for humans to respect and protect their natural environment. Human waste production accumulates in the environment and impacts the soil, wildlife, and water. With the Industrial Revolution, scientific advances led to the production of greenhouse gases that warm the atmosphere and cause a gradual increase in temperature, also termed the **greenhouse effect**. Spreading environmental awareness can preserve our natural resources and reduce the destruction of Earth.

As the environment becomes damaged and greenhouse gases accumulate, the increasing temperatures on Earth can lead to progressive changes, such as:

- Glacial melting from rising temperatures

- Drought with water shortages and increased wildfires
- Rising sea levels with flooding
- Destruction of coral reefs

Here are several examples of issues impacting the environment today:

- **Oil Drilling** - This issue is one that causes a great deal of environmental destruction. Our dependence on fossil fuel is a global addiction that affects every aspect of the world. Oil spills and offshore drilling poison marine life, oil drilling (on land) suffocates the Earth, and the combustion of fossil fuels add to the increased atmospheric CO₂, which in turns causes the progression of global warming and ocean acidification. This is a multifaceted issue and is a good cause to get involved with because it covers such a broad spectrum of issues.
- **Deforestation** - Millions of acres of forest are cut down for industrial benefit, such as large scale farming, oil mining, and the production of paper goods. Deforestation causes wildlife and biodiversity extinction because the loss of habitat threatens many species' existence. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has a Red List of environmentally threatened species with up-to-date information.
- **Production of Plastic Goods** - Currently our society creates a great deal of waste and much of that waste consists of plastic. This waste ends up all over the globe in both land and water. Not only is plastic waste an issue, but the production of plastic is also dependent on fossil fuel combustion. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), in 2010, 191 million barrels of liquid petroleum gases (LPG) and natural gas liquids (NGL) were used in the U.S. alone to produce plastic goods.

Once you're well versed in environmental issues, you can use that knowledge to start beneficial projects in your home and/or in your community.

Here are some examples of the kinds of projects and initiatives you could get involved in:

- Instead of driving to work or school, take the bus, carpool, walk, or ride your bike to cut down on greenhouse gas emissions. According to the EPA transportation adds to 33% of the total atmospheric CO₂.
- Consider investing in appropriate technology like clean power (solar or wind), if not for your home then maybe for a community center. This supports a transition to clean and renewable energy.
- Buy reusable products such as glass bottles, reusable bags, and reusable cups. Avoid buying disposable goods such as paper towels, plastic bottles, and plastic bags.
- Start a composting and recycling program in communities where there are none. This will help cut down our waste production.

- Support local businesses and farmers, and buy organic and pesticide-free food when you can. Or, start your own community garden.
- Once you have chosen your cause and have started a personal or community project, share it with the world! Get your coworkers, neighbors, friends, family, or even your local government involved. It's much easier and more effective to spread environmental awareness and start a local project if you collaborate with others in your community.
- Promoting environmental awareness is a crucial part of being an environmental steward. Start participating in the change and teach your community what is needed to create a sustainable future.
- Deepen your environmental awareness by learning about environmental rights.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Alternatives for Waste Management

Introduction

This publication provides an overview of the reasons and ways to better manage garbage or other household waste. While "recycle" may be a buzzword for an environmentally friendly way to manage waste, a more comprehensive approach to doing so is summarized by the "Three Rs":



I. Reduce: Buy only what you need because a better way to reduce waste is by not creating it.

II. Reuse: If you have to acquire goods, try getting used ones or obtaining substitutes.

III. Recycle: When discarding your waste, find ways to recycle it instead of letting it go to landfill.

As a nation, we are generating more garbage and we don't know what to do with it. Ineffective or irresponsible disposal of this waste can pollute the environment and pose a public health risk. We are running out of space in existing landfills. Citizens are discovering that there is no easy way to get rid of the garbage they once assumed could be buried or burned and forgotten.

Current disposal methods threaten our health, safety, and environment, and pose additional indirect costs to society. Most industrial, commercial, and household waste is now being placed in landfills or surface impoundments. Waste treated in this manner may contaminate groundwater, rivers, and streams. When waste is burned, it releases hazardous gases into the air and leaves toxic residues in the form of ash. These hazardous waste byproducts find their way into humans and animals in one form or another.

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In order to manage waste, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Solid Waste Act favor an integrated solid waste management strategy that includes 1) reducing the amount of solid waste generated, 2) recycling as much refuse as possible, 3) transforming waste in an environmentally safe manner, and 4) continuing safe landfilling. The strategies can be further discussed in the "Three Rs" approach—reduce, reuse, recycle—as briefly mentioned in the introduction.

I. Reduce

Reducing the amount you buy is the most significant of all the options to manage waste. The key is to only purchase goods that we need and in the right amount. If we never generate products in the first place, we do not have to extract raw resources, manufacture goods from scratch, come up with shipping materials, utilize additional resources for shipping, and then devise ways to dispose of them. Table 1 lays out how long it takes to decompose typical waste products.

