

15 Top Tips To Become A Better Team Player At Work



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Getting along with your co-workers is key to enjoying your work experience and fitting in with the office crowd. While you don't want to be an outsider, you may feel as though you are just not reaching your potential as a professional and wonder what the real issue is.

Being a better team player may be the answer you are looking for, as your ability to work well with other people in the office can not only improve your relationship with them but also help you perform better in your job.

Below, 15 members of [Forbes Coaches Council](#) provide their best advice for how any professional can become a better co-worker and team player at the office. Here's what they recommend:

1. Let Others Help You

One of the biggest pitfalls many achieving professionals fall into is a need to have all of the answers. Helping others is great. However, allowing others to help you is just as important. By opening up to your colleagues, you can be more authentic, more approachable and benefit from their wisdom. Even better: Those who help you get a positive dose of oxytocin that makes them feel great too.- [Erin Urban, UPPSolutions, LLC](#)

2. Focus On Shared Interests

Team members who balance long-term interests of key parties and setting a strategy for achieving this vision, while being aware of competing internal and external forces, will build credibility, reputation and personal power. We rely heavily on relationships to get things done. Focusing on shared interests

rather than individual positions harnesses our personal power to retain focus on the goal. - [Tracey Grove, Pure Symmetry Coaching and Consulting](#)

3. Listen Well

Sometimes we focus too much on what actions we should take rather than how we make people feel. One of the most powerful gifts we can give to another human being is to truly see them -- and the best way to do this is to listen to them. Listening, and the requisite patience to do it well, is becoming a lost art. If you listen well, the path to becoming a better co-worker and team player reveals itself. - [Jim Vaselopoulos, Rafti Advisors, Inc.](#)

4. Cultivate The Genius In Others

Most of us have been trained to focus on our success rather than to help others succeed. Yet this shift in mindset to focus outward is the skill that most leaders need to be better team players. If you spend your time cultivating the genius in others rather than needing to be the genius, people will naturally gravitate toward you because you will inspire and empower them to realize their potential. - [Carolina Caro, Carolina Caro](#)

5. Make Yourself A 'Reward'

According to neuroscience, when our brain signals rewards in front of us, we have positive emotions, so we listen, understand, collaborate, solve problems, etc. When we see dangers, we have negative emotions that tell us to stay away. So, make yourself a "reward" to your co-workers by treating everyone fairly and respectfully, relating to them, seeking them for ideas and offering them your values. - [Amy Nguyen, Happiness Infinity LLC](#)

6. Use Your 'Followership' Skills

The aptitudes and attitude needed to work in a team are often assumed to be within everyone's wheelhouse. But this is not so. Teams made of up of "alpha" types don't function well. Consider whether it is time for you to use your "followership" rather than "leadership" skills. - [David Smith, David Smith Career Coaching](#)

7. Lead With Best Intentions

Regardless of your role in the workplace, one thing that helps to enhance camaraderie, communication and collaboration is engaging with best intentions. This means looking at the whole self of the individual and all the

things they are bringing to the team. Engaging with best intentions helps enlighten gap areas and strengthen relationships, which is core to every company, relationship and the future. - [Kristy McCann, GoCoach](#)

8. Share Your Gifts

You have strengths and skills that come naturally. Share those gifts freely; what will take you five minutes to complete may save a fellow team member a whole day's worth of work and frustration. Nothing builds trust and connection like helping someone out of a challenging situation, especially when it is done freely and without expectation of repayment or owing anyone a favor. - [Tonya Echols, Thrive Coaching Solutions](#)

9. Volunteer To Do The Dirty Work

My sister ran a McDonald's as a manager. I worked there. First, she made me do all the bathroom cleaning, scrubbing the crevices of the floors with a toothbrush. She was hard. I didn't like her at first for making an example of me. But here's what I found out: She was teaching. To this day, I volunteer to do the dirty jobs. Teams, clients and co-workers seem to like me because I literally get my hands dirty. - [John M. O'Connor, Career Pro Inc.](#)

10. Spread Positivity

Positivity allows for creativity and innovation. Give energy rather than draining people's energy. See the opportunity, not the problem. Look for what's right, not what's wrong. Acknowledge people rather than gossiping. Stay away from judging things as good or bad, right or wrong -- simply acknowledge they are different and move forward. Smile and watch the smiles multiply. Be the light. - [Kimberly Roush, All-Star Executive Coaching](#)

11. Flex To Others' Work Styles

Don't assume that others work and interact the way you do. Rather, start by observing others. Do they prefer emails to calls? Do they want to chit-chat before meetings? Do they need to discuss something before making a decision? If your answers are different, consider flexing to their preferred work style. You will get more done, and people will be more drawn to work with you. - [Julie Kantor, PhD, JP Kantor Consulting](#)

12. Solicit Feedback From Colleagues

Employees might consider asking their peers for candid feedback on their strengths and weaknesses, as well as how they could become a better teammate. While these conversations may sometimes be more natural in a private setting, leaders could also incorporate them into team activities during company events to help build trust. - [Rick Gibbs, Insperity](#)

13. Find The Human Inside

Pay attention to what your colleagues tell you about their lives; these details are important to them and give you an insight into the human behind the job. You can then build conversations out of these snippets that show you really listen to them, which builds rapport and possibly even friendship. Colleagues who like each other help and support each other rather than just tolerating each other. - [Victoria Canham, Ahead Together Ltd](#)

14. Never Play The Blame Game

Games are fun, but the blame game never has a winner. If you aren't able to change the dynamic, perhaps it wasn't your place to comment. No good comes from throwing another co-worker under the bus. In a team environment, some people will fail to live up to commitments. Being a contributing and positive member of a team means finding productive ways to handle those interactions. - [Erica McCurdy, LunaNav, LLC](#)

15. Focus On Collaboration, Not Just Cooperation

Get into the habit of encouraging colleagues to ask "How can I help you?" at every opportunity. This single question builds goodwill, reciprocity, understanding and collaboration. Collaboration is significantly more powerful at generating positive results and outcomes than cooperation. - [Antonio Garrido, Absolute Sales Development](#)