

Interpersonal skills are the skills we use every day to communicate and interact with other people, individually and in groups. **Interpersonal skills** include not only how we communicate with others, but also our confidence and our ability to listen and understand. Problem solving, decision making and personal stress management are also considered interpersonal skills.

## [How to Develop Interpersonal Skills](#)

Strong interpersonal skills create more satisfying interactions in all environments. Developing people skills involves building strong relationships, demonstrating ethical behavior, communicating clearly and working effectively in teams. Here are some strategies for developing interpersonal skills.

### Steps

**1. Identify interpersonal skills in need of development.** Looking back on your life, there may have been times when a conflict led to a relationship breakup or a miscommunication led to the loss of an opportunity. Identifying these experiences assists in pinpointing interpersonal goals. You may decide to become a better listener, or practice expressing your feelings more clearly and truthfully.

**2. Focus on building harmonious relationships.** If your personal relationships are short-lived or work relationships are cold and distant, concentrate on the qualities necessary for healthy relationships.

- Practice empathy. Putting yourself in the position of another person allows you to see things from a different perspective. When people feel understood, they tend to be less combative, leading to greater understanding and unity.
- Be inclusive. At home, work, community gatherings or social events, practice helping people to feel included. Avoid behaviors that exclude others or make them feel like outsiders.
- Practice fairness. If you tend to take more than you give in relationships, try to be more generous. As an example, if a friend or partner is always accompanying you to events that you enjoy, reciprocate by doing the same for them.
- Be trustworthy. Relationships are more stable when 2 people trust each another. Keep commitments and confidences to increase trust.

**3. Communicate clearly and carefully.** Strong communication skills involve listening closely and expressing yourself clearly in person, over the phone and in written communications.

- Listen carefully. Many conflicts arise from misunderstandings. Listening to others helps to clear up miscommunications. As people are talking, focus on their words, tone of voice and body language to glean the true message.
- Speak clearly. In some cases, such as a business meeting, it may be necessary to speak concisely and get right to the point. In a conversation with a family member, communicating effectively may involve elaborating on feelings and providing examples. Each situation is different, but the ultimate goal is to use language that is clear, respectful and effective for getting your message across.
- Practice good judgment in written communications. Humor doesn't always come across clearly in written communications and can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or hurt feelings. Additionally, without a tone of voice or a greater context, words in written communications can seem cold, particularly in regards to sensitive issues. Consider speaking in person about critical issues.

**4. Examine personal ethics.** People tend to trust those who are self-aware and who do not abuse their power. Practice integrity in your relationships by examining the impact of your behaviours and decisions on others.

**5. Be a team player.** When working with others, engage in a give and take that involves collaboration and compromise. Examine tendencies to dominate situations or criticize others. Praise others for work well done and be open to receiving praise.

**6.Resolve conflicts.** Conflict is a natural and inevitable part of life. Diversity of opinion, perspectives and ideas can be enriching. When opinions clash, try to understand people's viewpoints and avoid black and white thinking. In most cases, resolving conflicts involves an honest and respectful expression of feelings. In some cases, it may be necessary to let go of attachments to unimportant issues.

### Example Of Interpersonal Skills:

1.Yesterday I asked my daughter to help me clean the house. As we were cleaning, she seemed grumpy and agitated. She was wandering around, and not doing her chores. I became frustrated and kept after her to do her chores. The more I pushed, the more frustrated she became. We finally finished the chores after many heated exchanges, and spending clearly more time than it should have taken. Once finished, she began doing her homework as she had missed school due to illness and was behind. I asked her why she was so frustrated to do her chores, and she immediately told me that she was worried about not getting her homework completed.

### Analyze:

I clearly did not use my interpersonal skills as effectively as I should have. I was more concerned about the task at hand rather than receiving the information in front of me. If I would have just asked her why she was agitated, I would have known she was concerned about her homework. I can't help but wonder if we would have completed the chores in half the time if I would have encouraged her to do her homework first, and waited on my needs until hers were met.

It's funny, until I wrote down this simple example; I did not realize that I could have been far more effective by asking one simple question. Writing down examples on interpersonal skills will tell you the little things you are missing in your interpersonal experiences. The real value is using examples to focus and develop your skills. It seems like one little thing, but imagine how all of these little things add up in your daily life. At work and in your personal lives, we have significant opportunity to become more effective. Developing your interpersonal skills will create less stress at work, and more enjoyable time with your family.

