



# FORGING BOLD HORIZONS

## National Postal Forum

*Tuesday May 5, 2026 2:45-3:45*

NATIONAL POSTAL FORUM | MAY 3-6, 2026 | PHOENIX, AZ

NATIONAL POSTAL FORUM | PHOENIX, AZ



# “Leading by Building Great Relationships!”

**Presented By: Wes Friesen**

**President-Solomon Training & Development; Professor-George Fox University; Non-Profit Board Member; Speaker; Writer; Manager – Portland General (retired)**



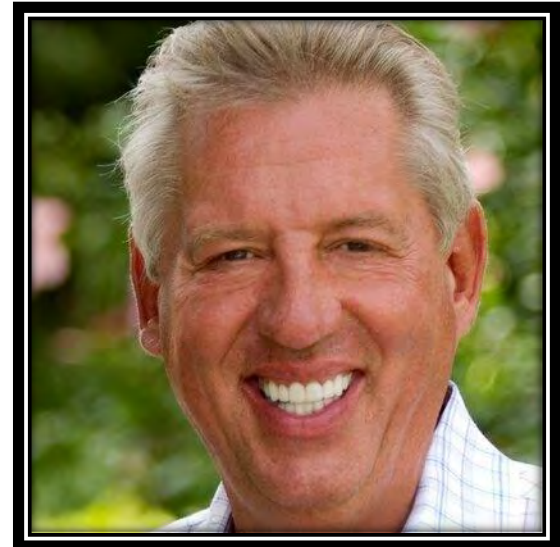
**“The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.”**

**- President Theodore Roosevelt**



# Relational Skills are Important!

**John Maxwell: “Relational skills are the most important abilities in leadership”**



# 80+ Year Harvard Study on Key to Happiness and Health

**Harvard “Grant” Study on 724 Men and their Wives and Children**

**Key to Happiness and Health?**

**Fame? Wealth? High Achievement? NO!!**

**Primary Key to Happiness and Health = Close, Loving Relationships!!**

# Bad relationships Can Hurt ☹️



Isn't it nice when we can  
all get along? 😊



# Sixteen Principles to Build Good Relationships

## 1) Develop Your People Skills

- Good relationships start with good people skills.
- People skills are primarily “soft skills” like collaboration, communication and conflict resolution.
- How to assess and get better:
  - \* Having trusted mentors or close friends that speak into your life.
  - \* Periodically taking confidential surveys and solicit honest feedback.

## 2) Practice the Magical 5 to 1 Ratio

“Positive to Negative Comments”

Validated by:

- Leadership team study
- Psychologists Clifton & Rath
- Dr. John Gottman

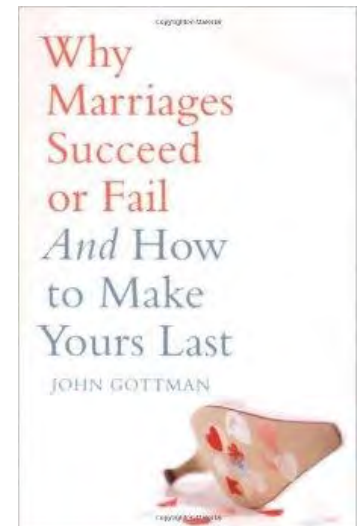
# Dr. Gottman Study

One 15 minute conversation with 700 couples that were strangers to the Gottman research team.

The team predicted if ten years later couple would be divorced or married. Ten years later the team followed up, and they predicted with an accuracy rate of 94%!!

Basis for team's prediction?

The magic five to one ratio!!



### 3) Develop a Genuine Care for People

- We only connect well with people when we value and care for them.
- Do not take people for granted – let them know we care and appreciate them.
- Part of caring for people is to be honest, genuine and transparent. Let people see our heart of caring and compassion – and they will respond and feel closer to you.



