

This International Student Edition is for use outside of the U.S.

SEVENTH EDITION

# HUMAN RELATIONS

## *Strategies for Success*



LOWELL H. LAMBERTON

LESLIE MINOR

DEMITRIUS ZEIGLER

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human relations  
**STRATEGIES  
FOR SUCCESS**

Seventh Edition

Lowell H. Lamberton

Leslie Minor

Demitrius Zeigler





## HUMAN RELATIONS

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 LWI 26 25 24 23 22 21

ISBN 978-1-264-58930-2

MHID 1-264-58930-1

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## authors



©Lowell Lamberton

**Lowell Lamberton** is an emeritus business professor with an extensive background in both writing and business. He has worked as an expert consultant to many businesses, especially in the area of human behavior, specializing in organizational behavior and management. Prof. Lamberton has had many years of experience teaching management, human relations, and business communications classes at Central Oregon Community College and at Linfield College. He lives in Bend, Oregon, with his wife, Ruth, who

is an artist.

He holds two degrees in English, one from Walla Walla University and the other from the University of Nebraska. He also holds an MBA and an advanced professional certificate (APC) in management from Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts.

Besides this textbook, he has also coauthored *Working with People: A Human Relations Guide* with Leslie Minor.



©Leslie Minor

**Leslie Minor** is a social psychologist and sociologist with a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Washington (Seattle), and MA and PhD degrees from the School of Social Ecology at the University of California (Irvine). Her teaching career spans more than 20 years, with teaching experience at large and small colleges, public and private, rural and urban, two-year and four-year institutions, in online and traditional formats, in the United States and in

Singapore. She also has several years of experience in college administration in the roles of Department Chair, Dean, and Vice President. Dr. Minor believes that her most rigorous and satisfying on-the-job training in teaching and administration has come from rearing her three sons.



©Demitrius Zeigler

**Demitrius Zeigler** is a freelance project manager and small business owner in Long Beach, California. He earned a BS in Urban and Regional Planning from Cornell University and a Master's degree from the University of Southern California. Demitrius has worked in various roles including urban planner, middle school teacher, and urban farmer, among other things. But his favorite role is as project manager for his rambunctious young daughter.



## preface»»»

Throughout our years of teaching, administration, running small businesses, and consulting in the fields of social science and organizational behavior, we have become increasingly aware of the need for a textbook that is down to earth, experience based, and grounded in sound research and theory. We believe strongly in the importance of understanding the relationship between self-awareness and human relations, and, by extension, the relationship between human relations skills and ongoing career success. We encourage building self-awareness, growth, and success skills inside the context of the real world. What realistic strategies and techniques can we teach our students to encourage their growth in human relations success, on and off the job site? How can students tap into the power that comes from working well in one-on-one situations, in groups, and in organizations large and small?

*Human Relations: Strategies for Success* attempts to provide answers to these questions and guidance in developing human relations skills that transfer from the classroom to the real world of work. Our commitment to the creation of a book that is at once interesting to read, motivating to study, and relevant to a wide variety of

students has been the driving force behind *Human Relations: Strategies for Success*.

This text covers research-based social science and management principles, as well as newer ideas in human relations drawn from management theory, group theory, personality theory, and relationship theory. Business applications of these theories are included in this text to bring attention to current best practices in these fields. More than ever, effective human relations skills are crucial to business success when organizations grow and compete in a global business environment, or when they arise from small-scale entrepreneurial enterprises. Employees must have the knowledge and skill to adapt to a workplace where change is as frequent as it is inevitable.

## FEATURES OF THE SEVENTH EDITION

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This seventh edition features the following changes from previous editions:

### Chapter 1

- Improved discussion on employers' and managers' responsibilities in creating a work environment that respects the dignity and rights of workers
- Updated research, demographic data, sources, figures, and business applications to reflect current trends and issues
- Expanded discussion on current challenges in human relations and the modern workplace, and other

concepts

- New, more contemporary “Case Studies” to reinforce Chapter 1 themes
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

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## **Chapter 2**

- Inclusion of more recent scholarship on self-concept and achieving a “growth mindset”
- Updated sources, with text revisions throughout the chapter to update concepts and their applications to business settings
- Added “More About” examples to reinforce course concepts
- Updated “working it out” exercise to focus on growth mindset
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 3**

