



1. Why put in the effort?

Just like in our personal lives, we all need to feel a sense of belonging, acceptance, and camaraderie at work. If employees and teammates do not feel supported or a strong sense of connection at work, they will be far more likely to seek employment elsewhere.

2. Who needs to put in the effort to develop professional relationships?

Ideally, everyone will invest in all kinds of work place relationships. It is important to foster connection from the bottom up, from the top down, and laterally to peers. Relationships are a two way street- effort must be invested from each party to ensure success. If you are a supervisor, you may find yourself needing to put in extra effort to get things rolling. This effort is critical! To develop or refresh your skills view [Creating a Connection Culture](#) or [Leading Through Relationships](#).

Use your CWRU network ID to access this training through LinkedIn Learning



Relationship Building Tips

Build Support Collaborate

3. Five building blocks for strong relationships:

- 1 Schedule time to build relationships. Whether it's a weekly check in meetings with the employees you supervise or monthly coffee with a colleague. Relationships take consistent effort.
- 2 Develop and implement boundaries. People do best when they know what to expect. Boundaries are a win-win both ways.
- 3 Avoid gossiping. The hard work put into relationships can be ruined with one instance of gossip. If you have a problem with someone, address it directly.
- 4 Remain positive and constructive. People want to be around people who make them feel good. This is not to say you can never give feedback that is hard to hear but consistent positivity is vital to balance out occasional constructive feedback.
- 5 Invest in yourself. The best leaders, colleagues, and friends are those who are mindful of themselves personally. Putting effort into developing emotional intelligence, personal interests, and mindful listening will make you better for your work relationships.

4. When conflicts arise:

Even the best and most well intentioned relationships will experience conflict. It must be addressed directly and promptly in order to avoid permanent damage to working relationships. The Professional Development Center (PDC) has many resources for conflict resolution. View the [Conflict Resolution Toolkit here](#) or request a [one-on-one career development meeting](#) for personalized resource recommendations.

For interpersonal conflict you may also find that a mediated conversation may be helpful. Reach out to the PDC for more information.

