



## Making Assumptions

We all do it. We make assumptions because we *think* we know the meaning and intent of someone's words or actions. Our natural reaction to those words or actions is to create our own version of the truth—our assumptions. We rely on our “filters”—our perspectives and past experiences—to make our assumptions. Unfortunately, there are often gaps, based on incomplete or inaccurate information, in our understanding of a situation or person. These gaps leave room for misunderstandings, accusations, frustration and conflict. Assumptions are costly in terms of damaged relationships, lost productivity, poor decision-making, employee turnover and, yes, lawsuits.

There is really only one way to avoid making assumptions—ASK! Ask; then listen. If you are truly interested in understanding another person's words or actions, it is necessary to understand *their* perspectives. Ask questions that encourage sharing rather than “yes/no” answers. Instead of “Why did you do that?” ask “What made you decide to do it that way?” Avoid judging the answers—you are interested in information. Whether or not you like the answers, they provide valuable feedback. Accurate information on which to base your next step could help you avoid costly mistakes.

Check out your assumptions by going directly to the source. Don't rely on second or third hand information—remember, others' opinions are formed utilizing *their* filters. And asking a third party for their opinion could be interpreted as a request to support your assumption. Questioning your assumptions requires that you be open to changing your mind when the information suggests you should.

The next time you're tempted to make an assumption, ask yourself, “Would I rather have someone make an assumption about what I'm thinking and feeling; or, would I prefer that they ask me?”

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## Words to Live By...

Kindness is a language we all understand. Even the blind can see it, and the deaf can hear it.

-Mother Theresa



## A BRIGHT IDEA

*Try something new...*

Take up a new sport. Become a gourmet cook. Learn to play a musical instrument. Go somewhere you've never been before. New adventures energize us and stimulate our brains. Go for it!

## Office Space For Lease...



Excellent rental opportunity! View our website for details! [www.alternativeresolutions.biz](http://www.alternativeresolutions.biz)

## What's Happening...

Alternative Resolutions, Inc. will present the following workshops in our training facility. These are open to the public. Plan for success in 2009—**Register today!**

### “Mediation Skills for the Workplace”

June 24-25, 2009 8:30 am—4:30 pm

August 11-12, 2009 8:30 am—4:30 pm

### “Basic Mediator Training”

July 20-24, 2009 8:00am—5:00pm

To register or get more information about these workshops, or to schedule a training specifically for your needs, contact Alternative Resolutions, Inc. at 920-993-1490 or [altres@alternativeresolutions.biz](mailto:altres@alternativeresolutions.biz) or visit our website at [www.alternativeresolutions.biz](http://www.alternativeresolutions.biz).

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