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Human Relations and You

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In Part One we'll explore the foundations of human relations skills. Specifically, how does each one of us develop the necessary tools to work well together at home, in school, and on the job? What aspects of our personality contribute to our success at human relations? Are there strategies we can use to build human relations skills?

Chapters 1 through 6 define human relations, then look closely at the relationship between self-understanding and communication, test your ability to ask questions about personal and global values, and help you discover how to tap motivational strategies for yourself and others. These are important first steps to develop the human relations skills you need for success in personal life and in the world of work.

Chapter One

Human Relations: A Background

CHAPTER CONCEPTS

- What Is Human Relations?
- The Importance of Human Relations Skills
- Current Challenges in Human Relations
- A Brief History of Human Relations
- What Human Relations Is *Not*
- Areas of Major Emphasis

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Be able to define human relations.
- Understand the importance of human relations to success in business.
- Learn a short history of the study of human relations.
- Understand the challenges of human relations in today's workplace.
- Understand which traits are most helpful to effective human relations.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Strategy 1.1 Develop Mutual Respect

Strategy 1.2 Build Your Communication Skills

In the Workplace

Flying in Rough Weather

SITUATION

The pilot hesitated. Weather conditions were terrible. Freezing rain was falling in Washington, D.C., that day, and his young copilot was bugging him. The younger man kept asking puzzling questions. “Why does this gauge read like this? Are you sure we’re all right to take off? Is it safe?”

DISCOVERY

The pilot had to decide. “Let’s go!” he finally grunted. Less than 30 minutes later, the plane crashed. The crew and most of the passengers were dead, drowned in the icy Potomac River. When the airplane’s black box was examined, FAA investigators heard that a young copilot with some honest misgivings about take-off was ignored by an older pilot—for reasons no one could ever fully explain. We can be certain, though, that a serious human relations problem was involved in this tragedy. Once it became clear that the plane was in trouble, the two men, who had previously been formal with each other, began to call each other by first names. But it was too late for a better relationship to help this situation. If communication lines had remained open between the two men—if the younger man had felt confident enough about himself to speak out forcefully and the older man more willing to listen from the beginning—this tragedy would likely have been avoided.¹

THINK ABOUT IT

Think about how human relations affect most situations. Can you think of a circumstance that might have been improved by better human relations in your own life?

What is Human Relations?

Not all human relations problems involve life-or-death decisions, but some do. The importance of human relations in our personal and work lives cannot be exaggerated. The skills that are necessary for good relations with others are the most important skills anyone can learn in life.

Human relations is the skill or ability to work effectively through and with other people.

Human relations is the skill or ability to work effectively through and with other people. Human relations includes a desire to understand others, their needs and weaknesses, and their talents and abilities. For anyone in a workplace setting, human relations also involves an understanding of how people work together in groups, satisfying both individual needs and group objectives. If an organization is to succeed, the relationships among the people in that organization must be monitored and maintained.

In all aspects of life, you will deal with other people. No matter what you do for a living or how well you do it, your relationship with others is the key to your success or failure. Even when someone is otherwise only average at a job, good human relations skills can usually make that person seem better to others. Sadly, the opposite is also true: poor human relations skills can make an otherwise able person seem like a poor performer. A doctor who respects patients, a lawyer who listens carefully to clients, a manager who gets along well with others in the workplace: all of these people will most likely be thought of by others as successful.

More about...

Internal Customers can be defined as a department's employees, or as other departments within an organization.

The Importance of Human Relations Skills

Other reasons for studying human relations include the following:

1. **Human rights.** Today, managers and employees have a greater awareness of the rights of employees. This awareness calls for more skillful relations among employees, using tact, trust, and diplomacy with greater skill. The rights of all others involved in the dealings of an organization must be respected and protected as well. In today's workplace, the term *internal customer* is often used. This identifies a new attitude toward employees as the *other customers* in a company. Companies must also protect the human rights of traditional customers, managers, and even competitors.
2. **The global marketplace.** The United States seems to have fallen into disfavor in many countries—even countries we have long considered to be our friends. Often, when anti-American stories are told, they involve Americans using poor human relations skills when doing business with other cultures. Improving interpersonal skills (the skills associated with getting along with others) can be a factor in fighting the widespread anti-Americanism that sometimes seems to be growing out of control.²

3. **Emphasis on people as human resources.** Two decades ago, many forecasters predicted that by this time in history, strong computer skills would be the number one factor in the workplace. However, now, perhaps more than ever, managers and corporate planners are placing great emphasis on the human factor. The two sets of behaviors now considered the most important for new job applicants are *communication skills* and *human relations abilities*.³ This trend will likely continue in the future.
4. **Renewed emphasis on working groups.** Today's employees tend to like working as teams and being involved in making decisions as a group. Helping groups work well together in such endeavors (as either a team member or leader) requires a great deal of human relations skill. Both managers and employees need to understand the dynamic of group interaction if such participation is to be effective.
5. **Increasing diversity in the workplace.** Few countries on earth contain the diversity of race, religion, and culture that exists in the United States. The number of foreign-born Americans now is over 33 million, and is increasing daily.⁴ The U.S. gains an international migrant every 25 seconds. Add to this reality the increasing number of women entering the workplace. A deep understanding of the differences that diversity brings is one of the most important skills in human relations.

Human Relations and You

The study of human relations can help you in several ways. Human relations skills can help you get a job, enjoy your work, be more productive at it, and stay there longer with better chances for advancement. An understanding of yourself and others can help you be happier and more productive in all areas of your life.

You, the manager A percentage of students who read this book will one day become managers. For a manager, no skill area is more important than human relations abilities. A manager with good human relations skills will retain employees longer, be more productive, and provide employees with an enjoyable environment. The most common reason for failure in the job of manager is faulty human relations skills.⁵ Because interpersonal skills are so important, experts often suggest that new managers should put as much effort into studying people as they put into developing technical skills.⁶

You, the entrepreneur In the 21st century, an increasing number of today's business students are entering the exciting realm of entrepreneurship: owning their own businesses. When you are the owner and operator of a business, your people skills—or human relations—are the most important factors in your success. In an e-commerce business, though there is less

More about...