### General Interpersonal Example:

2.My wife and I were sitting in the surgery waiting room as my 10 year old daughter was having her leg operated on. My wife commented on how pleasant and warm an older (70s) gentleman was as she passed him coming into the waiting room and said "hello". A doctor came into the waiting room, motioned the man over, and discussed how the surgery was going. The man's facial expression instantly changed from a smiling warm individual to visible shaken. He began to sob, dried his tears and attempted to put a smile back on his face. My wife was heart broken for the man as he was all alone in the waiting room. She asked me to talk to the man and see if we could do anything. I approached the man and I could tell immediately from his facial expression that he would welcome a conversation with me. I asked the man if he was ok, and he let me know the doctor said the surgery was not going well. We talked for awhile and exchanged information about each of our situations. I helped him figure out how to dial out on the waiting room phone to alert family members, and sat back down with my wife. He later came back and informed us the surgery ended up ok, and that his wife

would be fine. He thanked us for our concern and wished us luck with our daughter's surgery.

Analyze:

Although I will probably never see this man again in my life, I will not forget this interpersonal experience for sometime. My wife used her interpersonal skills, and was able to see that this man might need something. I was able to see that he would be open to an interpersonal experience and that I could provide value. Through this interpersonal experience I received support for our situation and the satisfaction of helping out an individual in need. I am simply not an emotional person. Without my wife being present, I would probably not have even noticed the situation in front of me. The one thing I can take away from this example is that I clearly found value in the support received from this individual and satisfaction from offering value to someone in need. Perhaps I should be a bit more observant of other people's needs.

Regardless of the significance of an interpersonal example, taking the time to analyze them allows us to see things we wouldn't normally see. Start with a random example, and continue with specific aspects of your interpersonal experiences to gain a different perspective to what is important to you.

Communication Example:

3. My boss recently approached me about a quote I submitted to a client. He was adamant that the quote was too low, and we were not going to make enough money. As I explained to him the costs that I calculated, he grew extremely agitated and wouldn't listen to anything I would say. We both grew angry and communications quickly broke down until neither one of us was accepting of the other's message.

Analyze:

Once back in my office, I had a chance to cool off. As I pulled up the quote and looked at my calculations, I quickly realized something. He doesn't have the information I have in front of me. I printed exactly how I calculated the quote and went to his office. Once I presented the information, he concurred that we were making enough money from the quote submitted. If I had simply educated him with actual calculations, our discussion would have been much shorter and much less eventful.

Interpersonal communication examples are filled with frustration. Fortunately there is usually a simple lesson to be learned from them. I now educate my boss with all the information I have before even continuing the discussion. This has resulted in far fewer heated discussions. Taking the time to analyze your interpersonal communications can allow you to see simple yet beneficial things you can implement in your work and personal lives to be a more effective communicator.

Interpersonal Skills to Have at Work

are an important thing to have and can be valuable in almost any situation. Basically interpersonal skills are skills we have that allow us to effectively communicate with each other. When you have good interpersonal skills you are able to develop social skills and can effectively communicate with someone using various techniques. Interpersonal skills are almost invaluable

especially if you want a good job and you want a good relationship with your manager and other coworkers. If you are not sure what types of interpersonal skills are great to have for the workplace, here are some great suggestions.

One great interpersonal skill to have is the ability to have effective communication with your boss and other coworkers. Effective communication is fairly easy to accomplish since the main goals are to listen and comprehend what someone is saying to you. It is important to always recognize the person that is talking to you to let them know you are listening and sometimes nodding and agreeing are ways to show that you are listening. Once the person is done talking to you it is important to summarize in your own words what the conversation was about that way the person knows you understand the conversation and you were paying attention. If you have any questions about what was being said then this is the time where you ask for clarification on that issue and then repeat the conversation making sure you understand it. Effective communication is a very important skill to have in the workplace because it will make the relationship with your boss and coworkers easier and just all around better. Sometimes during our jobs we make mistakes that could have been avoided by effective communication. Making sure you understand the task at hand or problem is important to ensure you are doing your job correctly and to make sure that you understand what the other person wants from you. Effective communication skills are always important no matter what type of job you are in because making a mistake from bad communication skills can cost you your job or someone their life. This skill will help better the relationship with your workplace peers and you will be better respected because you take the time to make sure you understand what is being asked of you.

