

Build good relationships, end bad ones

BUSINESS INSIGHT

Right relationships

Van Moody, author of “The People Factor, How Building Great Relationships and Ending Bad Ones Unlocks Your God-Given Purpose,” says the right relationships can propel you to great heights of achievement; the wrong ones will tether you to mediocrity and mire you in disappointment.

What are essential elements of a successful professional relationship?

It depends on two people agreeing to give and take; it requires mutual pursuit and promises joint benefit. Successful professional relationships are possible when people respect each other and share the same values. It is a state of being mutually connected for positive purposes with positive results.

Define a toxic relationship.

You're in a toxic professional relationship with a boss or peer when they:

- » Stifle your talent and limit your opportunities for advancement
- » Twist circumstances and conversations to their benefit
- » Chide or punish you for a mistake rather than help you correct it
- » Remind you constantly or publicly of a disappointing experience or unmet expectation
- » Take credit or withhold

recognition for new ideas and extra effort

- » Focus solely on meeting their goals and do so at your expense
- » Fail to respect your need for personal space and time

How can one establish a healthy relationship with toxic people?

Setting boundaries is one of the best ways to effectively work with unhealthy people. While you may not be able to change the tone of the relationship, we teach people how to treat us by what we allow. Healthy boundaries keep frustration and confusion low. Boundaries remind people of what is acceptable to you and what is reasonable to expect from you. Boundaries prevent unhealthy people from taking up too much of your time, energy, or resources — all precious commodities in the workplace. Toxic people don't like boundaries because they want to shift responsibilities according to their mood or the project. It is important to recognize that toxic people create work environments that mirror their personal environments. They want to operate where they are most comfortable. They will not set boundaries for you.

What are some exit strategies?

There are important questions a person must ask themselves when they have to end an unhealthy business relationship: How should I think about this situation? What do

I say to bring closure to the relationship? And how do I respond to others when they ask about the other person? It's important for you to be very clear about where your career is headed and why it requires the relationship to change. That way, you can muster up both the boldness and kindness to do it. If, after you decide to end the relationship, you should:

Be sincere » People know when someone isn't being authentic.

Be honest » But speak to them respectfully. The need to be honest does not give you the right to trample on anyone's feelings, so choose your words wisely.

Be clear » About where you are on your life's journey and what you need from a relationship. Tell them why you need to make a change and use phrases such as, “Here's what I really need...”

Don't assign blame » It's not about them; it's about positioning yourself to achieve your goals.

Share the lessons you learned » And say thank you. Be specific in showing your appreciation.

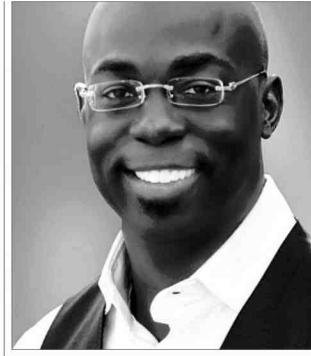
Be open » To reconcile in the future, if it's healthy and appropriate. The old saying, never burn your bridges may apply here. So avoid doing or saying anything that would prohibit you from redefining or restoring the relationship later.

Others » When you've been close to someone for a long time, whether it's personal or professional, other people know it. When that relationship comes to an end, they will notice that, too. When



others inquire, say as little as possible as positively as possible. For example, you could say: “Yeah, we don’t spend as much time together anymore, but I think he’s a great guy,” or “Well, we needed to go in different directions, but I sure did learn a lot from her.”

–*Dawn House*



Van Moody, *author*