



Quick E-Tips



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Thank you for subscribing to this newsletter brought to you by International Advantage® - *Leading Across Cultures*. Every month we bring you tips to help your team and organization, especially those operating in culturally diverse environments, reach the business goals.

If you heard that someone was talking badly about you at lunch yesterday, how would you respond? The following guidelines tell you how.

Topic of the month: **Achieving Peace in Your Organization**

The Human Resources Manager for a client told me this month that she spends a large amount of time responding to questions and complaints regarding **how to deal with interpersonal issues at work**. We decided to post and distribute a list of simple ground rules which could be helpful to employees...and save valuable time in her work week.

Below are my tips that may be helpful to all E-tip readers. These principles will keep you **calm and paranoid-free**. The added benefit is that their consistent use will earn you **respect and trust** from your colleagues. These work across national cultures, too.

8 Tips: **How to Eliminate Interpersonal "Drama" - and time - at Work**

1. **Only talk positively about others.**

Anything less reflects poorly on you.

2. **Give others the benefit of the doubt.**

Did someone give you the cold shoulder? *Assume it was not intentional.*
Did the group forget to invite you to the event? *Assume it was a simple oversight.*

In short, be secure enough with who you to resist creating conspiracies in your head.

Maybe you have been disappointed many times by the actions of a certain person. Should you still give him/her the benefit of the doubt? Yes. Talk to the person directly about the disappointments and/or learn to forgive. Give him/her the benefit of the doubt again. (Aren't there some lessons you, too, have needed to learn more than once?!)

3. Only act on information that you hear first-hand.

If you hear - or suspect -- that someone has spoken badly about you, do nothing. You do not know the context of the statement, its accuracy and/or motives of your informer. Avoid "wasted energy" and let it go.

Instead, reinforce this communication principle by saying to your informer, "In the future, please tell [name] to come speak to me directly to resolve an issue." Then let it go. Forget about it completely.

4. If someone offends you?

- a. Speak to him/her directly and calmly in a private setting.
- b. Seek to understand his/her perspective.
- c. Don't delay. Talk to him/her as soon as possible.
- d. Do not talk to others about it, unless you absolutely must. If you do, try to talk with someone who can provide an objective perspective (not just tell you how right you are). Speak with someone outside the organization, if possible.

5. Be curious.

When you did sit down to talk about an offence, remember that your #1 objective is to seek to understand the other's perspective. Be curious about what the other thinks and feels. Negotiate a solution.

6. Stop mumbling insults or complaints; Be careful with sarcasm.

Have you insulted someone in the safety of a crowd or at a safe distance (but perhaps in the person's presence)? Or have you ever softened a serious complaint making your comment into a sarcastic joke?

Consider that in many cases - especially when you do hold some real irritation about a person's actions -- you need to make a choice: accept the behavior (and be quiet about it) or talk to the person directly.

7. Stop conversations that are at others' expense.

If you hear someone complaining/commenting on another person in a hurtful way, stop the conversation and/or suggest that he/she speak directly to the person to get more information. Example: "I'd rather we didn't have this conversation without [name] in the room. Why don't you talk to him directly?"

8. Have you offended someone publicly?

If you offend someone in front of others (with or without them present), you must also apologize / make it right in front of that same group. Apologizing privately is not enough.

Consider posting these ideas in your cube, your office wall, in the hallway or on your board room wall. **Give a copy** to your entire team. **Have a conversation with your team** about which of these guidelines are the most needed in your team.

To answer the question posed to you at the beginning? Do nothing. (Guideline #3)

The pay-off? Stay calm and paranoid-free. Be respected and trusted. Achieve peace in your organization.

What's News

1. New Client in Construction/Real Estate: Gilbane Inc.

One of largest privately held family-owned companies in the construction and real estate industry was added to our list of clients this month. [Gilbane Inc.](#), serving its clients since 1873, will be launching a diversity initiative in its efforts to continue to be an employer of choice in its communities. We are happy to provide consulting and facilitation to them as it relates to the initiative.

2. Event Announcement: Institute of Management Consultants -Arizona

Please join us for our Aug 11th breakfast meeting in Phoenix for our teleconference program (so you can stay inside during the summer heat!) by John Havens on how to use podcasting for your business. Details and registration: www.imcaz.org

To your continued success around the globe,

Lisa

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