

## WORKPLACE WRITING PROMPT - #12

**TOPIC:** Interacting with Coworkers & Supervisors

**QUESTION:** The number-one workplace fact of life is that you have to get along with everyone you work with. Whether it's the CEO, your line supervisor or your cubicle mate, you must interact pleasantly, effectively, and appropriately. Keeping these things in mind, write an argumentative essay telling which employee you would promote based on the employee profiles you will read.

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Read the following text:
  - Do unto Others: 10 Tips on Improving Interaction with Your Coworkers
  - Input for Hire
2. As you read the texts, think about the important information. You may highlight key points and ideas.
3. After reading the texts, create a plan for your essay. Decide on which argument/employee you will support. Think about ideas, facts, definitions, details, and other information or examples you want to use to support your claim.
4. Write a 5 paragraph argumentative essay with an introduction, 3 body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Each paragraph should contain 3-6 sentences. Follow this outline:
  - **Introduction Paragraph #1**-Introduce the topic clearly and provide a focus. Reveal which worker you chose.
  - **Paragraph #2**- Support your decision with a piece of evidence from the texts. Provide details and examples to support your decision.
  - **Paragraph #3**- Support your claim with a second fact of evidence from the texts. Provide details and examples to support your claim.
  - **Paragraph #4**- Acknowledge that some may have chosen the other candidate. Give reasons and evidence from the text refuting the other side's decision.
  - **Conclusion Paragraph #5**- Provide a general statement about your arguments and briefly summarize the evidence that supports your decision.
5. Be sure to use correct sentence structure, grammar, punctuation and spelling. Use clear language and vocabulary. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion. Be sure to use information and details from the texts. Be sure to use your own words.

## Do Unto Others: 10 tips on Improving Interaction with Coworkers

[http://www.kellyservices.us/US/Careers/Career-Tips-and-Tools/Do-Unto-Others\\_-10-Tips-on-Improving-Interaction-with-Your-Coworkers/#.VoVztxUrLIU](http://www.kellyservices.us/US/Careers/Career-Tips-and-Tools/Do-Unto-Others_-10-Tips-on-Improving-Interaction-with-Your-Coworkers/#.VoVztxUrLIU)

It's a well-known fact that on occasion, office jobs and many other positions can make you feel like you're back in high school. Petty rivalries, rude coworkers and even clique forming can make professional life stressful at best and nightmarish at worst. Unfortunately, hiding in your cubicle or ignoring others is not a valid option. Though it might give you some respite, sooner or later you're going to have to emerge from your work cave and interact with your colleagues.

If your knee-jerk reaction to tackling a project with Gossip Girl in sales is to wear noise-canceling headphones, or pulling a shift with Mr. Sarcasm makes you want to reach for your mouth guard and body armor, read on. We've made a list of 10 easy ways to improve interaction with your coworkers and help everybody on the team feel respected and valued. And since people skills are a vital part of teamwork and important in nearly every profession, you can use these tips no matter what type of relationships you have with your colleagues.

1. **Pay attention.** US News advises that when somebody addresses you, pay attention. If possible, stop doing what you're doing; if not, ask them to wait for a minute or so until you can pause. Then give him or her your full attention. Face the person and listen actively by nodding and giving other verbal clues.
2. **Be interested.** Most people like it when their colleagues show genuine interest in their lives. Make a point of remembering personal details such as the account manager's new child or the intern's favorite hockey team. It takes only a few minutes now and then to engage them in polite conversation in the elevator or by the water cooler.
3. **Know when to back off.** TechRepublic reminds workers to be respectful of other people's time. If somebody's in a conversation or attending to a task, come back later when they're not busy. Likewise, don't ask colleagues to take on your tasks unless you have very good reason to, and always try to avoid encroaching on people's free time.
4. **Communicate effectively.** Make your emails concise, polite and to the point. If you're going to a meeting or have to give a presentation, note your points and arguments ahead of time and review them shortly before the event. It will help you be more direct without being abrupt. In addition, adapt your preferred style of communication to the audience and setting: If you're an extrovert, train yourself to avoid launching into

- related subjects unless necessary. If you're an introvert, coach yourself to explain your thoughts and observations in a clear manner.
5. **Be positive, polite, and respectful.** Demonstrating courtesy, respect, and a positive attitude goes a long way in creating rapport with others. Treat them the way you would like to be treated to avoid insulting or upsetting anybody. Strive to offer any criticism in a constructive manner. Be enthusiastic about challenges, and always be solution oriented.
  6. **Show appreciation and share credit.** US News points out that it costs nothing to thank coworkers for their input or assistance, and it makes collaborating much more pleasant. In addition, it's fair to share credit with others who've worked on a project with you or who assist you in other ways. Plus, when people feel respected, it helps create better working relationships in the future.
  7. **Own your mistakes.** Nobody likes a finger pointer. If you make a mistake, don't antagonize others by blaming them—own it. Even if your boss gets mad, treat the incident as a learning experience. It will make you stronger and help your professional development.
  8. **Honor your commitments.** If you promise to finish a project by the end of the week, do so. Never underestimate the time you'll need for a project or take: that way, you'll have plenty of time to complete it and won't disappoint your peers or superiors.
  9. **Follow up.** TechRepublic stresses the importance of following up with people. For instance, wrap up a project by asking how the process and results were for the other party. This strengthens relationships and provides you with feedback about your own performance.
  10. **Use social media wisely.** Facebook can be fun, but it can also be full of pitfalls. Refrain from venting about your boss or sharing details about colleagues on social pages. If you want to post a photo online that includes others, always ask for permission, since they might have different privacy preferences than you. In short, if you're interacting with colleagues on social media or your accounts are public, behave as you would in the workplace: professionally.

The effort to improve relationships at work is a sound investment. Spend a little time and energy to enhance your interaction with others and watch how that profits your professional life.

# INPUT FOR HIRE

Communication 2000

Interpersonal Communication

Tianna has to choose someone to represent the telemarketing department on a company-wide committee that will look at ways to solicit input from employees. Tianna's company hopes to boost morale and increase the empowerment of individual workers. Management wants to hear from the front lines and give employees on all levels an opportunity to contribute. Tianna is considering two of her coworkers—Stan and Ari.

Ari has been in the department for four years and has voiced a lot of opinions about how things should change. Ari's ideas are valuable, but his style needs some work. In fact, all Ari does lately is complain. He manages to do his job well enough, but obviously resents the decisions made by upper management.

Stan doesn't seem to have many gripes about the way management makes decisions. Stan has only been with the company for 10 months, but in that time he's taken on new responsibilities and come up with valuable cost-saving ideas for the company.

Tianna has not ruled Ari out as a potential representative for the committee. Ari needs to feel valued, and Tianna knows that Ari and everyone who interacts with him would benefit by a change in his communication style. Placing him on the committee would provide a constructive outlet for his opinions. In a new setting, Ari might learn to express himself better.

Stan, on the other hand, already expresses himself well. He knows how to present ideas so others embrace them, and with his positive energy, he would be an asset to the committee.