- Enhanced discussion on the topic of self-disclosure, including the benefits and risk factors of disclosure in the workplace
- Inclusion of more recent scholarship, plus updated sources and business applications
- Updates throughout the chapter to provide a fresh look at core concepts and their applications to business settings

- New and updated “Real World Examples” for modern context
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 4**

- New opening vignette to emphasize contemporary workplace issues
- Revised and updated research findings on happiness, United States and international comparisons, and the down side to happiness
- New section on introverts, and a new “working it out” exercise focused on introversion
- Enhanced research on attitudes and values related to job satisfaction
- Updated information on values in corporate culture and corporate cheating
- New “Real World” examples and relevant quotations to reinforce student learning
- Text revisions throughout the chapter to update concepts and their applications to business settings
- Two new “Case Studies” focus on positive workplace attitudes and workplace values conflicts
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 5**

- New and updated sources for scholarship on the topics of motivation and self-esteem

- Revisions throughout the chapter to promote understanding and clarity of the material
- New demographic data added, and figures provided to illustrate changing demographic and workplace realities
- Text edits throughout the chapter to update sources and business applications of concepts
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 6**

- New opening vignette to reflect modern workplace scenario
- New and updated “Real World” examples to illustrate course concepts
- Expanded discussion of specific strategies to improve active listening skills
- Revisions and updates throughout the chapter to include more contemporary sources and applications of concepts
- New section on listening skills and delivering verbal messages
- Updated information and sources on international and intercultural communication
- New “working it out” exercise on cross-cultural aspects of marketing
- New “Case Studies” addressing difficult communication situations in the workplace

- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 7**

- Chapter has been overhauled with major updates and revisions to better reflect contemporary workplace issues
- Inclusion of more current scholarship around the ideas of group and team work in the workplace
- Enhanced discussion on leadership and organizational culture/climate
- New team development and team building strategies added to text
- New, improved activities to support the concepts in the chapter
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 8**

- New opening vignette to illustrate course concepts
- Updated discussion on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, including critique of theory
- Added section on Sternberg's theory of triarchic intelligence
- Added concepts and applications in strong emotions including aggression and passivity
- New "More About" examples to illustrate course concepts

- Text revisions throughout the chapter to promote understanding and clarity
- Text edits throughout the chapter to update sources and business applications of concepts
- Added “working it out” exercise on emotional intelligence
- New “Case Study” addressing the inner saboteurs
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 9**

- Greater, more detailed discussion on how technology is shaping our personal lives, and our roles in the modern workplace
- Newer research, and more up-to-date scholarship related to the concepts
- New figures, exhibits, and photos to connect readers’ learning
- “Managing Life Changes” section revised to offer clear, straightforward advice for self-care during times of stress
- Discussion on Organizational Change Models has been updated to reflect more current thinking and scholarship on the topic
- Greater emphasis on stress reduction strategies to deal with changes in our personal and professional lives
- New “Real World Examples” to connect the concepts of the chapter with contemporary issues
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to

reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 10**

- Expanded discussion of creativity in the workplace, health effects, and characteristics of creativity
- Revisions throughout the chapter to update contemporary sources and applications of concepts
- New, more contemporary “More About” examples
- New “Real World” material on developing creativity
- Added material on the creativity strategy of reverse brainstorming
- New “working it out” exercise on creativity
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

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## **Chapter 11**

- New opening vignette to help students connect real-world example with learning material in the chapter
- Expanded analysis on conflict in the workplace guides students toward successful strategies such as “BATNA”
- Updated data sets for workplace employment
- Edits throughout the chapter to update contemporary sources and business applications of concepts
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts



## Chapter 12

- New, clearly presented information to help students identify and manage stress in their personal and professional lives
- Inclusion of new data and scholarship on the physical effects of stress, workplace productivity and stress, and technology effects
- New “More About” examples to illustrate course concepts
- Revisions and edits throughout the chapter to update contemporary understanding of issues and their applications to the workplace
- Updated survey research summarizing sources of stress in the United States
- Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale has been moved to this chapter to better place it with the topic
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## Chapter 13

