

Communication is a two-way street...

Employees and managers share the responsibility to communicate effectively. Differences in their respective roles lead to differing viewpoints which, in turn, often create gaps in communication. It's like seeing your house from the ground and then from an airplane 10,000 feet up---same house, different views. Constructive interactions require these key elements.

Be respectful – Have difficult conversations in private, whether it's raising a problem, giving difficult feedback or taking disciplinary action. Whining, blaming, finger pointing or accusations create defensiveness and shut down communication.

Seek input – Lack of input at all levels can lead to missed opportunities and failures. Determine together the best way to give and get input and feedback, utilizing a variety of methods.

Share what you know - Information minimizes assumptions and builds trusts. Regularly share information about company plans, organizational health, problems you each encounter, and ideas for improvement. Capitalize on your diverse perspectives, knowledge, and skills.

Value one another's role – Recognize that while the expectations and responsibilities of your roles differ, your ultimate goals are similar, if not the same. Listen carefully and objectively to understand how things look from “the ground”, as well as how each role fits into the “10,000 foot” view.

Say “Thank you” – Make an extra effort to express appreciation when you see anyone go above and beyond – the employee who stayed late to get the job done or the manager who lobbied hard to upgrade your equipment. And, remember the little things – the employee who jumped in to help out a coworker and the manager who let you arrange your schedule to attend your child's activity.

Author John Powell says “Communication works for those who work at it.” Work at it together.

Words to Live By...

“We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.”

Winston Churchill



A BRIGHT IDEA

Eating the Elephant—one bite at a time...

Tackling a large project can seem just as daunting as eating that proverbial elephant. As the old adage suggests, you can do it—one bite at a time. Establish a realistic timeline and divide the project into incremental, achievable steps (bites). Go ahead...take your first bite.

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“Basic Mediator Training”

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