



## 5 Steps to Building a Strong Relationship

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Have you ever invested your time and emotions to build a relationship, only to see that relationship destroyed in a matter of minutes? When it was all over, and the dust settled, did you find yourself wondering, *"What happened?"*

Whether the relationship is in your business or personal life, ***strong relationships take time, attention, and energy to build, maintain, and nurture.***

Relationships are important to everyone. As the saying goes, *"No man is an island."* We need and depend on each other. Our relationships help define who we are and how we get along in the world. We're often judged by the company we keep and our relationships are part of this.

Without relationships, a business cannot exist for long. Regardless of what type of business you have, you need good working relationships. At the very least, you need people to do business with! Forming healthy relationships with your customers and colleagues is an integral part of the recipe for success.

Additional types of relationships include family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, supervisors, mentors, and more. ***These relationships add layers of depth to your life.*** Each one can touch your life and make a difference, so you want to build and cherish these relationships as well.

**Here are 5 essential keys to building healthy, profitable relationships:**

- 1. Be Honest.** People respond to honesty. In a world where people are often faced with scams and lies, honesty is a priority. The relationships you form with honesty as a foundation will be strong and powerful.

2. **Apologize.** If you're wrong about anything or do something that offends or hurts someone, admit it. Everyone makes mistakes; after all, we're all human. People respect you more if you admit your mistakes and apologize. ***Respect strengthens your relationships.***
3. **Stay in touch.** Relationships require exchanges. In our world today, we have many options to communicate and improve our relationships.
  - ***Face to face is always the best.*** Enjoy coffee, lunch, or just stop in for a chat. Not only are you communicating, but you're also fully devoting your time to them as well.
  - Letters and cards are a good way to stay in touch, and they remain special in this computer age full of quick text messages and impersonal emails.
  - Emails are also appreciated, particularly when you give it the personal touch, but nothing says, "you're important to me" like meeting in-person or chatting on the phone.
4. **Recognize accomplishments.** Let people know that you notice even their small accomplishments. Everyone likes to be noticed and recognized. It fosters good feelings and builds on your relationship when you give someone a well-deserved compliment.
  - Let your co-worker know they did a great job on their presentation.
  - Tell your client you noticed how well they're doing in their business.
  - Give your child a hug for doing a great job on anything!
5. **Take a genuine interest in those you have relationships with.** Don't just serve up generic compliments from time to time. ***Ask questions.*** Showing an interest and remembering small personal details lets them know that you're thinking about them and that you're interested in their life.
  - Learn from their experiences. For example, you can ask, "*How did you do that?*"
  - Ask about what they've been working on.
  - Inquire about their family, baseball team, or the new puppy.

Relationships add much to our lives. In our personal life, they can add the richness of friends and shared memories. In our business life, they can bring us success and recognition. ***Strong, healthy relationships are the founding corners of a rewarding life.***

Relationships grow over time. While there are the rare finds where you instantly bond with someone, this is the exception rather than the rule. Be sure to follow these tips to build and nurture profitable relationships that will stand the tests of time and challenges.