An **entrepreneur** is someone who organizes and assumes the risks of beginning a business enterprise.

face-to-face contact with customers and suppliers, the ability to work with people and to fulfill their needs remains extremely crucial to success.

In a larger sense, your knowledge of human relations helps the work you do—or the business you own—provide fulfillment. Famed Russian author Fyodor Dostoyevsky wrote, “If it were desired to reduce a man to nothingness, it would be necessary only to give his work a character of uselessness.”⁷ Many entrepreneurs become business owners to escape the feeling of uselessness associated with their former jobs. The entrepreneur is in the position of being able to control the human climate of the business he or she owns and operates.

You, the employee Undeveloped interpersonal skills represent the single most important reason for failure at a job. This is especially true in the early days and weeks on a new assignment.⁸ Making a good impression on your superiors, your peers, and all other coworkers will set you on a good track. Developing interpersonal skills is extremely important to the advancement of your career and will affect the ways in which your fellow employees, supervisors, and customers view your overall performance.

Current Challenges in Human Relations

More about...

Generation X is the generation of Americans born between 1960–1980, following the Baby Boomers.

Generation Y refers to Americans born after 1980, especially students who are now graduating from high school and either going to college or entering the job market.

Today’s Generation Y, the generation now just entering the job market, often find good, family-wage jobs hard to come by and advancement very difficult. The problems faced by this group and by Generation X are often blamed on the “Baby Boomers,” the middle-aged people who are mostly in management positions above them. Although a “generation gap” is nothing new in our history, this one affects human relations in the workplace directly and forcefully.⁹ You will learn more about this topic in Chapter 16, “Managing Diversity.”

Increased Competition in the Workplace

Competitiveness reaches into all areas—urban, suburban, and rural—and affects all businesses, large and small. Small businesses feel pressure to meet the standards of the foreign market and of the huge multinational companies that dominate the economy. When a chain retailer such as Wal-Mart moves into a small town, the competition felt by the local citizens is very real. The increasing number of people doing business on the Web has created a source of competition unlike anything else in human history.

Higher paid family-wage jobs for all age groups are more competitive than before. Having a college degree is no longer a ticket to a meaningful career, as it was only a generation ago. This new reality causes a great deal of frustration for many people in the workplace, and many human relations problems result.

Another very important factor in competition is the current position of China as the new leader of much of the world economy. During the past two decades, China has been developing economically at the rate of 9.7 percent annually.¹⁰ Economic factors that have made this power position possible are lower labor costs, a nationwide desire to compete, and a government role that allows potent government help to businesses. Experts see nothing for the future of China except continued growth and competition with the West.¹¹

Dual-Career Families

The majority of families now needs income from both adult members to survive comfortably. This has placed a strain on the family and its members—a strain that is felt in the workplace in several ways. First, additional financial pressures cause workplace stress. Second, the time needed for the everyday realities of childrearing—such as visits to the family doctor and transportation to and from school—create difficulties for everyone involved.

Single-Parent Families and Divorce

Two important factors have contributed to the existence of a higher number of single parents: an elevated divorce rate and an increase in the number of never-married parents. The parent—often the mother—must be the provider, taxi service, spiritual guide, and emotional support source. These many roles often result in frustration and stress in the workplace. This type of worker is truly overloaded.

The divorced parent often has additional barriers to success in the workplace. The divorced person often has to go through a period of emotional recovery, during which many emotional issues can form. Such issues often negatively affect job performance and attitudes, harming relationships with coworkers, bosses, and fellow employees. Besides the already heavy burdens of single parenthood that many of these workers have, they are often dealing with challenging issues of self-worth and self-esteem.



Divorce: A Heavy Impact on Employees' Lives

Many employees unintentionally bring depression, lowered productivity, and hostility to the workplace as a result of family breakups. *What can employers do to help employees in personal crises?*

Two Generations of Dependents

People are living longer now than ever before. This rise in life expectancy, along with fewer high-income jobs for senior citizens, and (more recently) cuts to pension funds, means that many middle-age adults now find themselves helping to support their own children along with their aging parents and parents-in-law, all at the same time. These middle-aged adults who find themselves squeezed for time and finances are often referred to as the “sandwich generation” (with the elderly dependent parents as one piece of bread, and the dependent children as the other). The added responsibilities exist when parents or in-laws live with the adult children and their families, but also when elderly parents live alone or in retirement homes. The emotional impact affects all involved, including the dependent parent who usually would prefer self-sufficiency. See Chapter 19 for more on this topic.

A Brief History of Human Relations

One cannot fully appreciate the present state of human relations without at least a partial understanding of the past. The history of human relations is essential to a thorough understanding of its place in today’s world.

Human relations has been important ever since human beings began to live together in groups. Of course, attitudes toward power—especially the *sharing* of power—have changed through the centuries. Most societies no longer tolerate slavery, nor do most cultures blindly follow leaders as they once did. Thus, the history of human relations problems can be viewed in different ways during different times.

The Early Years

Human relations began to be an issue around the early- to mid-1800s. Figure 1.1 on page 9 gives a thumbnail view of major events in the field. The Knights of Labor, founded in 1869, was an organization much like the labor unions that came later. The founders of this group denounced the bad working conditions and unfair treatment in many workplaces of the time.¹² The labor union movement might never have started if human relations between managers and workers had been better, and if working conditions had been more tolerable.

In early 19th-century England, a man named Robert Owen came up with the amazing idea that treating workers better would actually increase productivity and, thus, profits. Owen introduced many reforms in the industry of the time. For example, he stopped employing young children in his factory. He also encouraged his workforce to stay clean and sober. Although by today’s standards this might seem quite basic, Owen was quite progressive for his time.¹³

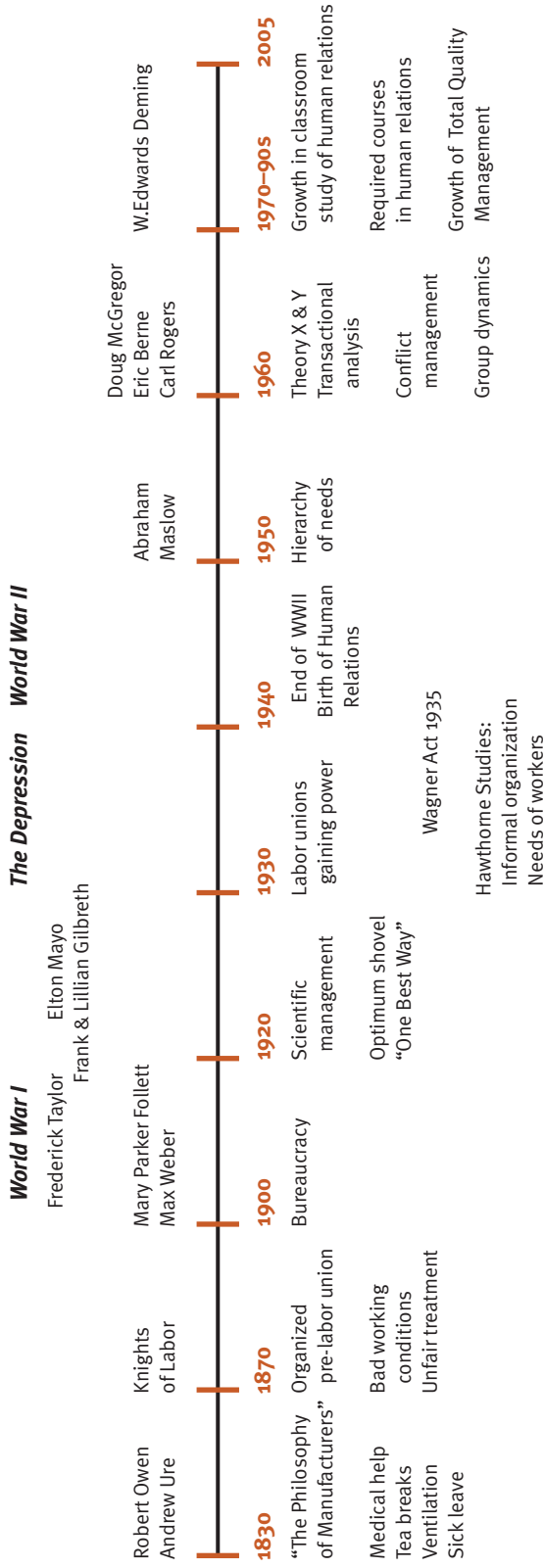
More about...

Robert Owen
(1771–1858) was a Welsh-born social reformer who influenced both English and American employers. His philosophy was known as Owenism and his followers Owenites.

FIGURE 1.1

A Human Relations Timeline

What are the major changes you see in human relations over the years?



More about...

Andrew Ure

(1778–1857) was, like many of his time, an avid enthusiast of the Industrial Revolution. He was the first person to write a detailed study of manufacturers and their management processes.

Max Weber

(1864–1920), who was also a political economist, is best known for writing *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904).

Like Robert Owen, Andrew Ure (also from Great Britain) was interested in human relations in manufacturing companies. In 1835, Ure published a book called *The Philosophy of Manufacturers*. This book suggested that workers should have medical help, hot tea on a regular basis, good ventilation, and even sick leave—again, all ideas that were advanced for their time.¹⁴

Owen and Ure were definitely not typical. Both in Europe and in the United States, the first decades of the Industrial Revolution were full of abuses by bosses against workers, especially workers with few skills. Many of the immigrants to America during that time were forced to face inhumane working conditions.

Some of the better employers built “company towns.” These were settlements, owned by the company, where workers would live in company housing, buy supplies at the company-owned store, and even send their children to a school owned by the firm. Though not popular today, this setup usually produced happier and more loyal workers, especially when the quality of the company town was considered high.

In Germany, a sociologist named Max Weber saw human relations problems as being caused by favoritism, nepotism (playing favorites with family members), and other unfair practices. In Weber’s time, most European companies were managed like extended families. Employees were loyal to a single person, rather than to the company goals or mission statement. Weber came up with the *bureaucratic organizations approach*,¹⁵ a system that was meant to be impersonal and rational. In Weber’s model called *bureaucracy* each person had specific duties and responsibilities that were to be assigned on the basis of ability and talent only. Also, the work of the people in an organization was to be done in an orderly way, with only one supervisor to whom each worker must answer.¹⁶ This approach reduced favoritism and many other unfair practices.

Human Relations as a Science

Today the word **bureaucracy** often has a negative connotation. The word is often associated with government red tape and paperwork. Bureaucracy actually started out as a method of improving not only efficiency, but human relations as well.

Scientific Management

In the early years of the 20th century, Frederick Taylor and others began a movement called **scientific management**. Most people today who have heard of Taylor think of him as an industrial engineer who tried to find the “one best way” to do a job. He is often criticized as someone who cared more about production than about the needs of workers. However, Taylor is important to the history of human relations because he showed how crucial the human element is in the performance of any organization.¹⁷

A **bureaucracy** is a formal organization in which each person has specific duties and responsibilities and is assigned to only one supervisor.

Scientific management is a system based upon scientific and engineering principles.

Like others in the scientific management movement, Taylor was concerned with increasing efficiency while getting as much work as possible out of employees. Taylor's approach contained two major features:

1. Managers should carefully select and train workers for specific tasks.
2. Managers should try to motivate workers to increase productivity. Careful hiring and in-depth training do not seem very earth-shaking today, but Taylor was among the first to recognize the importance of both. Also, in Taylor's time, motivation was believed to be induced only through increased pay. Though shortsighted and a bit simplistic, his view of motivation at least focused attention on the issue.

