

Competency: Working with People

Activity 1

Look at your team members and identify how they differ from you in the ways they behave at work. Ask yourself why you react negatively towards some people but not towards others. When a colleague makes a suggestion, concentrate on the suggestion itself rather than on how it is expressed. Try to uncover any unconscious bias that you may have.

Activity 2

Show others that you have listened to them by summarizing what you have heard and repeating it back to them. Be prepared to be influenced by other people's views. Value others for the diversity of their skills, knowledge and experience. Try not to make assumptions about thoughts and feelings of others.

Activity 3

Question why you may not always ask others for help in solving problems and why others may be reluctant to be involved in joint problem-solving with you. Use your listening and questioning skills to draw out the ideas of others in your team. Acknowledge the value of each contribution and try to build on the ideas of others. In group situations, draw quieter members into the discussion by asking for their comments directly.

Activity 4

Acknowledge when others in your team do something right and praise them for it. Identify and give praise both for team successes and for individual contributions. Make a point of recognizing improvements in performance. Get to know the type of recognition each member of your team prefers.

Activity 5

Whenever you can, encourage others to share their achievements, ideas and concerns with you, to help you give relevant guidance on how they can improve and develop. Persist with this approach even if you are initially met with suspicion. Make sure you don't show favoritism but offer this kind of support to all members of your team equally.

Activity 6

Allow time for liaison and collaboration within and across teams. Organize cross-team ventures and events. Mix teams up when possible. Work with colleagues to identify the signs of a "silo mentality" and use your findings to assess how well your team or teams are cooperating. For each sign look for possible causes and ways of tackling them.

Activity 7

Praise others' ideas if they have merit. Look for ways to add value to their ideas and decisions. Become an enthusiastic advocate and offer to provide practical or symbolic support. Reward initiative and action, and acknowledge individuals taking personal responsibility for outcomes.

Results: