

4 Common Ground, Common Purpose. Relationships in School Boards

Tips on How to Build Positive Working Relationships

Be tolerant of your own and others' weaknesses.

Be polite, respectful, helpful and supportive. Treat others the way you would like to be treated.

Offer to mentor trustees who are new to the role.

Be on time, be prepared and be willing to work hard. Be respectful during meetings. Turn off your cell phone. Pay attention. Make eye contact.

Learn to give and accept praise. Learn to set limits with yourself and others. Learn to say “no”.

Be honest with your feelings – with yourself and others. Be direct, open, and clear in giving messages to avoid misunderstandings.

Be a good listener. Listen to understand. Be aware of your body language, voice inflection, posture, and facial expressions. Remember that 70% of all communication is non-verbal.

Try for “win-win” solutions to problems. Agree to disagree if no solution is available. Offer your point of view when it is asked for, and assume responsibility for your contributions.

Get to know your colleagues better. Try to connect on a personal level as well as professionally. Be sensitive and empathetic to others' feelings.

Keep your promises and be reliable. Tell the truth. Be trustworthy.

Be open to new ideas, innovations and outside-the-box thinking.