



Relationship Re-tooling

He's sitting across the table from you. You are cordial. You smile and nod, showing support on the outside. On the inside, you are dreading working with this person. You have figured out how to *get along to go along* because you "**have to**". Yet you know the results could vastly improve **if only** you could figure out a different way to work together.

Often triggered by some small transgression or misunderstanding, our perception of another becomes clouded by the assumptions, interpretations and attributions we place on them over time. This thought process is often outside of our awareness. And it happens so fast, we don't realize that when we look at, think about, or interact with them, our perception is encumbered. In the meantime, the "other" is very likely going through a similar process. Now, all of this "stuff" blocks each other's ability to be "real" while working together.

We can't really harness the full impact of true collaborative relationships unless we understand how our own thoughts can get in the way. When relationships start to breakdown, the thin line of trust keeps getting tripped, taking us further and further away from effective collaboration. Understanding these micro-transgressions and the impact on our relationships is key. Understanding how our thought processes contribute to the conundrum is key. Sorting through the situation so that you can see your part, the other's part, and what goes on together is vital.

Relationship Re-tooling is a process to help you and another key business colleague, or perhaps a whole team, revitalize an effective working relationship in support of your results. Here's how it works:

- We privately meet with each person involved (i.e., two people, each team members) to understand the situation.
- As needed, we privately meet with each person a second time to start raising awareness of these attributions and potential transgressions. This fosters ownership for each person's part of the story.
- Then we bring everyone together for facilitated discussions. The number of sessions is dependant upon the situation. We are always working toward the goal of productive resolution to retool the relationship for optimal performance. Usually, new awareness and understanding sets new possibilities into motion about ways to work together, new goals, and new directions for collaboration.
- In closure, we meet together as a group or again individually to discuss lessons learned and to chart a path to reinforce new behaviors and skills that will enhance the relationship and ultimately, stronger results.

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