



## Core Value #2

# Close Relationships Among Team Members

# Positive Relationships @Work

Like in most consulting firms, law offices' team members also spend more than one-third of their time in a day in the office. Positive and happy work environment and interactions among team members in the workplace are therefore crucial as they can greatly affect the productivity and performance of the team members.

We believe that close relationships among team members will lead to positive interactions in the workplace, which will eventually support the growth and achievement of the team members and the firm. They can also unleash potentials of the team members which have never been explored before. We encourage our team members to keep developing and improving their selves, be proactive, be adaptable to any kind of situation and be independent. More importantly, we also encourage collaboration among team members since we believe that collaboration is key to boost performance and therefore, to better serve clients.

The following tips for developing close relationships among team members at work are general in nature and may not be relevant to all firms, but they may be of interest to those who work in the legal industry as we have gathered the same from our experience working in a law firm:

- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of the team members

By understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the team members, we can learn to appreciate and support each other. With better understanding on the capability and character of the team members, more realistic expectations can be set on them and we can focus on positive things that each team member can bring to the workplace. Furthermore, this will enable each team member to know when to offer assistance to and ask for assistance from other team members. Offering assistance to other team members when they need it the most is a great way to build a close relationship. On the other hand, do not hesitate to ask for assistance from other team members because it can also initiate a close relationship from a different perspective.

- Listen, listen and listen

Getting to know your team members, by among others asking questions about their personal life (without being nosy or judgmental), professional goals or daily needs, shows your interest in them. This can be a start of a close relationship.

As lawyers, we often feel that we need to speak more because somehow, we feel that we are expected to be a great communicator rather than a good listener. However, we often forget that we first need to listen in order that we can communicate things effectively. In a professional context, we can ask questions on ideas presented by other team member to build up his/her confidence and stimulate his/her creativity. This can also ensure understanding among the team members on particular issues.

As much as we want to correct, deny or challenge other team member's statement, we still need to listen to his/her statement completely because we never know that such a statement was triggered by something that we don't know or even made out of a totally different perspective. Through listening (and by listening, we meant active listening, and not just hearing), for example, by letting other team member to have a voice in expressing his/her ideas or allowing him/her to an uninterrupted turn to speak, trust can be built, problems can be solved and conflicts can be avoided.

- Appreciate each team member's role and efforts no matter how minor they are, and respect diversity

As we all work towards the same goal, ie to serve clients our best, we need to appreciate each team member's individual role and efforts within the organization because essentially we are social beings and only through team work, a great success can be achieved. Teamwork builds morale and the team members will feel that their work is valued when they contribute to the growth of the organization and this would build confidence and more trust within the team, which may in the end bring the team members closer to each other.

Respecting diversity at work may also create a close relationship because acknowledging differences means that we can recognize the unique contributions each individual can make.

- Take time to build "personal" relationships at work

Developing "personal" relationships at work may seem

challenging in the beginning due to such reasons as different interests, different roles, different goals, different schedule, and the list can go on and on. Scheduling like the first 10 minutes of a meeting to be a time when team members can catch up with one another or having a team lunch once every month or an annual office outing could be a good way to develop close relationships among team members.

## Positive Work Relationships During the Covid-19 Pandemic

During this unprecedented pandemic situation where team members work as much as possible remotely from the office, work relationships among team members may be affected. Team members may be faced with challenges such as issues in managing schedule and time, blurred line between personal and professional lives, reduced supervision and direction and possible lack of communication and coordination.

Each of us can actually take part in dealing with this situation by again playing our role and making efforts to the best we can. Effective communication among team members has obviously become more important than ever. Whilst physical meetings are somehow irreplaceable, we can still ensure close relationships among team members through virtual meetings to discuss various professional and non-professional issues, including, if need be, any challenges that may be faced by team members in performing their tasks and solutions to the challenges.

The team members can also do fun activities virtually such as a virtual group lunch with a particular dress code or theme or interactive trivia questions quizzes to maintain healthy and positive interactions among the team members.

**Note:** This article contains general information only and is not intended to be legal advice. For further information, please contact us at [info@shiftlegal.id](mailto:info@shiftlegal.id).

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