



Together

Dealing with differences

In today's global environment, we interact constantly with people from different backgrounds and lifestyles. Whether on the Internet, in social settings or at work, we are dealing with differences every day.

What's the best way to deal with differences?

Every one of us is different in some way. And how do we want to be treated? With respect, fairness and equality.

We strive to be open-minded and want to be treated with open-mindedness, too. Differences aren't better or worse — they're just different.

Differences in the workplace

It's especially important to practice acceptance toward coworkers because:

- It makes the workplace more enjoyable. Positive vibes in the workplace help people maintain focus and accomplish their tasks.
- Acceptance leads to increased cooperation and collaboration in team efforts. The result is often greater success with projects and department initiatives. So everyone wins! On the flip side, conflict and distraction can lead to mistakes, accidents and decreased productivity.
- Finally, it's the law. Bullying, harassment and discrimination are illegal. Those who participate are putting themselves and their job security at risk.

How can you help?

Freedom and acceptance are fundamental American ideals. Be an advocate for differences. For example:

- Don't gossip. Walk away or speak up if there is mean-spirited talk about others.
- Don't harass or bully. It's cowardly and illegal.
- Be a leader instead of a follower. Take the lead in showing open-mindedness. Have lunch or take a break with coworkers who are not in your usual circle of friends. Learn more about them. You may find you have more in common than you thought.

Finally, think of the future

What would you like to pass on to your children or other young people regarding differences? How do you hope they are treated? Be a role model of acceptance to help create a better future for us all.

Call us anytime. We're here for you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



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