*"Expressing gratitude is a natural state of being and reminds us that we are all connected."* - Valerie Elster

*"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."* - John Maxwell



## 4) Look for Common Ground

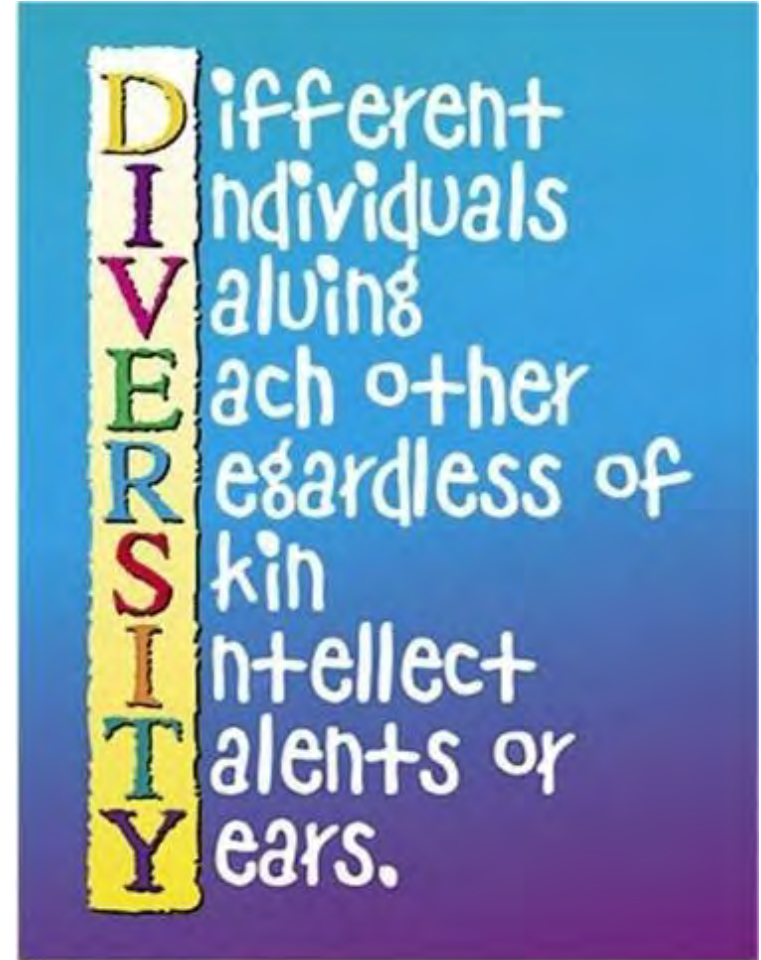
- John Maxwell – *"Anytime you want to connect with another person, start where both of you agree. And that means finding common ground."*
- There are lots of potential areas for common ground – ranging from personal interests to life experiences to values and beliefs.

**The key to finding common ground?  
Asking questions and listening.**



## 5) Recognize and Respect Differences

- While looking to find common ground, also acknowledge that we're all different.
- Differences and diversity make our lives more interesting, and can strengthen our team performance as we blend our diverse backgrounds and abilities together to make us stronger.



## 6) Develop Relationships with ALL people

- Don't be status conscious.
- The people we most admire are those that treat *all* people as important.

*"Anytime you devalue people, you question God's creation of them."* - Bill McCartney



*"The true measure of a man is how he treats someone who can do him absolutely no good."* - Ann Landers

# 7) Be a Giver – Not Merely a Taker

- Commit to being a *servant leader*.
- Giving of ourselves is the ultimate win-win.

*"We make a living by what we get. We make life by what we give."*



Winston Churchill

*"No one has ever become poor by giving."*



Anne Frank

*"The greater you help others, the greater your own success."*



A. L. Williams

# 8) Employ Active Listening Techniques

Dale Carnegie

(author of the classic "How to Win Friends and Influence People")

*"You can make more friends in two weeks by becoming a good listener than you can in two years trying to get other people interested in you."*



Rachel Naomi Remen

*"The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention...A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words."*



Active listening techniques include maintaining good eye contact, asking clarifying questions, and repeating back to the person what you think you heard him or her say.

