Communicating Effectively in a Diverse World

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New Jersey Employee Advisory Service
21st Century Diversity

Importance of Interpersonal Skills
Diversity

- Cultural
- Personality
- Generational
- Gender
Sensitize Your Attitude

• Others see things differently
• Every perspective has merit
• Alternate ways of looking at things can be helpful
• Different isn’t necessarily better or worse
  – “Not everyone thinks the way I do”
  – “Every perspective has merit…not just mine”
Examine Your Biases

- Everyone has them
- Their impact on communication
- We all have them...identify yours
• Seek first to understand, then be understood – Stephen Covey

• Make courteous requests

• Explain things in a practical way

• Let them go first
  – ask clarifying questions
  – respond in light of the other’s situation
Seek First to Understand...

- Defer to the other person (Ram story)
- It’s common courtesy…but also strategic
Make Courteous Requests

• Start with pleasantries…

• Be considerate of the other’s situation before proceeding

• …Then make your request

• Be personal before “getting down to business”
  – check and see if they have time, are interested, etc., before proceeding
  – then make your request
Explain Things in a Practical Way

- Don’t assume the other understands your point of reference
- Avoid excessive use of slang, acronyms, etc.
- Put things in layman’s terms
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