

# Everyday Conversation Can Improve Relationships

Turning a deaf ear on routine or mundane conversations can shortchange personal and professional relationships. Think of a comment or a question as an invitation—and an opportunity. Here’s an example: A co-worker offers a cheery “good morning” and draws a positive response about an upcoming project.

The early morning conversation is one that can encourage interaction and dialog that will support a pleasant, productive work relationship. A failure to respond or gruff “that’s not the way I see it!” does little to encourage conversation or positive working relationships.

Here are some tips for adding value to interpersonal communications:

- Take the time to listen.
- If you miss a comment or question, apologize, and ask the other person to repeat it.

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- Respond as positively as possible and with interest, an appreciative comment, or humor, if appropriate, to invite further dialog.
- Keep it simple. A short response can be enough to let others know that you value the relationship. Repeated failures to respond will, however, send the message that you don’t value a relationship.
- Tone matters. A hostile comment—a zinger, for example—can fuel hostility.
- Respect boundaries—personal information is personal.

Positive interaction almost always adds value to interpersonal relationships—and to each day, as well.

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