# THE ART OF RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER GROWTH

# **Business Relationships Are Fundamentally People Relationships**

What you say, how you say it, who you say it to... what you do, and how you do it all collectively become the embodiment of how everyone around you will size you up, judge who you are, and, in turn, determine how they will interact with you. Therefore, your success at practicing the art of relationship development, which is heavily influenced by your communication skills, directly impacts your professional trajectory, the success of your business endeavors, and the achievements you may or may not realize from your leadership efforts. If you want the best out of others, then you'll need to give others the best of you. This is the essence of relationship development.



#### **Benefits of Positive Business Relationships**

Building positive business relationships is an integral part of many careers. It's not just about professional success but also personal growth. Depending on your industry, you may build relationships with your customers, clients, employees, and suppliers. Creating positive relationships from the start offers many advantages:

<u>Higher employee satisfaction</u>: Managers are the lynchpin for building positive relationships with their team members. This can significantly improve team member satisfaction, leading to a happier, more positive workplace, higher morale, and greater productivity.

Improved customer satisfaction: Trust and loyalty, fostered through positive business relationships, are vital to increasing customer satisfaction. Initiating positive relationships with your clients and customers is a crucial step in this process.

Increased productivity and efficiency: Positive relationships with suppliers, vendors, and business partners can significantly contribute to a more productive and efficient business. Professionals may collaborate more effectively when they have positive business relationships.

Optimized communication channels: Positive relationships allow you to better communicate with those whose advice, knowledge, and support can help a business grow. You can also create channels to communicate effectively with clients, partners, and suppliers, keeping them updated about projects, orders, and industry trends, thereby building stronger business relationships.





### **Building Strong Business Relationships**

Strong business relationships are essential to your success as a leader. Prioritizing these relationships has many benefits, from increased job opportunities and client referrals to expanding your network and learning from others. The benefits of building these partnerships can include:

- Understanding others better and tapping into their capabilities
- Gaining insight and information to leverage a potential promotion or better pay
- Knowing how to focus your priorities based on others' feedback
- Seeking missing links that may help your success
- Improving on challenging interactions and situations to keep innovation flowing
- Creating a higher level of presence, highlighting your leadership skills to others

### **Tips for Building Strong Business Relationships**

Offer Valuable Goods or Services: Bring something valuable to the table and take a genuine interest in helping others. Forming and building relationships can come more naturally if you offer help, support, information, or actions that make a difference for the other person.

Maintain Important Contacts: Networking is necessary to build a robust community of support throughout your professional career, so keep in touch with your industry and business connections. Check-in on LinkedIn or other professional social media platforms, hand out your business cards at networking events, and be a friendly face in whatever industry you are in. And ask, "How can I help you?"

<u>Build Trust</u>: Once you have established that you are reliable, your reputation will speak for itself. Not only are your existing connections more likely to stay in your network if you are trustworthy, but you will also attract

new business relationships from people looking for dependable partnerships.

Building trust is all about acting and following through on your promises. By fulfilling your commitments, you show your worth as a business connection. Validating your trustworthiness leads to stronger business relationships.

Ask For Constructive Feedback: Asking for constructive feedback is one of the best ways to show that you are listening to others and actively seeking improvement. Seeking feedback helps to acknowledge expectations and learn from potential mistakes. It also creates trust and opportunities for both parties to strengthen the relationship.

**Utilize Social Media:** Today's digital-forward landscape creates opportunities and expectations for how to connect and stay connected with others. Taking advantage of social media's benefits is vital to your professional growth. Social media can also lead to new business relationships.

Be a Resource: Strong business relationships are predictable and mutually beneficial. Both parties win from the effort of building the relationship. One of the best ways of demonstrating that effort is by making yourself invaluable to others. Become a resource and a champion of others by offering assistance, advice, and support to your connections. Helping others creates authenticity and shows that you demonstrate investment in the success of others.