- New opening vignette on the importance of good service
- Updated research and references to reflect contemporary scholarship and ideas around improving customer service in the workplace
- New “More About” sections to guide learning toward creating empathy in the workplace
- Edits throughout the chapter to update contemporary understanding of issues

- New “Case Study” on internal/external customer relations
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 14**

- New opening vignette to present workplace experiences of diversity

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- Updated demographic data and statistics on diversity in the United States
- Text revisions throughout the chapter to reflect changing U.S. economic and political climate
- New figures provided to illustrate changing demographic and employment trends
- Text edits throughout the chapter to update contemporary understanding of issues
- New section illustrating the benefits to employers and employees of workplace diversity
- Expanded section on LGBTQ issues and sexual harassment in the workplace
- New “More About” examples to illustrate course concepts
- New section on cultural intelligence
- New “Case Study” on workplace discrimination
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 15**

- Updated opening vignette to help students connect with the material in the chapter
- New and updated information on contemporary issues such as the spread of disinformation, cyberbullying, and a growing digital divide
- The Global Ethics Issues section and others have been updated to reflect current trends and more recent scholarship around the topic of ethics and social responsibility
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

## **Chapter 16**

- Revisions throughout the chapter to update contemporary sources and applications of concepts
- Enhanced information on improving employee morale, and on reducing procrastination
- Updated research and statistics on substance abuse and its effects, and on the workplace response to substance abuse
- New “working it out” exercises on practicing interview skills and on career planning
- Added TED Talk reference and discussion questions to reinforce chapter concepts

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## **TEXTBOOK-WIDE FEATURES**

Each chapter includes the following pedagogical features

to facilitate student comprehension and to show how chapter concepts apply to the real world:

**Strategies for Success.** To highlight the connection between human relations theories and their real-world applications, this textbook contains a unique series of strategies that are integrated into all of the chapters. These strategies offer concrete guidance on how to use human relations skills to address situations that all people face.

**Opening Vignettes.** Each chapter opens with a short vignette to set the tone of the chapter. These vignettes use the narrative approach to make the chapter concepts more real to students at the outset, before they begin to absorb concepts and terms.

**Key Terms.** Important terms are highlighted within the text and called out in the margin. They are also listed at the end of each chapter and are defined in the glossary.

**Review Questions and Critical Thinking Questions.** Each chapter closes with thought-provoking questions. These questions call on students to go beyond simply reading the chapter, by asking them to consider its implications for their lives in the classroom and beyond. Many questions tap students' creativity and problem-solving abilities as they encourage students to think beyond the boundaries of the book.

**Case Studies.** Two realistic, job-based case studies (each with questions) are presented in every chapter.

These classroom-tested case studies are drawn from familiar experiences in a wide variety of workplace settings. These cases allow students to resolve realistic human relations problems for which there is usually more than one viable solution. Each case study can be used as a springboard for classroom discussion and group problem-solving activities.

**“working it out” exercises.** For most students, active participation is motivating, rewarding, and crucial to reinforcing learning. In a variety of classroom-tested working it out exercises, students are encouraged to build on their human relations skills as they role-play, interview each other, assess their own and each others’ strengths and weaknesses, work on setting goals and developing strategies, practice giving and receiving feedback, and explore other applications of chapter topics.

## acknowledgments

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This edition marks 25 years since the first edition of the textbook was published. We could not have achieved this milestone alone; many people were involved in the writing and production of this book. We especially would like to thank Laura Hurst Spell, our associate portfolio manager from McGraw-Hill Higher Education, and our editor Sarah Blasco, for their help, kindness, and patience. Many reviewers provided valuable feedback that strengthened the content in this edition. At home, too many students to mention have offered suggestions and help since the last edition.

We would also like to thank our colleagues and co-workers, friends, and family members for the help they have offered by presenting real-life situations involving human relations issues. This real-life material has been incorporated into opening vignettes, Real World examples, and some of the case studies. A special thanks goes out as well to our families who provided ongoing support and assistance: Lowell's wife, Ruth Lamberton; Leslie's sons, who have now planted roots on the east and west coasts but stay close virtually and in real life; and Demetrius' daughter, who is always ready to contribute a critical artistic or editorial eye in the writing process.