One of Taylor's best-known victories was the invention of the *optimum shovel*. At an eastern steel mill, Taylor watched men shoveling coal for the large smelters. Using the same shovel, these men would also load cinders into waste containers. After carefully studying both processes, Taylor came up with two shovels: a much larger shovel for the light cinders and an optimum shovel for the coal. This shovel was exactly the right size and weight to allow the maximum work without the need for frequent rest periods. The productivity of the steel mill rose immediately, making Taylor and scientific management both very popular.¹⁸

Frank and Lillian Gilbreth

Living around the same time period as Taylor, Frank and Lillian Gilbreth were a married couple who were both industrial engineers—and scientific managers. The Gilbreths became especially well-known for their research study of bricklayers. Frank Gilbreth identified 18 different motions that had been used by bricklayers, apparently for as long as people had been laying bricks. By inventing some labor-saving devices and by changing the basic routine, the Gilbreths reduced those 18 motions to 5. The result was a system of bricklaying with more than *double* the productivity of the old system.

Lillian Gilbreth was especially interested in studying workers and their reactions to working under stressful conditions. She taught the importance of standard work days, relaxed and regular lunch breaks, and periodic rest periods. Her life's work helped influence Congress to pass child labor laws. The mother of 12 children, Lillian was among the first women in America to receive a Ph.D. in psychology. In her later life, she became known as "The First Lady of Management." She was an important early force in the human relations movement as well.¹⁹

Mary Parker Follett

In the early years of the 20th century, Mary Parker Follett became known for her lectures and writings on what we would now call human relations issues. Follett was a member of the upper classes—not someone with a

More about...

Frederick Winslow Taylor

(1856–1915) was also renowned as an inventor; the optimum shovel is perhaps his best-known invention. By experimenting with different materials, he was able to design shovels that would permit workers to shovel for the whole day.

More about...

Frank Gilbreth (1868-1924)

Lillian Gilbreth (1878-1972)

Frank & Lillian Gilbreth were pioneers in time and motion study. Besides their early work refining the bricklaying process, they had a great impact on medicine by significantly reducing the amount of time patients had to spend on the surgical table. Thus the Gilbreths were also responsible for saving many people's lives.

Source: Daniel A. Wren, *The Evolution of Management Thought*, 2nd ed. (New York: Wiley, 1979), p. 171.

More about...

Mary Parker Follett (1868-1933)

Mary Parker Follett attended the college known today as Radcliffe. She studied philosophy and political science but

became deeply interested in management. Always the advocate of humanizing the workplace, she stressed people over technology. One of her pieces of advice to engineers was “Don’t hug your blueprints!”

Source: Henry Metcalf and Lyndall Urwick, eds., *Dynamic Administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett* (New York: Harper & Row, 1940).

More about...

Elton Mayo

(1880–1940) was born in Australia and didn’t arrive in the United States until 1922. He was the driving force behind the Hawthorne Studies and translations of his work appeared in German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, and Arabic.

The **Hawthorne Experiment** was a five-year study conducted at the Western Electric plant in Hawthorne, Illinois, that showed that workers performed better when someone was paying attention to them.

An **informal organization** is the ever-changing set of relationships and interactions within an organization that are not formally put together by anyone. These relationships form naturally in the workplace.

work-related background. She lectured widely, however, and was quite influential.

Follett taught three concepts that were ahead of their time. First, she held that workers should be allowed to be involved in decisions affecting them. To her it was logical that the people closest to the action could make the best decisions. Second, she stressed that the workplace is dynamic—that is, constantly changing. Thus inflexible, static rules are potentially harmful to maintaining a productive workforce. Finally, Mary Parker Follett believed that the main job of managers at all levels was to maintain positive relationships with workers. Happy workers with a sense of belonging, she said, would end up making more money for the company and would remain at the same job for a longer time. These three concepts define Follett as a very important early pioneer of the human relations movement.²⁰

The Hawthorne Experiment

In the late 1920s, a group of scientific management scholars went to Hawthorne, Illinois, to study the effects of physical factors on workers and their productivity. Each time they would try an experiment, productivity would go up: when they reversed the experiment, productivity would still increase. The most popular of these experiments was with lighting. When the lights in this Western Electric assembly plant were brightened, productivity increased. However, when the lights were dimmed, productivity went up *again*.

The experimenters were really confused. Why would workers work even harder under such poor conditions as very dim lighting? The problem confronting these scientific management scholars attracted the attention of Elton Mayo, a social psychologist from Harvard University. He traveled to Hawthorne and stayed. For nearly five years, from 1927 to 1932, he and his Harvard colleagues studied the **Hawthorne Experiment**.²¹

Two important discoveries came from this five-year study. First, Mayo showed that the workers at Hawthorne performed better because *someone was paying attention to them*. This attention was more than they had been accustomed to receiving at work, and they responded with extra motivation. Second, Mayo found that the relationships that had formed naturally in the workplace made up what he called the **informal organization**. On days when a worker would not be as motivated as usual, the expectations of the group would make up the difference, and productivity would remain high.

Recent research has shown that the Hawthorne workers were very likely motivated by fear as well as by attention. Whether or not this new interpretation is true, the findings of Elton Mayo influenced decades of thought on the role of human relations on the job. Much of what has been written and practiced since Hawthorne has been influenced by what Mayo himself concluded—and although the findings have been re-examined, the original shape of those findings still influences people today.²²

Human Relations and Management

Probably the most important improvement Elton Mayo brought about was to change the way management looked at workers. Rather than seeing workers mostly as people who need wages, managers now began to understand that the complex needs of workers include a unique combination of values, attitudes, and desires.

By the time Elton Mayo left Hawthorne, the Great Depression was several years old. Although the interest in human relations still existed, the stubborn fact was that a ruthless manager could mistreat workers now without much fear of losing them. After all, jobs were very hard to find.

