

STAY COOL IN THE WORKPLACE

It can be a struggle, an art form and a challenge to effectively negotiate a way of living that has joy, purpose, and a satisfying career and home life. With the average worker spending more time with co-workers than with his/her own family, it becomes essential to learn the skills to get along. Often, our behavior makes the difference between a promotion and staying put.

Stay Cool Tips:

1. Many Japanese customs of politeness and saving face are based on the proximity factor of many people on little land and the need to get along. **Being pleasant** with those around you has a positive effect on others and will actually make you feel better. Imagine getting a big "good morning" and a smile from someone unexpected. Doesn't it change how you feel? Encourage others with your own optimistic attitude.
2. Many people work in teams. Let go of negative thoughts you may have about your team mates. Do your best to do your part of a project even if others may not. Perhaps they are not as skilled as you or may be stressed. In what ways can you **engage others** to lighten the load (or lighten up)?
3. In these economic times, you may be experiencing a lot of "turf protection" behavior. Still, it's best to get to know everyone without falling into gossiping cliques. If you can appreciate that people behave badly when gripped by fear and remember a time when you were not exactly proud of your own behavior, you will be able to **communicate with compassion**.
4. Make a **careful assessment** of office politics. Think of it as an iceberg: you are only seeing 10% of game. The rest is under the surface and the dive is deep. Getting involved can have negative consequences for you.
5. **Thoughtfulness** is a really big plus. How many times a day do you interrupt your boss or coworkers to the point of compromising his/her productivity? If you appreciate thoughtfulness in others, return the favor by not interrupting.
6. **Compliment others** on a job well-done when they come up with good ideas or when they take the initiative or just do good work. You might just make their day!
7. Lastly, don't throw your colleague or co-worker under the bus. This is very bad form and it won't save you by making others look bad. It's not appropriate to point out their mistakes, especially in front of others. If there is a problem, it should be handled as **constructive feedback** and it should be private. Let's inject some love and a sense of well-being out there. People are working hard to make a living. Make believe, the person next to you at work is your younger brother or sister or an older parent. How would you treat them?