Solid previous editions have made this one possible. In the first edition, Betty Morgan, our adjunct editor, created the “Strategies” approach, for which we are extremely grateful. Heather Lamberton spent many hours doing research for nearly all of the chapters. And without Carla Tishler, our first editor, we would never have completed the project. In the second edition, we were helped greatly by Cheryl Adams, adjunct editor for Glencoe/McGraw-Hill. Tammy Higham was invaluable in the creation of the third edition. Of course, the instructors and students who have used the textbook over the past two and a half decades have a special place in our hearts as well.

We would also like to thank the following people for their feedback and guidance as reviewers of this edition of the manuscript:

- Irene Church, Muskegon Community College
- Kim Fox-Marchetti, Lone Star College System
- Philip Mathew, Olympic College
- Lori Merlak, Kirkwood Community College
- Karen Overton, Houston Community College
- Matthew Clayton Reynolds, College of Southern Idaho
- Eric B. Terry, Miami Dade College
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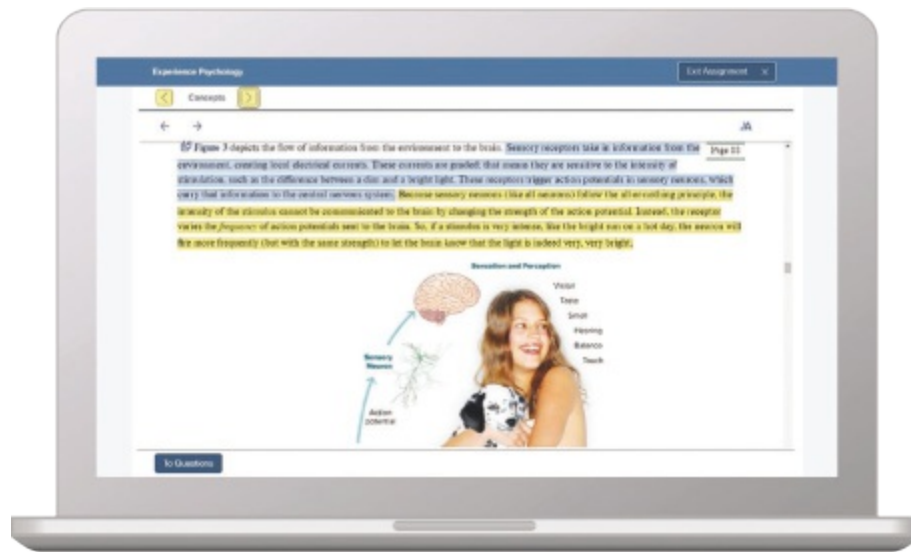
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# PART ONE

## ««« human relations and you

- 1 Human Relations: A Background
- 2 Self-Concept and Self-Esteem in Human Relations
- 3 Self-Awareness and Self-Disclosure
- 4 Attitudes and Values in Human Relations
- 5 Motivation: Increasing Productivity

*In Part One, we'll explore the foundations of human relations skills. Specifically, how does each one of us develop the necessary tools to work well together at home, in school, and on the job? What aspects of our personality contribute to our success at human relations? Are there strategies we can use to build human relations skills?*

*Chapters 1 through 5 define human relations, then look closely at the relationship between self-understanding and communication. These chapters will test your ability to ask questions about personal and global values, and help you*



*discover how to tap motivational strategies for yourself and others. These are important first steps to develop the human relations skills you need for success in your personal life and in the world of work.*



# R ONE

## 1

# HUMAN RELATIONS

## « « LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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**After studying this chapter, you should be able to:**

- LO 1-1 Define human relations.
- LO 1-2 Explain the importance of human relations in business.
- LO 1-3 Discuss the challenges of human relations as these factors affect success in business.
- LO 1-4 Identify what the study of human relations does not include.
- LO 1-5 Describe the areas of emphasis for human relations in today's workplace.
- LO 1-6 Discuss a short history of the study of human relations.

## « « STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

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- Strategy 1.1 Develop Mutual Respect
- Strategy 1.2 Build Your Communication Skills

## SITUATION

It had been a long day for Kelly, the kind where she felt the universe was conspiring against her. In her job as an administrative assistant at the county's Small Business and Entrepreneurship Program, she dealt with dozens of people each day, often at a dizzying pace. Now that the work day was ending, she felt frazzled, tired, and angry. The last client of the day had been rude and insulting to her. The client, Mr. Petrov, blamed Kelly for problems with his new business. He wouldn't listen when Kelly tried to explain that she was there as clerical support, not as a consultant; that she could not give him business advice; and that she was not responsible for his business failure. Voices were raised as tempers flared on both sides.



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As a public employee, Kelly had signed confidentiality and ethics agreements with her employer agreeing that she would not disclose private information related to the program, and that she would not make public statements that put the organization in a bad light. But this terrible, horrible day ending with Mr. Petrov made her forget about all that. Later that evening, she logged into her Twitter account and started venting. She posted a quick series of tweets about her frustrations with the difficult client, called out other clients who had treated her badly, her supervisors, and had a few choice words for county administration in general. She really let 'em have it.

The next morning as she arrived at work, her supervisor immediately called Kelly into her office and closed the door. “Kelly,” she began, “as a public agency, we hold high standards for our office. We work hard to keep our community’s trust. With your venting session on your social media page, you violated confidentiality and ethical behavior policies, and tore down the basic integrity of our work here that has taken years to build. Just this morning, I have heard from more than a dozen people who saw your tweets and called to complain. I’m going to have to ask for your resignation.”

Kelly was in complete shock. She felt sick, and could barely speak. “But. . .” she stammered, “those were my private opinions from my own, personal account! I have free speech rights, don’t I? Those weren’t meant to be public statements, and I didn’t really mean what I said, I was just very upset!”

## **DISCOVERY**

As Kelly gathered her belongings and prepared to leave, the seriousness of the situation began to sink in. There was no way she could explain away what she had posted. She had mocked Mr. Petrov, his business, and even his accent. She had made sarcastic and hostile remarks about other clients and county administrators by name, and in detail.

Kelly felt terrible about what she had said. The bitter irony was that she was proud to work for an organization that helped people work toward achieving their dreams. She was filled with remorse and regret. She wished she could apologize to everyone, on the spot.

“It’s going to take a miracle for me to make this right with everyone,” Kelly thought to herself. Kelly’s impulsive behavior had become a human relations nightmare for the

organization, clients, staff and administrators, and Kelly herself.

## THINK ABOUT IT

Consider the situation Kelly now finds herself in—at what point did her situation become problematic?

As you read through Chapter 1, ask yourself, “Which of the areas of major emphasis in human relations arise with Kelly’s situation?”

How can human relations knowledge and skills be used to resolve this situation?

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## » WHAT IS HUMAN RELATIONS?

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The importance of human relations in our personal and work lives cannot be exaggerated. The skills that are necessary for good relations with others are the most important skills anyone can learn in life. Human relations decisions may not involve life-or-death outcomes, but they can have very serious impacts.

**Human relations** is the skill or ability to *work effectively through and with other people*. Human relations includes a desire to understand others, their needs and weaknesses, and their talents and abilities. For anyone in a work-place setting, human relations also involves an understanding of how people work together in groups, satisfying both individual needs and group objectives. If an organization is to succeed, the relationships among the people in that organization must be monitored and maintained.

## human relations

The skill or ability to work effectively through and with other people.

In all aspects of life, you will deal with other people. No matter what you do for a living or how well you do it, your relationship with others is the key to your success or failure. Even when someone is otherwise only average at a job, good human relations skills can usually make that person seem better to others. Sadly, the opposite is also true: Poor human relations skills can make an otherwise able person seem like a poor performer. A doctor who respects patients, a lawyer who listens carefully to clients, a manager who gets along well with others in the workplace—all of these people will most likely be thought of by others as successful.

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## » THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RELATIONS SKILLS

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The ability to create and maintain effective relationships with others is the most important reason to understand human relations. Other reasons for studying human relations include the following:

### more about. . .

**Internal customers** can be defined as a department's employees, or as employees in other departments within an organization.