## 9) Promote Open and Effective Communication

- Starting place: Be a good listener.
- Encourage people to freely express their thoughts in a non-judgmental manner.
- Communicate with respect, stay rational and avoid being overly emotional.
- Use preferred channels of communication (e.g. face-to-face, phone, e-mail, texts, etc.).

# 10) Work on Building Trust

- Trust is foundational to good relationships

*Create a track record of predictability and integrity.* To earn trust we must have a predictable pattern of how we act. An important part of predictability is integrity – honoring your word. High-trust managers always try to honor their word – and if they fail to do so they apologize and make sure it does not become a habit. Integrity also includes always doing the right thing – even if it costs you personally.

*"If you have integrity, nothing else matters. If you don't have integrity, nothing else matters."* - Senator Alan K. Simpson

**Other tips:**

**Never break confidences;  
avoid bad mouthing  
others behind their backs**



# 11) Get to Know People On a Personal Level

- Find ways to get to know people on a personal level (within reasonable boundaries).
- Asking non-probing open ended questions is a good starting place.
- Look to build bridges and find connections

Joseph Newton said, *"People are lonely (disconnected) because they build walls instead of bridges."*

To build bridges share common experiences with them. Anything you experience together helps create a common history and build connection.

## 12) Be Mindful – and Know When to Dial it Back

- Being mindful means taking responsibility for our words and actions.
- Be careful and attend to what we say, don't let our own negative emotions impact the people around them.
- Being mindful also includes knowing when to have fun and when to be serious, when to be over the top and when to be invisible, and when to take charge and when to follow.

## 13) Appreciate Others

- Showing sincere appreciation opens the door to great relationships!
- Prominent psychologist William James spent much of his career researching what our deepest needs were – and landed on the need for appreciation being at the top of the list for most of us.



# **13) Appreciate Others: by Speaking Their Appreciation Language**

**Psychologists Gary Chapman & Paul White:**

- 1) Words of Affirmation**
- 2) Quality Time**
- 3) Acts of Service**
- 4) Tangible Gifts**
- 5) Appropriate Physical Touch**

# 14) Be Positive, Not Negative

- Focus on being positive.
- Positivity is attractive and contagious, and it will help strengthen relationships with those around you.
- No one wants to be around someone who's negative most of the time.



# 15) Be Willing to Compromise

- Compromise involves each party getting something that he or she wants so that everyone wins (think Stephen Covey's "win-win" concept).
- People are drawn to those that are not self-centered and willing to put relationships over having everything done my way.



## 16) Practice Common Courtesy

- A simple exchange of smiles and a “Hi” can be first steps in building a relationship.
- Making eye contact, saying “thank you” and pick up after yourself.
- Choose to be positive and pleasant in the way you treat others (most will respond in kind)!

*“Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others.”*

Booker T. Washington



# Bonus! Advice from Apostle Paul

To build great relationships, “clothe ourselves” with these seven attributes when relating to others:

- 1) Compassion
- 2) Kindness
- 3) Humility
- 4) Gentleness
- 5) Patience
- 6) Forgiveness
- 7) Love

*“The key to Social Intelligence is found in Colossians 3:12-14.”* Dr. Steve Stephens,  
Psychologist and Author of 28 Books



# Closing Thought:

## Good Relationships = Influence & Impact

- Building deeper relationships with people will enhance your influence and help you have a greater impact.
- Jackie Robinson - "A life isn't significant except for its impact on other lives."



How will you use your greater impact? Add even more value to the lives of people around you!



# Contact Information

Wes Friesen

Solomon Training & Development

14034 SE Portland View Pl

Portland, Oregon 97086

C: 971-806-0812

[Wesmfriesen@gmail.com](mailto:Wesmfriesen@gmail.com)

**Wesfriesen.com**

Order Your Team Can Soar! under the "Book" tab