Reducing the amount you buy can help reduce waste in surprising ways:

- **Phone books:** When was the last time you used a phone book? The white pages alone cost 5 million trees a year. They generated 650,000 tons of waste in 2009 (EPA, 2010). You can opt out of phone book delivery by registering your address at sites like www.yellowpagesoptout.com.
- **Disposable razors:** More than 2 billion disposable razors are disposed of each year in the U.S. alone (EPA, n.d.).
- **Disposable diapers:** In 2010, 50,000 tons of wood pulp were used to produce disposable diapers, and almost 4 million diapers were discarded in landfills (EPA, 2011). As listed in Table 1, it takes 450 years to decompose a disposable diaper.
- **Cell phones:** Despite great strides in manufacturing, a typical new cellphone consists of 40% metals and 40% plastics, which use oil for their manufacturing, as well as other resources for packaging and transportation. EPA estimates that more than 125 million cell phones are discarded each year, generating more than 65,000 tons of waste (EPA, 2004). Because cell phones contain hazardous materials, you should always trade in,

donate, or recycle your old phones.

- **Light bulbs:** ENERGY STAR compact florescent light bulbs save about \$6 per year and about \$40 over their lifetimes (ENERGY STAR, n.d.).

Reduce: **What Can We Do?**

Each person adds to the waste management problem. If each household reduces its waste, the problem will be reduced. You can start by analyzing what you throw away and what goods are needed at home.

- **Choosing items that you need, not want:** People who keep upgrading their electronics (e.g., cellphones) to the latest design are very likely to waste their money and also unnecessarily waste natural resources.
- **Shopping for high-quality items:** You may have to pay more, but high-quality items may last longer, perform better, and give fewer problems than lower-quality items. Instead of disposable items, opt for durable ones such as silverware, reusable cups, and reusable water bottles.
- **Using minimum packaging:** Packaging materials like plastic bags, boxes, packing peanuts, and plastic wrappers often wind up in landfills. Bring your own shopping bags instead of using plastic bags. If you don't have shopping bags, use paper bags instead of plastic because they decompose faster. Many stores have reusable bags for sale at the register, and some stores even have used plastic bags for consumers to use.
- **Buying local products:** Besides stimulating the local economy, buying local products means we can reduce negative environmental impacts from transportation.

You may be able to make some of these items at home, such as shopping bags and homemade cleaning supplies. A selection of home cleaning products and their uses are laid out in NMSU's Cooperative Extension Service Guide G-304, *Selection and Use of Home Cleaning Products* (http://pubs.nmsu.edu/_g/G304.pdf).

II. Reuse

The idea of being wasteful makes many people uncomfortable. Yet most of us continue to waste because we can't think of anything better to do with last year's phone book, draperies that are too short, or a closet door that was scratched by a favorite pet. We are conditioned to think of things that are old, empty, worn, broken, ugly, or marred as useless, so we throw them away without much thought about the consequences. Most Americans buy far more than they can use effectively, as evidenced by bulging attics and garages.

The process of reusing starts with the assumption that the used materials that flow through our lives can be a resource rather than refuse. Waste, after all, is in the eye of the beholder. One person's trash is another person's treasure. If we really look at things we are throwing away, we

can learn to see them as materials that can be reused to solve everyday problems and satisfy everyday needs. Most of us, however, haven't even begun to exploit the resources in our trash. Once you have made up your mind to use trash for positive uses, you can begin to brainstorm and generate ideas. Reusing saves money, conserves resources, and satisfies the human urge to be creative.

Reuse: What Can We Do?

The following are some examples of reuse.

- Containers can be reused at home or for school projects.
- Reuse wrapping paper, plastic bags, boxes, and lumber.
- Give outgrown clothing to friends or charity.
- Buy beverages in returnable containers.
- Donate broken appliances to charity or a local vocational school, which can use them for art classes or for students to practice repairing.
- Offer furniture and household items that are no longer needed to people in need, friends, or charity.
- Sheets of paper that have been used on only one side can be used for note-taking or rough drafts.
- Old, outdated furniture can be reupholstered or slipcovered. Have padding added to the furniture to give it a new look. Often the frame can be modified slightly to change the way it looks.
- Old towels and sheets can be cut in small pieces and used for dust cloths.
- Books and magazines can be donated to schools, public libraries, or nursing homes.
- Newspapers can be donated to pet stores.
- Packing materials, such as polystyrene, plastic quilting, and similar materials, can be saved and reused again for packing.
- Carry a reusable tote bag or take bags to the store when you go shopping. There are attractive nylon mesh bags available that can be stored easily in the glove compartment of your car. Durable canvas bags, which take very little space to tuck away when not in use, can also be used.

- If you buy prepared microwaveable dinners, save the plates for outdoor parties or for children.
- Old tires can be used in the garden and in the play yard.

Some of the strategies are very closely related in these "Three Rs" categories. For instance, we need to reduce the use of plastic bags for grocery shopping, but we can use tote bags instead and reuse them while making sure that they are clean.

