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The ability to work with people and develop relationships is absolutely indispensable to effective leadership. If you don't get along with people you lead, it will be hard to convince them to go along with you on the tough journeys, especially if they really don't have to. People who don't get along with their so-called leaders only do enough they're required to in order to get paid--or stay only long enough to meet the obligations of time associated with their pay.

What can you do to manage and cultivate good relationships as a leader? It requires three things:

1) *Have a leader's head--understand people.* You must have the ability to understand how people feel and think. As you work with others, recognize that all people, whether leaders or followers, have some things in common:

- They like to feel special, so sincerely compliment them.
- They want a better tomorrow, so show them hope.

You have to get along before they go along

- They desire direction, so navigate for them.
- They are selfish, so speak to their needs first.
- They get low emotionally, so try to encourage them.
- They want success, so help them win.

Recognizing these truths, a leader must be able to treat people as individuals. The ability to look at each person, understand them, and connect with them is a major factor in relational success. This means you can't treat all people the same. You have to be able to adapt your leadership style to the person you're leading.

2) *Have a leader's heart--love people.* You cannot be a truly effective leader, the kind that people want to follow, unless you love being with and around people. Albert Einstein put it this way: “Strange is our situation here upon earth. Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why, yet sometimes seeming to a divine purpose. From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know: that man is here for the sake of other men.”

3) *Extend a leader's hand--help people.* LeRoy H. Kurtz of General Motors said, “The fields of industry are strewn with the bones of those organizations whose leadership became infested with dry rot, who believed in taking instead of giving--who didn't realize that the only assets that could not be replaced easily were human ones.”

People respect a leader who keeps their interests in mind. If your focus is on what you can put into people rather than what you can get out of them, they'll love and respect you.

Doing these three things, however, won't guarantee that everyone will get along with you. Some people are so toxic in their behavior and attitude that they will be a thorn in your side no matter what, and for as long as you tolerate it. And you don't have to tolerate it!

Knowing how to get along with people is one of the most important single ingredients in the formula of success. When it comes down to it, you have to get along before they go along.

~ The End ~