



Beyond the Technical: Five Leadership Strategies for Connecting with People

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- 1. Have authentic conversations.** How can a leader create opportunities for authentic conversations? “Walk the floor.” Take the initiative to meet employees where they are, focus on the person, and be authentic. Ask open-ended questions to foster inclusiveness. Invest the time.
- 2. Sweat the small stuff.** “Small stuff” doesn’t mean things that are insignificant or unimportant, but actions that are basic and fundamental, and often overlooked. Say thank you, apologize, and follow through on what you say you’re going to do. These common courtesies demonstrate good interpersonal skills, but they also link to the basic idea that employees want to be treated like people. Conscious awareness and practice are key.
- 3. Recognize and acknowledge contributions.** Recognition shows appreciation for action. Acknowledgement articulates what you appreciate, admire, like, or are inspired by in this person. When you acknowledge someone, you are showing appreciation for who they are and what they bring to the table.
- 4. Seek feedback.** Seek input on your leadership from colleagues and those you lead. “Signal a lane change” to let people know that a change is coming and that it is completely intentional.
- 5. Continue to learn.** Leadership is a journey and we never quite arrive. Training courses, reading books, mentoring, coaching, and seeking feedback can all play important roles. Then, practice new behaviors that further your leadership capacity in connecting with people.



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