III. Recycle

The main benefits of recycling are:

- **Recycling generates industry:** As New Mexicans recycle, there will be a growing supply of materials generated. In order to utilize these recycled materials, manufacturing facilities will emerge to find uses for them. As more recycling plants are built and more products are manufactured, we will gain a greater understanding of the entire process.
- **Recycling creates jobs:** EPA estimates that recycling 10,000 tons of materials would create 36 jobs compared to six for landfilling the same amount (EPA, 2002). Some communities have formed working partnerships with workshops for the disabled, developed and administered job-training partnerships, or otherwise found work for unemployed labor in recycling programs.
- **Cost avoidance of recycling:** For years, recycling has been hampered by the belief that it should make money. That may be true for some recyclables, but not for others. Rather, recycling should be thought of as a cost-effective disposal option. It usually requires fewer government subsidies than landfilling or incineration. It saves natural resources and helps protect the environment. Lower taxes, energy savings, and a cleaner environment are the real "bottom lines" in favor of recycling.

Collecting Recyclables

A lot of the things that people trash can be recycled. Prime examples include paper, newspaper, corrugated cardboard, high-grade paper, aluminum, steel (tin) cans, glass, plastic, motor oil, organic waste, and scrap metals. Some notes on recycling:

- Paper with residues cannot be recycled in most cases. This is why used pizza boxes are not recyclable!
- Recycling centers will not accept light bulbs, ceramic glass, dishes, or plate glass because these items consist of different materials than bottles and jars.
- Recyclable items not accepted by your city recycling programs may be accepted by local companies. For instance, glass might not be accepted by a New Mexico city's

recycling program but might be accepted by a supermarket.

- Ask your local recycling office about recycling programs and recyclable items in your area.

Main recycling collection methods are:

- **Curbside collection** requires homeowners to separate recyclables from their garbage. Clean recyclables may need to be placed in special containers, while the garbage goes in standard containers. Both are placed at the curb for collection by separate trucks.
- **Drop-off centers** are one of the simplest forms of collecting recyclable materials; people can drop off their used glass, metal, plastic, and paper at a designated recycling drop-off site. These centers are usually placed in an easily accessible location near a high-traffic area such as the entrances of supermarkets and parking lots.
- **Buy back centers** purchase aluminum and other metals, glass, plastic, newsprint, and sometimes batteries and other materials.

The "Three Rs" (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle) effort to promote better waste management needs to be done in an effective manner. If converting an old pair of jeans into a shopping bag that needs continuous repair, you are better off donating the jeans in the first place and purchasing reusable shopping bags. Some efforts may involve a steep learning curve and require time to get used to. Sorting out recyclable items may be challenging in the beginning, but once you get the hang of the system the related chores will become like effortless habits.

What is a carbon footprint?

A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases (including carbon dioxide and methane) that are generated by our actions.

The average carbon footprint for a person in the United States is 16 tons, one of the highest rates in the world. Globally, the average carbon footprint is closer to 4 tons. To have the best chance of avoiding a 2°C rise in global temperatures, the average global carbon footprint per year needs to drop to under 2 tons by 2050.

Lowering individual carbon footprints from 16 tons to 2 tons doesn't happen overnight! By making small changes to our actions, like eating less meat, taking fewer connecting flights and line drying our clothes, we can start making a big difference.

A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases (including carbon dioxide and methane) that are generated by our actions. The average carbon footprint for a person in the United States is 16 tons, one of the highest rates in the world. Globally, the average carbon footprint is closer to 4 tons.

Respect

a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements.

Respect is the act of showing high regard or special attention to someone or something. It can also be defined as a positive feeling or action that conveys admiration for good or valuable qualities.

Here are some examples of respect:

- Valuing someone's feelings and views, even if you don't agree with them
- Accepting someone on an equal basis
- Giving someone the same consideration you would expect for yourself
- Showing care, concern, or consideration for someone's needs

Respect is important for many reasons, including:

- It's a component of healthy relationships and effective communication
- It prevents bullying and other aggressive behaviors
- It's essential for societal development
- When we feel respected, our brain releases feel-good neurochemicals like oxytocin and serotonin

Some ways to show respect include:

- Using simple words and phrases like "thank you"
- Using simple physical signs like a slight bow, a smile, direct eye contact, or a handshake
- Listening to each other and being patient when you disagree
- Allowing the other person space if they need it
- Admitting when you've made a mistake

Respecting colleagues can help create a positive workplace environment where employees feel valued and supported. Here are some ways to show respect to your colleagues:

- **Be a good listener:** Give your colleagues your full attention and avoid interrupting them. Show that you're interested in their ideas and opinions.
- **Be inclusive:** Use respectful language and avoid making assumptions or using derogatory terms. Be mindful of your tone and body language.
- **Be open to learning:** Share your expertise respectfully and be open to growth and learning.
- **Be reliable:** Follow through on your commitments and responsibilities.

- **Be supportive:** Offer to help when needed and acknowledge when your colleagues have helped you.
- **Celebrate others:** Recognize your colleagues' contributions and achievements.
- **Be honest:** Admit your own mistakes and be honest with your colleagues about theirs.
- **Be mindful of boundaries:** Respect your colleagues' personal boundaries and privacy.
- **Speak face to face:** Discuss problems with employees directly, rather than in front of others.