



Stanford eCorner

Treat Everyone with Respect

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1641/Treat-Everyone-with-Respect>

An important lesson that Greg learned during his extensive career was to treat everyone with respect. He states that the business world is in fact a small world, and one is likely to interact with the same people many times. It is very important to be respectful of those senior and junior to you.



Transcript

One of the things that I've noticed is that the people that you deal with on your way up the chain of command are very, very important to you in the long run. I've made a special effort over the course of my career to reach out to younger people, more junior people, to treat them with respect. I can't tell you how many times I've been in a business meeting where there's the senior person, the mid-level person and the junior person who's supposed to be taking the notes. The mistake that a lot of people make in meetings, they look just to the senior person; they completely ignore the other two and they especially ignore the junior person. That's a mistake. Make eye contact with that person just like you do with the senior person. Shake that person's hand with the same vigor and sincerity that you shake the senior person's hand. Then if that person ever calls you up and wants some advice, take the time to give them the advice because you never know where that person is going to end up. They may in turn do a favor for somebody else who ends up having a great career and you have been indirectly responsible for that person. There was a person who ran the details and logistics of my first road show at 3Dfx when we took the company public.

This was the most junior of the bankers and their role really is sort of the logistics of the road. We're on the road for three weeks, Japan, Europe, the US, meeting with a lot of potential investors and he's the guy who's up early in the morning making sure that the limousine is there to pick us up. He's the guy who's making sure that all of the meetings have been setup, changing the schedule when it needs to be changed. We had the presentation already. He's the person who picks up the check at night; the most important task. He's the person who when all of us are asleep and sleeping is worrying about the next day. I spent a lot of time with this person. I think I treated him with a lot of respect. We spent some time in Paris together at museums and I treated him as if he was an equal member of the team which he was. I think that's probably an unusual experience for him.

It was only six months later when I was talking to somebody else that I discovered that that person had a trust fund of \$250 million, didn't need to be on that trip at all actually. In fact, had never submitted the expenses for that trip because he called them the small things in life. But today, he's running one of the largest funds that invest in venture capital funds in the world. I've had occasion now to talk to him, not directly but things that affect my career, but venture capital friends of mine who have asked me for a favor to be a reference for them to him and because of the credibility that I developed in my relationship with him, that's a conversation that not only comes well but I think has a fair amount of credibility in it.