During the Great Depression, labor unions began to gain power. Congress passed the Wagner Act in 1935, giving unions and union members more rights than they had enjoyed before. For example, businesses were now *forced* to negotiate contracts with union representatives.²³ Although this new union activity was good for workers, it did not necessarily mean that human relations was being emphasized. Many managers still had the attitude that one need only to “fire the problems and hire the solutions.” Unions usually emphasized salary and benefits for workers rather than the more abstract issues of employee treatment and workplace morale.

By the time the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941, the Depression was showing some signs of lifting. Once the country began gearing up for World War II, the workplace was affected drastically. With hundreds of thousands of young workers going overseas to fight, employers were forced to hire nearly anybody who would work. Sadly, human relations in the workplace always seems to be affected by the job market. During World War II, managers knew their employees would be very hard to replace, so treatment of workers temporarily improved. Cases of sexism, racism, and sexual harassment, however, were all too common.

Throughout the war, and in the years immediately following, many studies were being done on human relations factors. The noted psychologist Abraham Maslow devised a “hierarchy of needs,” which teaches that people

More about...

The Wagner Act, also called the National Labor Relations Act, made it illegal for employers to use scare tactics or other techniques to prevent employees from forming or joining unions.



The Great Depression: A Human Relations Setback

During the Great Depression, the great job shortage made many employers feel that they could “fire the problems and hire the solutions” by firing employees they disliked until they found ones that suited their needs. *Does this problem still exist today?*

More about...

Douglas McGregor (1906–1964) was a pioneer in industrial relations. His creation of Theory X and Theory Y allowed management to understand their influence on employee morale and productivity. Although well-respected in his lifetime, his peak popularity did not come until 1993, nearly 30 years after his death.

Theories X and Y explain two different types of managers and how they look at workers. Theory X managers see workers as lacking ambition, disliking work and wanting security above all else. Theory Y managers see workers as enjoying work, being able to assume responsibility, and being creative.

Total Quality Management (TQM) is an organizational philosophy that states that quality must be present in the product or service produced and in all support activities related to it.

tend to satisfy their needs in a certain order; you will read more about this in Chapter 6. In 1960, psychologist Douglas McGregor wrote *The Human Side of Enterprise*, considered by some to be the most important book on human relations ever written.

McGregor introduced the concepts of **Theory X** and **Theory Y**. These two theories are held by different types of managers, based on their ways of looking at workers. Theory X managers see workers as lacking ambition, disliking work, and wanting security above all else. Theory Y managers, on the other hand, see workers as happy to work, able to assume responsibility, and overall quite creative. These two theories—especially Theory Y—have influenced thinking in both management and human relations since the year of their creation.²⁴ Theories X and Y will be discussed at length in Chapter 4.



Internet Exercise 1.1

Theory X and **Theory Y** are explained alongside McGregor's broader philosophy through <http://www.mhhe.com/lamberton3e>. Read the philosophies and write a comparison. Which theory do you prefer? Why?

Human Relations and the Individual

The second half of the 20th century brought a great deal of attention to the study of the workplace from psychologists and other social scientists. In the early 1960s, Eric Berne had created his famous Transactional Analysis method of understanding interpersonal communication. Carl Rogers published his findings on the development of the personality, group dynamics, and conflict management. Some managers began experimenting with participative decision making and other human relations-based management.

By the late 1960s, an era had started that would affect human relations for years. A new emphasis was placed on the rights and needs of the individual person. For the first time, it was popular in this culture to *do your own thing*. Perhaps even more importantly, other people were allowed to do their own thing as well. Also new was the revolutionary attitude toward success as having to do with people, rather than with money. Many of today's middle managers were hippies then. Influence from that era has still not peaked.

By 1980 **Total Quality Management (TQM)** had been introduced in the U.S. as it had been three decades earlier in Japan. The man responsible for this new movement was an American named W. Edwards Deming. This important school of thought held that the *process* of whatever happens in an organization is more important than the product. Doing away with targets, “zero defects” programs, and slogans, the TQM people concentrated on the process—which inevitably includes people and relationships. The

work that was pioneered by Elton Mayo and others became refocused with a process emphasis. People in organizations participated at work to an extent unimagined before. Working conditions had come to be seen as the most important single issue in many companies.²⁵

Internet Exercise 1.2

W. Edwards Deming

The basic teachings of W. Edwards Deming (1900–1993) can be found through <http://www.mhhe.com/lamberton3e>. Write a paragraph explaining why you think TQM was effective.



By the late 1980s, Total Quality Management had changed industry both in America and abroad. From the mid-1990s to the present, the label “TQM” has been heard less frequently. However, the *process* of TQM survives under other names—sometimes simply “quality”—and remains an important part of many successful organizations. There must be quality in the process itself, as well as in the final product. Of course, TQM covers many other organizational issues besides human relations, but the positive effect of the quality movement on human relations promises to be lasting.

The 1970s through the 1990s saw a tremendous growth in the classroom study of human relations. Today, college business and industrial education departments in increasing numbers require courses in human relations. This trend reflects the growing awareness of the importance of understanding and working with others effectively. As an international economy develops, human relations takes on a broader significance.

What Human Relations is *Not*

Now that you know what human relations is, and how it has developed into what it is, it’s time to look at some characteristics it *does not* have. First, human relations is not a study in understanding human behavior in order to manipulate others. Good human relations means being real, positive, and honest. Practicing effective human relations means *being yourself at your very best*.

Second, learning better human relations skills is not a cure-all. Nor is it a quick-fix for deep and ongoing personal problems. The skills you will learn in this book are skills to be built on, developed, and tried out whenever you can, as part of your own experience on the job and throughout your life.

Last, human relations is not just *common sense*. This argument is often used by people who think a book like this is unnecessary. “Common sense,” they say, “will carry you through.” In the area of human relations, common

sense (meaning ordinary good sense and judgment) is all too *uncommon*. The abuses of many workers on the job today, the misunderstandings that cost thousands of companies millions of dollars every year, the unhappiness of many workers with the jobs they have: all of these factors illustrate the need for human relations—even if much of it seems like simple common sense.

