

# Here are eight ways to earn respect at work

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OPINION

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Respect is earned. If you are the go-to person who is sought out for input and advice, it didn't just accidentally happen. If, when you speak, others listen, then rest assured that it's not a coincidence. If others make it a point to regularly keep you in the know, then it isn't just good luck. Respect at work is earned, and if you're wondering exactly what it takes, then read on.

**1. Build goodwill.** Invest the energy to build goodwill by supporting your boss and your co-workers, particularly when it seems they need it the most. Offer to help, even if it doesn't fall within your area of responsibility. Even more so if the current snafu isn't your fault. Share information with your co-workers. It shows them that you have confidence in their abilities and discretion, and that you respect them enough to keep them in the loop. And when you build goodwill with others, it gives you permission to call on them later when you are the one in need of assistance.

**2. Adjust to differing work styles.** Everyone works and communicates differently. Some people need only high-level information, others need data and details. Some make decisions instinctively, others after careful consideration and analysis of all available facts. So adjust your approach based on who you are working with. Be thoughtful about when it's more appropriate to talk in bullet points and when to speak in depth. If you adapt your communication style to match that of others, then you will quickly climb in their estimation.

**3. Raise concerns privately.** Earning respect isn't about always agreeing, but it is about how you bring up your differences. If you have concerns, make it a point to raise them one on one with the person involved. You may need to take it to a wider audience later, but when

you open the conversation privately, you show respect. Which gets respect.

**4. Be modest.** While there is nothing wrong with celebrating accomplishments, don't cross the line into becoming an arrogant show-off. So is it possible to garner applause for success without coming across as a braggart? Yes. Publicly thank others who contributed to your praiseworthy results. And as an unanticipated bonus, you'll also benefit from creating goodwill.

**5. Invest in relationships.** Be patient with those you work with. Not everyone operates at the same speed as you do. Allow others the chance to comprehend and respond. Listen. When you take the time to really listen, not only will you build respect, but you might also learn valuable information that will help improve your outcomes. Care about others

at a personal level. Remember things they've said about their lives outside work and ask for an update when you see them next. When you treat your boss and your co-workers like humans, you'll earn their respect.

**6. Be inclusive.** It might have been cool to be one of the "in" kids when you were in high school, but it won't serve you well in your professional life. Earning respect in the workplace comes from being inclusive. Being clique-y at work may seem great on the surface, but it can quickly alienate you from others. When you reach out to include others, particularly those who don't seem to easily fit in, you will get a noteworthy return in emotional capital.

**7. Don't gossip.** Don't do it. Don't listen to it. And don't repeat it. If you do, you're telling the world that you can't be trusted with confidential information. Even worse, it gives the impression that you revel in the misfortunes of others.

**8. Always be professional.** At work, and that most definitely includes the office party. But also be professional in your personal life. People respect the person, and professional and personal are two sides of the same coin. Besides, in today's digital world, your private life isn't much of a secret, so act accordingly.

If you want to be respected at work, then understand that you need to work at it.

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