**Human rights.** Today, managers in the workplace have a greater awareness of their responsibilities to safeguard the rights of employees, who for their part have come to expect dignity, respect, equity, and fairness from their managers and other employees in the workplace environment. This awareness calls for more skillful relations among employees, using tact, **trust**, and diplomacy with greater skill. In today's workplace, the term *internal customer* is often used to describe stakeholders or employees within the company, who may be grouped into different departments or groups (such as IT, HR, front vs. back office, and similar employee-to-employee relationships). Addressing the needs of the

*internal customer* can help promote human rights within the workplace by creating a culture of mutual respect among employees and managers, where the rights of all—including outside customers and competitors—are safeguarded.

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**The global marketplace.** While most people in other countries tend to view the United States favorably, global opinion of Americans can vary in some countries—even countries we had long considered to be our friends.<sup>1</sup> When anti-American stories are told, they tend to invoke the metaphorical “ugly American” and involve stories of Americans using poor human relations skills when doing business with or communicating with people from other cultures. Improving interpersonal skills (the skills associated with getting along with others) can be a factor in promoting an image that Americans do respect individual liberties both at home and abroad, and remain competitive in the global marketplace.

**Emphasis on people as human resources.** Decades ago, forecasters predicted that by this time in history, strong computer skills would be the number one factor in the workplace. However, managers and corporate planners are now placing great emphasis on the human factor *in addition to* technical or occupational skills. In the age of automation, successful job applicants are now being sought for their additional business “soft skills,” such as effective communication, responsibility, teamwork, problem-solving, leadership, time management, problem-solving, emotional competence, and an “ethical compass.”<sup>2</sup>

**Renewed emphasis on working groups.** Today’s employees tend to enjoy working as teams and being involved in making decisions as a group. Helping groups work well together in such endeavors (as either a team member or leader) requires a great deal of human relations skill. Both managers and employees need to understand the dynamic of group interaction if such participation is to be effective.

**Increasing diversity in the workplace.** Few countries on earth contain the diversity of race, religion, and culture that exists in the United States. For example, the Census Bureau estimates foreign-born residents made up 13.7 percent of the U.S. population in 2018. Likewise, the number of women in the workplace has also dramatically grown globally in recent decades. And older Americans now contribute to an increasing share of

adults in the workplace, with an increasing number of employees staying in the workplace past typical retirement age.<sup>3</sup> In fact, looking ahead to the future, the participation rate for workers age 65 years and older is expected to increase to 23.3 percent by 2028.<sup>4</sup> The point of these data: A deep understanding of how diversity strengthens an organization is one of the most important skills in human relations.

## trust

Firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something.



Group work is a necessity in today's workforce.

GaudiLab/Shutterstock

## Human Relations and You

The study of human relations can help you in several ways. Human relations skills can help you get a job, enjoy your work, be more productive at it, and stay there longer with better chances for advancement. An understanding of yourself and others can help you be happier and more productive in all areas of your life.

## You, the Manager

A percentage of students who read this book will one day become managers. For a manager, no skill area is more important than the ability to relate to, and communicate with, other employees in the company. A manager with



good human relations skills will retain employees longer, be more productive and help the organization to be more productive, and provide employees with the type of positive engagement that promotes a more enjoyable workplace environment.<sup>5</sup>

## You, the Entrepreneur

In the 21st century, an increasing number of today's students leave college to enter an exciting realm of entrepreneurship: owning their own businesses. When you are the owner and operator of a business, your people skills—or human relations—are among the most important factors in your success. In an e-commerce business, although there is less face-to-face contact with customers and suppliers, the ability to communicate with people and to fulfill their needs is as crucial to success as choosing the right e-commerce platform or maximizing the use of social media.<sup>6</sup> Even in an e-commerce business, human relations skills matter immensely.

### more about. . .

An **entrepreneur** is someone who organizes and assumes the risks and rewards of beginning a business enterprise.

In a larger sense, your knowledge of human relations helps the work you do—or the business you own—provide fulfillment. Famed Russian author Fyodor Dostoyevsky wrote in the 1800s, “If it were desired to reduce a man to nothingness, it would be necessary only to give his work a character of uselessness.”<sup>7</sup> Many entrepreneurs become business owners to escape the feeling of uselessness associated with their former jobs. The entrepreneur is in the position of being able to control the human climate of the business he or she owns and operates.

