

20 Ways to Promote Civility and Respect

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1. Model the behavior you would like to see from others. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
2. Do not let your silence condone disrespectful behavior, yet consider carefully when and where to speak up.
3. Without giving up your own convictions, accept that disagreement will exist.
4. Don't take your stress out on those around you. Use the counseling resources for students and employees.
5. Be a respectful listener.
6. Conflict can be healthy if expressed appropriately. Make sure it's a discussion about the ideas or the behaviors, not about the person . . . You can say: "I don't support or like (description of the behavior)" so the comment is not about the individual.
7. Remember that you are not always right—and others are not always wrong.
8. Whatever view you feel strongly about, another may feel just as strongly against . . . and that's okay. Although high emotion is not necessarily the mark of incivility, remember that it may cause a conversation to escalate in unproductive ways.
9. Tone of voice matters.
10. Work collaboratively with your class, colleagues and friends to define and apply respectful behaviors.
11. Consider how your use of technology (e-mail, social media, etc.) helps or hinders a respectful work/organization environment. Remember that with e-mail there is no voice tone to help convey meaning.
12. Rely on facts rather than assumptions. Gather relevant facts, especially before acting on assumptions that can damage relationships.
13. Take time to learn more about a background or culture you are not familiar with to expand your own perspective and interpersonal skills.
14. Have difficult conversations in person or, at a minimum, by telephone, not electronically.
15. Adopt a positive and solution-driven approach to resolving conflicts.
16. Always remember to say please and thank you.
17. Recognize the contributions made by individuals throughout your organization. Show appreciation for contributions at all levels.
18. Kindness has a ripple effect that extends far beyond the initial recipient. Practice treating others with respect and consideration no matter the setting.
19. Understand your triggers or "hot buttons." Knowing what makes you angry and frustrated enables you to manage your reactions and respond in a more appropriate manner.
20. The world always looks better from behind a smile!