Areas of Major Emphasis

In the broadest sense, the study of human relations has two goals: personal development and growth, and achievement of an organization’s objectives. (See Figure 1.2). All of the following areas of emphasis take both of those goals into consideration. You will notice that each of the areas is developed in the following chapters of this book. Most of them overlap, and some are dependent upon others. Those relationships will become clearer as you read further.

Self-Esteem

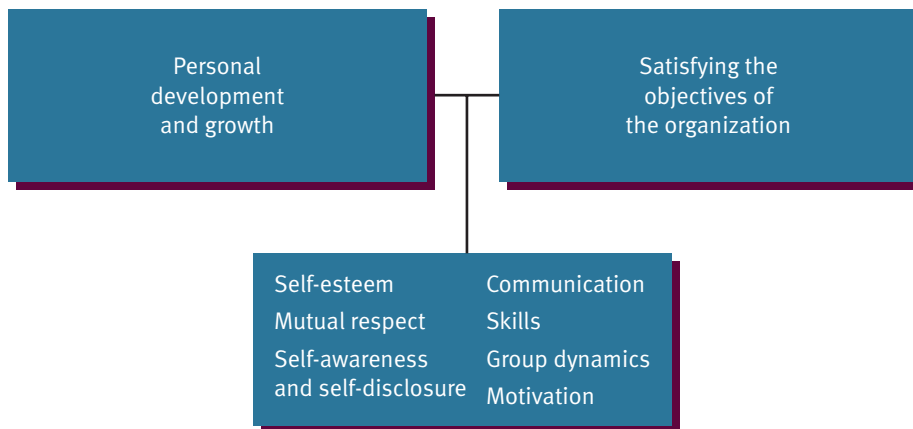
Self-esteem is the regard in which an individual holds himself or herself.

Self-esteem is your feeling of confidence and worth as a person. Psychological research has shown that low self-esteem is related to a variety of mental health problems, including alcoholism, anxiety, and depression—all of which cause problems on the job. High self-esteem, on the other hand,

FIGURE 1.2

Major Goals and Emphasis Areas of Human Relations

Which of these areas do you personally consider most important to effective human relations?



improves attitudes, job morale, and overall quality of life. In the workplace, healthy self-esteem is the key to top performance and high-quality work—especially when the work directly affects other people.

Self-esteem is a buzzword in business circles today. Most Americans seem to have discovered this important part of themselves and its influence on every other factor in their lives. Self-esteem is at the core of most issues in human relations. Because it is so important, Chapter 2 is dedicated to that subject.

Mutual Respect

Notice that this isn't simply respect, but mutual respect. **Mutual respect**, the positive consideration or regard that two people have for each other, can exist only when your self-esteem is stable. If your self-esteem is too fragile, you will have little energy left for cultivating mutual respect. Also, without **trust**, mutual respect is meaningless. Many human relations specialists rate trust as the single most important element in human relations.²⁶ People at all levels of an organization need trust and mutual respect to perform at their best.

Mutual respect is the positive consideration or regard that two people have for each other.

Trust is a belief in the honesty, integrity, and reliability of another person.

Self-Awareness and Self-Disclosure

These two concepts are interconnected. **Self-awareness** is the knowledge of how you are being perceived by others. **Self-disclosure** is the process of letting other people know what you are really thinking and feeling. Self-awareness allows one to know what in one's own behavior is being perceived as real by other people; self-disclosure involves "being real" with others. In *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, author Stephen Covey said, "Until we take how we see ourselves (and how we see others) into account, we will be unable to understand how others see and feel about themselves and their world."²⁷ As mentioned earlier, manipulation of others is something that human relations is *not*. Self-disclosure, on the other hand, reflects the positive side of human relations: By allowing others to see what feelings and thoughts you really have in a given instance, you can promote genuineness in the other person. A positive side effect is that your relationship with the other person is likely to become closer.

Self-awareness is the ability to see yourself realistically, without a great deal of difference between what you are and how you assume others see you.

Self-disclosure is the ability to let another person know what is real about your thoughts, desires, and feelings.

More about...

Stephen Covey, author of numerous books, is known globally for his emphasis on personal and professional integrity. He cofounded the Franklin Covey Company, which is the largest leadership development organization in the world.

Internet Exercise 1.3

Stephen Covey has lectured millions and conducted hundreds of interviews related to his self-improvement theories. A brief version of his philosophy can be found through <http://www.mhhe.com/lamberton3e>. Read the philosophy and write a brief summary.



Communication Skills

Communication is the process of giving and receiving, through listening and speaking, ideas, feelings, and information.

Communication is the process of sending ideas, thoughts, and feelings, and having them received in the way you intended.²⁸ The communication process is at the heart of all managerial functions, and it is directly related to success or failure at the managerial level. It is also a vital part of all personal interactions. When a human relations problem emerges, miscommunication is usually involved.

If you are to grow either as an individual or in groups, effective communication is essential.²⁹ Much of your success depends on your ability to express ideas and concepts precisely. Part of that ability is based on your listening level, which includes listening for feelings and emotions as well as for objective content.

Group Dynamics

Group dynamics is the set of interpersonal relationships within a group that determine how group members relate to each other and that influence task performance.

Whenever two or more people form a relationship, there is, in effect, a group. Once a group is formed, it immediately requires understanding, planning, and organizational tactics appropriate to groups. Thus, understanding **group dynamics**—the ways in which groups operate—is a cornerstone in the study of human relations.³⁰

As important as our individuality is, nearly everything that people value in life can be achieved only through groups.³¹ For success, people learn how to make group processes more effective. In *The New Realities*, well-known management expert Peter Drucker said, “Management is about human beings. Its task is to make people capable of *joint performance*, to make their strengths effective and their weaknesses irrelevant.”³²

Knowledge of group dynamics includes understanding conflict management. Much of good human relations involves preventing negative conflict.

More about...