Assertive communication is also very important when talking about effective interpersonal skills at the workplace. Assertive communication skills are important due to the fact you want to be clear and to the point. Having assertive communication skills basically means you are able to deliver a message or issue to the person it needs to be delivered to and only that person while maintaining an effective manner of communication. You want to deliver that message to the person with the details and not just a general message. Be as concise and clear as you can about what it is you want or you need and do not be afraid to be blunt about it. Make sure that you tell your coworker to give you clear and honest feedback about the message that way it seems you are delivering your own opinions rather than being demanding. This is a great skill to have with your boss, manager and other peers in the workplace because you want to be able to express yourself in a clear manner and express your needs and wants in a clear and specific manner. If you are able to express yourself and what you need or what you are feeling specifically and effectively, then you will most likely do better at your job and get more things accomplished. Assertive communication is the other end of effective communication in the sense that this communication skill is showing how you communicate with your workplace peers rather than how you listen to them. Your workplace will feel you are valuable because you speak your mind in an effective manner and they will respect you more for sharing those feelings or needs with them.

Anger management is also a great and effective interpersonal skill that is invaluable at the workplace. Everyone becomes angry at something, whether it be a bad day in general or someone making you angry because they made a mistake at work. It is important to know that being angry at work can cause a lot of problems and can possibly make you lose your job if you can not properly control those emotions. It is important to know what types of situations or people anger you and have an effective way to deal with those feelings. You should not direct anger at anyone in your workplace because this could cause intimidation and lead to a lot of workplace hostility. One of the most important things to keep in mind when you are angry is to take deep breaths to calm down and if that does not work then just walk away. You need to learn what methods work for you as far as something that will calm you down before you take your anger out on the wrong person. Workplace anger management is often taught during classes or training but you need to know what works for you in angry situations and how you can better control your own emotions. Knowing how and when to deal with workplace anger will better enhance the relationship between you and those you work with and will help them also develop better anger management skills. Knowing how to control your anger will also help in the workplace because people will want to come to you with problems due to the fact they know you will control your emotions and find a proper way to deal with the situation at hand. This is also important because your boss might be looking at you as a team leader or someone who might end up in a higher-level position at your work if you can control your anger and you have effective anger management skills. All around anger management is a great interpersonal skill to have because it will help you communicate your thoughts and feelings with those around you at your workplace in a reasonable and approachable manner.

Conflict resolution is something that goes with anger management and is an effective interpersonal skill to have in the workplace. Conflict resolution consists of knowing what the conflict is and how it affects you as well as knowing the reasons why the conflict matters to you. If you are in a conflict with someone it is important to include them into your resolution while maintaining a positive attitude and acting civil toward them. Make sure they know what the conflict was and why it is important to you and also how you feel about the conflict. Make direct compromises with the person if possible and ask to hear their side of the story relating to the conflict at hand. You should always be respectful to the other person and ask their opinion on the conflict and a possible solution to the conflict. When you both can agree on a resolution you should make a plan to stick to that resolution and then follow through with talking to the other person afterward to make sure that the issue was resolved. Conflict resolution is an important interpersonal skill to have in the workplace because in every job there is always going to be conflicts and various opinions about a subject. Knowing how to approach the conflict and being respectful to the other person involved will help the people at your work get along and it will show them things they could do to improve their skills. Conflict resolution is also important because it tells the people you work with that you are open to negotiating a situation and that you do care about what they think and you are there to listen to them and how they feel. This is

important because your boss will then know you are capable of handling situations on your own and that you have skills to solve problems peacefully with others.

Teamwork is also a very important interpersonal skill to have in your workplace. Teamwork means you can collaborate with other people and share ideas with them to come to a common goal. Teamwork means you are listening, cooperating with people in your workplace, communicating your thoughts and feelings and it also means you can come to resolutions on conflicts. Teamwork is basically knowing you are not the only one at your workplace and that other people have ideas and feelings to and you all are working toward the same common outcome. Teamwork uses skills of different interpersonal skills because they all come together to make teamwork possible and useful. Teamwork means knowing that even though some people might be different than you it is still possible to make a common goal happen by setting those differences aside. You should be able to express your own opinions in a thoughtful and specific manner and also be able to listen to others and share ideas to help one another. Teamwork is very important to any workplace because there would be no workplace if you did not have teamwork and everyone working together. Teamwork is the ability to solve problems and achieve goals with others that will directly affect your workplace. Your boss and others in your workplace will see this skill as a building block to success. You will become a better person, better coworker and also a leader in your workplace for knowing how to effectively use teamwork skills. Knowing teamwork skills might help you advance in your workplace and become a manager or it might just make you a very valuable member of the organization. Teamwork will help you get along with your boss and others because it will help you realize the common goal everyone has and it will help you better understand how to achieve those goals.