

How Does Understanding Others Help You?

Workplaces are melting pots of cultural and economic backgrounds. How can the way you handle it contribute to or hinder your success?

You, your co-workers and your company all rely on each other to be successful.

Working as a team requires a tolerance for those who are unlike us or may think differently. The first step in understanding how to work well together is to understand each other.

Be a cultural sponge. Learn about different cultures, races, religions and backgrounds of the people at work. Ask your co-workers to share some of the customs and practices associated with their cultures.

Treat people like you would like to be treated. Don't tell offensive jokes that may alienate those who are different from you. Most importantly, always be respectful.

Welcome different ideas. The creativity that comes with diversity can help you generate new ideas or improve a process already in place. It can also make work more interesting,



engaging, and fun. **Understand the diversity you bring to the table.** Diversity comes not only in the form of culture, race, and gender but also socio-economic background, education level, geographic location, sexual orientation, thought, and other forms. **Every person has something special to offer.** *"I think of the company or work team as a big rope,"* said Karen Sheerin, Success Coach (Southwest Michigan ERN). *"It is full of several strands that make up the solid and sturdy rope that can be twisted, pulled and tugged on but not break. So, there is no room for even one strand of the rope to not be included, as this weakens the rope. If enough strands are frayed, the strength of the rope is compromised. So, the next time a co-worker is trying to share a suggestion, opinion, or even a complaint, let's all*

of what is being said. Do not be wary of someone that is different than you or treat them as 'less-than'. By implementing this ideal as our company model we will all learn and our organization will be stronger for it." **Always strive to be better.** Be willing to learn, accept feedback, and listen to the concerns of those around you. **Communicate and educate.** Learning about diversity is a journey, not a destination. It takes time, patience, and perseverance. Be patient with coworkers who may not yet value diversity or who may not always behave respectfully. Offer them information or invite them to a cultural event.

Greater Detroit Employer Resource Network

Our goal...
Creating access and resources for employee success at work and in life. We partner with employees who work for:

Member Companies

- ◆ Detroit Chassis
- ◆ Detroit Manufacturing Systems
- ◆ HBF/APU
- ◆ Integrated Manufacturing and Assembly
- ◆ Shinola

Strategic Partners

- ◆ Goodwill Greater Detroit
- ◆ MEDC Community Ventures
- ◆ Michigan ERN
- ◆ Wayne County DHHS

Get a group together. **Suggest a cultural potluck.** Once a week co-workers can each bring in a family recipe for a lunch potluck. It's fun to try new food! **Ask your Success Coach.** If you are having any sort of diversity issue that is causing you stress, don't hesitate to meet with your Success Coach for ideas on how to improve the situation. *Source: Michigan ERN.*

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313-510-7397 (cell)

Detroit Chassis

6501 Lynch Rd, Detroit

- ◆ Monday: 12:45pm-4:00pm
- ◆ Wednesday: 8:00am-12:00pm

Detroit Manufacturing Systems

12701 Southfield Rd, Detroit

- ◆ Tuesday: 1:00pm-4:00pm
- ◆ Thursday: 8:00am-12:00pm
- *4th Thursday: 4:00pm-8:00pm

HBF/APU

1 Detroit Metro Airport, Detroit

- ◆ Tuesday: 8:00am-12:00pm
- ◆ Thursday: 1:00pm-4:00pm

Integrated Manufacturing and Assembly

6501 E Nevada St, Detroit

- ◆ Monday: 8:00am-12:00pm
- ◆ Wednesday: 12:45pm-4:00pm
- * 4th Wednesday: 4:00pm-8:00pm
- *also serving Highland Park employees

Shinola

485 W Milwaukee St, Detroit

- ◆ Friday: 9:15am-4:00pm

Walk-in Welcome

Call, email or text for appointments.
Off-site meeting locations available.
Request additional times if needed.



<https://www.facebook.com/ERNdetroit>

www.ern-mi.com

Just Can't Relate to a Co-Worker?

What could you personally gain by understanding co-workers whose lives are much different economically than your own?

A different way of looking at diversity. When you think of diversity, it's usually cultural, but it can also mean differences in socio-economic classes.

Outside our comfort zone. Does your boss bring some kind of strange health food for lunch? Does a co-worker seem unreliable because they rarely have a working vehicle? Maybe we just don't understand the details. *"Economic class provides different experiences, behaviors, skills and attitudes which result in a mindset you bring to work with you,"* says Ruth Weirich, author of *Workplace Stability*.

Be open minded to be more successful yourself. *"When you understand diversity through the lens of economic class, you understand yourself better, and those you work beside. This understanding provides for stronger relationships, policies and procedures in the workplace,"* said Ruth.

Where do you start? Be friendly and ask questions for conversation starters. Broaden your horizons and learn more about where other people are coming from. The new perspective and its benefits may surprise you. *Source: Michigan ERN*

Overcoming Workplace Anxiety

Worried about things at work? Does talking to particular co-worker make you nervous?

Workplace triggers. In the book, *Work Makes Me Nervous*, Jonathan Berent, a psychotherapist, says there are five basic triggers of workplace anxiety:

- ◆ fear of speaking in public
- ◆ fear of interacting with authority
- ◆ fear of taking on new challenges
- ◆ fear of being noticeably nervous
- ◆ perfectionism

Pay attention to physical signs.

Become aware of your body's fight-or-flight responses. Has your pulse quickened or temperature of your hands risen? Physical reactions are normal. Take deep breaths.

Take care of your physical health.

The first steps toward mental health are eating well, getting good sleep, exercising regularly and avoiding substances like alcohol.

Embrace the challenges. If you dread asking a question in a meeting, just do it to know how it feels. Be kind to yourself by imagining a nurturing parent patting you on the back.

Talk it over with your Success Coach.

Your Success Coach can listen to specific triggers at your workplace that are causing you to be anxious and offer solutions. They can also provide a confidential referral for counseling if you would like to see a mental health professional to fit your budget. *Source: Michigan ERN*



Philosopher's Square

"I don't like that man. I must get to know him better." – *Abraham Lincoln*