Peter Drucker (1909–), a management expert for over 60 years, is the author of several books that still carry the same strong impact as they did when they were published. His first influential work was the 1945 study, *The Concept of a Corporation*, which compared his ideal of management with the management of General Motors.

Motivation

People often use the term **motivation** to describe the force that gets them to do their tasks. It is no longer enough to threaten punishment or even to reward a job well done. Motivation derives from the needs of an individual and of a group. It is also a major element in understanding human relations.

Motivation is the force of the need or desire to act.

Strategy for Success

1.1 Develop Mutual Respect

1. **Develop your self-esteem.**
2. **Develop your self-awareness.**
3. **Develop trust.**
4. **Learn to self-disclose.**
5. **Cultivate mutual respect.**

Although these are big tasks, they can be achieved by anyone with a clear understanding of human relations.

1. **Develop your self-esteem.** First, you must develop your self-esteem. Self-esteem can be encouraged or damaged very early in life, and some people who have self-esteem problems do not even realize it. However, no matter what your age or self-esteem level, you can always learn to like yourself more. Chapter 2 will cover self-esteem in great detail and provide tips on how you can build your own self-esteem.
2. **Develop your self-awareness.** Without self-awareness, you will find it hard to develop self-esteem or any of the other issues that are important to successful human relations. This is because you must know yourself before you can value yourself highly and express yourself honestly to others. You will learn more about how to develop self-awareness in Chapter 3.
3. **Develop trust.** Without adequate self-esteem, you will find it difficult to trust. With trust, however, you will find that your relationships will grow deep and meaningful, and that you will be able to tell other people what's in "your gut" without unnecessary fear.
4. **Learn to self-disclose.** As you develop trust, you will be able to disclose more about yourself. Self-disclosure and trust are areas that you can develop simultaneously: As you learn to self-disclose appropriately, you will develop deeper trust in your relationships. Chapter 3 will cover self-disclosure in greater detail.
5. **Cultivate mutual respect.** Developing trust will lead to mutual respect, as you forge relationships that are based on honesty. You will learn more about talking "from your gut" also called self-disclosure, in Chapter 3.

Build Your Communication Skills

1. **Learn to communicate honestly.**
 2. **Learn what effective communication is and how to develop this skill.**
 3. **Know what you are communicating to others by increasing your self-awareness.**
 4. **Know what you are communicating to others by your nonverbal signals.**
 5. **Learn to deal effectively with conflict.**
-
1. **Learn to communicate honestly.** When you communicate honestly by learning to say what you feel, by establishing trust, and by using effective and appropriate self-disclosure, your listeners will learn to respect and trust you more. Self-disclosure will be covered in Chapter 3.
 2. **Learn what effective communication is and how to develop this skill.** Effective communication is communicating so that your listener receives the message you intended to send. When you use honesty and appropriate self-disclosure, and state your message in a clear way that shows high self-esteem, you will send your message more effectively.
 3. **Know what you are communicating to others by increasing your self-awareness.** If you have low self-awareness, you may communicate so that your true meaning is unclear. By working on your self-awareness, you will improve your communication skill. Self-awareness is covered with self-disclosure in Chapter 3.
 4. **Know what you are communicating to others by your nonverbal signals.** If you give nonverbal signals that are unintended, your message will be different than what you expect. This can lead to confusion and mistrust. Nonverbal communication is covered in Chapter 7.
 5. **Learn to deal effectively with conflict.** Effective communication skill involves the ability to deal with conflict. Chapter 13 will show you how to deal with conflict to restore trust and mutual respect.

Chapter One Summary

Chapter Summary by Learning Objectives

- 1. Be able to define human relations.** Whatever direction your life takes—whether you become a manager, an entrepreneur, or an employee—you will always have to deal with other people, and human relations skills will be essential. Human relations is the skill or ability to work effectively with and through other people. Human relations skills are especially important today for several reasons: greater awareness of human rights, current fluctuations in international markets, growing emphasis on the human resource in companies, current emphasis on teamwork, and increased diversity in the workplace.
- 2. Understand the importance of human relations to success in business.** Today's problems make workplace survival an even greater challenge. Increased workplace competition, the rise of the dual-career family, the divorce rate, and the problem of two generations of dependents: all of these factors increase personal stress and complicate the issues of human relations.
- 3. Learn a short history of the study of human relations.** Starting with the scientific managers in the early part of this century, and finding a focal point in the Hawthorne Experiment, the human relations movement began in the 1800s and spanned the entire 20th century. Names to remember include Robert Owen, Andrew Ure, Max Weber, Frederick Taylor, Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, Mary Parker Follett, and Elton Mayo. In 1960 Douglas McGregor wrote about Theory X and Theory Y managers, showing the latter as both more effective and more humane.
- 4. Understand the challenges of human relations in today's workplace.** Skill in human relations does not mean being phony or manipulative; it is neither a quick-fix nor a cure-all; and it is not just common sense. It is a skill area that is learnable, though growth continues for a lifetime.
- 5. Understand which traits are most helpful to effective human relations.** The main areas of human relations are: self-esteem, mutual respect, self-awareness and self-disclosure, communication skill, group dynamics, and motivation.

Chapter One Review

Chapter Review

Key Terms

human relations (p. 4)	Theories X and Y (p. 14)	self-awareness (p. 17)
bureaucracy (p. 10)	Total Quality Management (TQM) (p. 14)	self-disclosure (p. 17)
scientific management (p. 10)	self-esteem (p. 16)	communication (p. 18)
Hawthorne Experiment (p. 12)	mutual respect (p. 17)	group dynamics (p. 18)
informal organization (p. 12)	trust (p. 17)	motivation (p. 18)

Review Questions

1. In your own words, write a one- or two-sentence definition of human relations as you would have defined it before reading this chapter. Then, assuming your definition has changed a bit, write a new one.
2. Explain the importance of Elton Mayo and his work in the Hawthorne Studies to the history of human relations.
3. How can the development of human relations skills help you on the job as a manager? as an entrepreneur? as an employee?
4. Explain the role of W. Edwards Deming in the further development of human relations concepts during the past two decades.
5. List three reasons why human relations issues are more important today than ever before.
6. Why is self-esteem important to the development of human relation skills?
7. List the six “areas of emphasis” in the study of human relations and explain each one briefly.
8. Why did the human relations movement not make much progress during the Great Depression? Discuss the relevance that experience might have to today’s workplace.