## You, the Engaged Employee

For modern businesses, employee engagement is key, with employee engagement leading to reduced turnover, higher productivity, and increased profitability.<sup>8</sup> Being uninvolved, unapproachable, or pessimistic about your work can be reasons for failure at a job. Staying engaged and practicing good

communication with your superiors, clients, and other co-workers will set you on a good track.

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## » CURRENT CHALLENGES IN HUMAN RELATIONS

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From the executive boardroom to the shop floor, businesses function in a dynamic way with the world economy. For example, changes in economic policy, or changes to the means of production can provide a challenge to human relations in the workplace. Similarly, changes in the social structure or in the social or economic priorities of people in a society cause unanticipated workplace challenges. These forces can also work in reverse: changes and challenges at the individual level can influence changes at the page 7 professional level.

Young Millennials and those from Generation Z entering the job market for the first time can find that good, sustainable-wage jobs are hard to come by, and that advancement can be difficult at first. The problems faced by this group, and by the slightly older Generation X, are often blamed on the Baby Boomers, the late-middle-aged people who are mostly in management positions above them. Although a generation gap is nothing new in the American workplace, the potential friction between up-and-coming Millennials, Generation Zers, and not-yet-ready-to-retire Baby Boomers is one that may have a direct and profound effect on relations in the workplace.<sup>9</sup> You will learn more about this topic in Chapter 14, which discusses issues of workplace diversity.

### more about. . .

**Baby Boomers** are the largest cohort of Americans living today. Those of the Baby Boomer generation were born during the years 1946 to 1964.

**Generation X** is the generation of Americans born between 1965 and 1980. “Gen X” is the generation that follows the Baby Boomers.

**Millennials** generally refers to Americans born between 1981 and 1996. Sometimes also called “Generation Y,” the term Millennials especially applies to the generation that follows Generation X.

**Generation Z**, or those born between the years 1997 and 2012, is the emergent generation of the next economy. Also thought of as the “Post-millennial generation,” Gen Z will navigate a vastly different business workplace than their Baby Boomer grandparents.

## Increased Competition in the Workplace

Competitiveness reaches into all geographic areas—urban, suburban, and rural—and affects all businesses, large and small. Small businesses may feel pressure to meet the high international standards of the foreign market and of the huge multinational companies that dominate the economy. When a chain retailer such as Walmart moves into a small town, the competition felt by local business owners is very real. Likewise, the increasing expectation among consumers that they should be able to get most of what they need online has created a source of major competition for both established and emerging businesses.

Secure, well-paid jobs are more competitive than ever before. Having a college degree is no longer a ticket to a meaningful career, as it was just a generation ago. This new reality causes a great deal of frustration for many people in the workplace, and many human relations problems can result.

Another important factor increasing competition is the continued economic strength of some of America’s global trading partners, especially China, which leverages an ever-increasing share of the world economy. For example, China—which is the world’s largest economy in 2020, with the United States the second largest—had an average annual growth rate of 9.69 percent from 1989 until 2017.<sup>10</sup> Contrast that with an average annual growth rate of less than 4 percent in United States during the same time period, and it becomes easier to understand American workers’ general anxiety about their role in an increasingly competitive “global workplace.” Other countries are also seen as emerging markets, including India and other nations around the world. Will all of them become large enough to become a strong competitor? Time will tell. Worldwide issues such as wars, widespread illness such as the global pandemic, new technology, trade wars, changing international trade agreements, and the global political landscape are among many of the factors that affect the global economy and the

global workplace.



#### **DIVORCE**

**Divorce often has a heavy impact on employees' lives.**

Aleksandr Davydov/Alamy Stock Photo

## **Family Work Dynamics Changing**

Most families or households now need income from more than one adult member to survive comfortably. With both adults in a family working, this can place a strain on the family and its members—a strain that can be felt in the workplace in a number of ways. For example, additional financial pressures at home can cause workplace stress. And the time needed for the everyday realities of child rearing—such as visits to the family doctor and transportation to and from school—can create difficulties for everyone involved.

Even with an increasing trend toward two-income households, two important factors have contributed to the existence of a higher number of single parents than was prevalent among the Baby Boomer or earlier generations: (1) a high divorce rate and (2) an increase in the number of never-married parents. The single parent must be the provider, taxi service, spiritual guide, and emotional support source. These many roles often result in a spillover effect of frustration and stress in the workplace. This type of