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*We Help You Focus Clearly,  
Organize Effectively,  
And Act With Courage*

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### ***Do's and Don'ts for Building Team Relationships***

#### ***DO:***

- Realize your perception is *your* reality -- not everyone else's.
- Risk honesty and openness.
- Be sensitive to people's feelings.
- Speak from your own experience.
- Check out your perceptions.
- Be patient.
- Realize that this is something new and there is no "tried-and-true" formula to follow.
- Be willing to give up some control.
- Take responsibility for your part in a difficult relationship.
- Admit that you do not have all the answers, or even know all the questions.
- Believe that everyone has something to offer.
- Ask plainly for what you want from another person.
- Listen.
- Be willing to compromise.

#### ***DON'T:***

- Assume everyone thinks like you.
- Expect everyone to participate equally.
- Demand that others change first.
- Expect that all your expectations will be met.
- "Should" on each other -- that's a form of blaming and shaming.
- Give up at the first sign of tension or conflict.

### **TEAMS -- CAN WE or CAN'T WE?**

Can we get along in a team setting or not? Can we give the other person (you know which one -- the one we "never could stand," the one that "just doesn't fit in") the credit for an idea that could very possibly make things better? Can we admit that someone else has the answer we've been seeking?

These are just a few of the questions that individuals face when confronted with working in a team. Most people are comfortable with the concept that "two heads are better than one." When this concept is put into practice however, one should not expect immediate results. A group of individuals cannot be expected to operate as a team just because they call themselves a team. Further, teamwork is even harder to create in long-existing work groups.

#### **WHY IS THIS SO HARD?**

Every individual who boards a work team carries baggage that can extend from an overnight bag to a steamer-sized trunk fully equipped for a two-week cruise. While checking in the baggage, we find a large suitcase full of "can't stand 'ems" and a trunk filled with "doesn't fit ins." A closer inspection of a satchel reveals an incident back in October of 1981 when someone's authority was undermined. That large blue bag contains the time three years ago when someone was passed over for a promotion, and the small valise holds an occasion last week when someone was publicly chastised for an error he/she did not commit.

#### **HOW DO WE PROCEED?**

We need to be aware of the problems that baggage has on relationships. Those bags of perceptions stem from real "hurts" that people have experienced in the past. People won't drop these bags until they can resolve that hurt, or trust that they won't be hurt (intentionally) the same way again.

Sometimes we need to slow down to go fast. Most people want to get into tasks quickly and then can't understand why their efforts seem so labored. By slowing down to air feelings, to share hopes and fears, and to resolve long-standing conflicts, we just might be able to work a lot faster.

Most people have been holding on to their bags for a long time, and it will take more time before they loosen their grip. Patience, sensitivity, and consistent behavior will help people trust that everybody (including themselves) wins when they let go.