Critical Thinking Questions

9. Explain the importance of the work of Frederick Taylor, and Frank and Lillian Gilbreth and the scientific management movement to the development of modern industry.
10. What are the problems of today’s society that cause greater stress on the job, thus increasing the need for human relations skills? List and explain the importance of each.

Communicating With a Supervisor

Working It Out

Situation: Doris Johnston is the president of Elko Manufacturing Company. Workers are in short supply in the town where Elko is located. Doris noticed that the turnover rate has been extremely high in one department. The supervisor in this department, Janet Kent, has been having problems relating to her workers. Janet has become known as someone who abuses her power by intimidating her workers, and purposely conducting herself in a way that makes them constantly concerned that they will lose their jobs. Many workers never voice their complaints and simply find work elsewhere. Doris has asked Janet six times during the past five months why the turnover is so high in her department. She also tells Janet that she has overheard workers complain about the way Janet treats them. Janet answers that the workers leave because they can't handle her demands and maintains that she is "tough, that's all, not unreasonable."

Procedure: Four volunteers should play Doris and Janet in two separate role plays. The first will present how Doris should *not* confront Janet with her concerns. Then, without class discussion, play the second role play, showing a better way that Doris can communicate her concerns with Janet. Finally, the class should discuss both role plays, sharing what they have learned from the process.

1.1

School-to-Work Connection:

Interpersonal Skills,
Thinking Skills and
Personal Qualities Skills

INTERNET EXERCISES



1. Research and Evaluate

Several different organizations have identified the "Best Companies to Work For." Among the producers of such lists are *Fortune* magazine, the Society for Human Resource Management, and organizations in Canada and the United Kingdom. Using a search engine, find one of these lists. Choose any one of the listed companies and look it up on its own Web site to get more information. Then, write a short paragraph on the company, evaluating whether or not you would want to work there. Be sure to emphasize the human relations–related reasons for your conclusions.

2. Compare and Contrast

The Singaporean Cultural Studies site can be found through <http://www.mhhe.com/lamberton3e>. Imagine that you have just learned that your company is sending you on a one-year business trip to open and manage a branch office in Singapore. You have never traveled to Asia before, and you know little about the culture. Visit this page and write down the first five

noticeable differences you observed between your culture and Singapore's. Then write a paragraph that answers these questions:

- a. How could those differences create human relations issues?
- b. How can effective human relations prevent or solve misunderstandings related to these differences?

3. Self-Assess and Apply

Lawrence K. Jones at North Carolina State University has posted an excellent set of online tools to help you with your career exploration. Visit this site and take the Career Key assessment through the course Web site at <http://www.mhhe.com/lamberton3e> or enter directly through <http://www.careerkey.org/english/index.html>. Report on the career that fits you best, according to this assessment.

Case Study

The Fighting Carpenters

1.1

Alan McKenzie's department was in trouble. Of all the departments in the construction company, Alan's remodeling division was showing the lowest profit margin. Yesterday his boss had called him on his cell phone from a job outside of town. "Alan," he exclaimed, "I drove out here to double-check on the sheetrock work, and I found a big fight going on between your carpenters. They are about three days behind schedule on this job, and they're holding up three subcontractors who are mad at you—and the company. Get over here and straighten things out!"

The boss wasn't telling Alan anything he didn't already know. Alan knew what the problem was; the question was what to do about it. He had two groups in his crew who kept sabotaging each other's work and hurling insults at each other. Last week, a fistfight had broken out between the leaders of the two groups, and now, apparently, the same people were at it again. When he had arrived at the job site, the fight had ended, but the atmosphere was still very tense, and Alan was frankly scared about what would happen next. If only he could solve his human relations problem, his other problems would be much more easily solved.

"I'll drive out there and get ahold of the situation right away," he told his manager.

"You'd better," the manager snapped back. "The company can't keep losing subcontractors because your men would rather fight than work."

Continued

Case Study Questions

1. Which emphasis areas of human relations does this case mostly address?
2. What steps should Alan take to solve the conflict in his department?
3. Could Alan have done anything to prevent this problem from occurring in the first place? If so, what?

The E-Commerce Entrepreneur

Case Study

1.2

While Jenny Wilson was a sophomore at Portland Community College, she started her own business on the Web. It was an international electronic brokerage for bed-and-breakfasts. Her business obtained listings with elaborate photos and descriptions from the owners of the B&Bs. She would then sell travel packages to customers, making her profit on the percentage paid by the owners and—depending on the package type—often a small fee from the customer as well.

At first, business was good. Jenny found herself spending long hours at her computer, then decided she couldn't survive without some help. Her area was undergoing a tremendous worker shortage, however, and she was forced to get by with a few part-timers. B&B.com, as the business was known, had succeeded largely because Jenny was so good with the owners of the bed-and-breakfasts, selling her ideas by phone and Internet, even to owners who had a poor concept of marketing.

Now, with the five new people she had hired, that element was sometimes missing. In fact, she began to get messages from well-established clients that they had been “treated rudely” on the phone or via e-mail. One day, Jenny walked into her new downtown office to hear one of her workers in a heated argument over an unpaid bill. As it turned out, the bill had been mailed to the wrong client; and the B&B owner had not even received it.

“Henry,” she said to the employee, “we need to talk.”

Case Study Questions

1. What should Jenny say to this employee during the talk she has with him?
2. Should Jenny call a meeting with her entire crew and train them in some of her own selling techniques and human relations policies?
3. What procedure could Jenny have followed to prevent these experiences from happening?

Endnotes

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