**Professional Experience Placement - 7 tips for building effective professional relationships at work**

One of the key employability skills employers look for is your ability to communicate effectively and build relationships with those you work with. Positive working relationships aren't just a productivity booster, they can also increase your job satisfaction. Poor working relationships, on the other hand, can be detrimental to motivation levels and performance across the team.

Building quality professional relationships in the workplace is, in many ways, similar to building trust relationships outside of work: you need to demonstrate sensitivity towards to the environment and context in which you work and live. Relationship building is embedded in respect for other people and how you're coming across to them.

There are, however, some additional aspects you should keep in mind as you join a new team of colleagues:

**1. Be open and honest**
Being open, approachable and honest will help build trust with your co-workers, while it also creates an environment in which issues can be discussed and dealt with faster and more efficiently.

**2.** **Be respectful and understanding**
Always be respectful to those you work with, value their ideas and propositions and make a conscious effort to see things from their perspective to help foster an inclusive and creative working environment.

**3. Listen**
While talking less and listening more can be a challenge at times, it's important to suspend your own needs and reactions in order to really hear what another person is saying. Listening skills are significant, skills for teachers to develop in order to notice and understand the students in their classroom. Not only will this help you build rapport with the person you are speaking with, it'll also help you increase your performance as you ensure you're not missing out on valuable information being passed on to you.

**4. Keep your commitments**
Inability to meet deadlines or deliver on promises will not put you in a favourable light with your co-workers, manager or employer and may even develop a lasting strain on your trust relationships with colleagues. Be realistic when agreeing to deadlines and plan effectively to ward off any disappointments. Ensure that challenges to keept to set timesframes or deadlines are communicated in a timely manner. If you do run into unforeseen trouble, make sure you inform everyone involved as soon as possible.

**5. Work on your charisma**
Charisma is a powerful tool: charismatic people are more likely to attract people, to influence them and to make them feel comfortable. While not all of us are innately charismatic, it is something you can pick up. Always be positive in your interactions at work, complement others and make sure you are fully engaged when talking to someone.

**6. Be careful of how you come across through emails/ texts**
Even though you might not be looking the person in the eye when you're typing an email or a text message, it's still important to stick to the basic rules of effective communication: be polite; keep it short and to the point; but also ensure that what you're saying is sufficiently informative.

**7. Share credit**
It's important that you recognise the contributions made by those around you. So, whether you've just finished a solo assignment that a colleague helped you out with or a team project that you took the lead on, make sure to thank those involved and acknowledge their efforts when talking about that specific piece of work to the rest of the office. This will help build trust and respect.

When it comes to building relationships at work it's important to get it right from the get-go. So, take the time to get to know people, be open, ask questions and show that you're invested in your new role and the contribution you make to the team. Chances are, you'll start feeling less like the newbie and more like a fully-fledged team member in no time.