

VIEWPOINT

# Now, more than ever, we need to C.A.R.E.



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**C**A.R.E.: Communicate, Appreciate, Respect, Encourage.

I urge you to open your heart, your mind, your eyes and your ears. What you are about to read can make a huge difference in your life and the lives of the people you work for, and work with, every day.

Why is it that most people seem to CARE more about the way they look, the way they feel, and what they have, but do not seem to actually CARE about other people? Could it have something to do with the economy? Or the fact that inflation fears are running rampant? We keep hearing that the economy is getting better, but times are tough and we can see the stress, frustration, anxiety and even anger, in the people we interact with.

I recently heard some comments like, "If you can't control it, you can't worry about it," and "You can only control two things, your attitude and your behavior." These are both true statements, but how can we not worry about our problems, and what can we do? Let's focus on helping others, being of service and making a real difference in these tough times.

Yes, now is the time to try something different and make a change. We must start to give, share and CARE, focus on helping others, turn the "me" into "we" and make a difference.

You may be saying, what about me and my family? Well here is the harsh truth and the real answer to the initial question of this article; we as a society have

become more selfish and self-absorbed.

We can't help it, it is our nature (and we are taught) to look out for No. 1. We can always find something or someone to blame, but the fact is we are responsible.

The following are some suggestions to implement CARE at work and at home:

**Communicate and connect:** With technology today, we are communicating but not connecting. Texting, Twitter and Facebook are all great, but let's try and spend more time actually talking to people, face-to-face. The best way to connect is to LISTEN. Learn to listen, listen to learn.

**Appreciate:** Appreciation and praise cost nothing to give, but the benefits to morale are priceless. You bring out the best in others with appreciation and encouragement.

**Respect:** Be nice to everyone and treat everyone with respect. If you want respect, you need to show respect.

**Encourage:** Always encourage others. Take a minute to talk — or, better yet, listen — to your co-workers or family members. It will make a difference.

**Acknowledge good:** Look for the good in people and acknowledge it. Focus on accomplishments, not mistakes. Ken Blanchard said it best in "The One-Minute Manager": Catch them doing something right!

**Be optimistic — stay positive:** Focus on the solution, not the problem. It will get better. Think positive thoughts and good things will happen.

**Be grateful:** Be thankful you have a job. Look at it like you GET to go to work, not that you HAVE to. Make a list of the things you are grateful for.

**Be humble:** "Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less." Try to think of the other person first.

**Positive attitude:** Attitude is everything! Your attitude toward life, people and your job will have a profound effect on what happens every day.

**Don't criticize, condemn or complain:** It is a waste of time and energy and

does no good for anyone. Great advice from Dale Carnegie.

**Keep an open mind:** Be open to others' suggestions. Your mind is like a parachute; it works better when it's OPEN.

**Always be an example:** People watch you. You can have a huge influence on your co-workers and family members. Smile, laugh, have fun. Choose to make it a good day, have a sense of humor and a positive "can-do" attitude.

**Say "thank you":** Two small words that mean so much. Express gratitude.

**Practice:** All of the suggestions listed above are easier said than done. Try to implement them and practice them on a daily basis. Work on one or two a week. Share them with your family and co-workers and open up the dialogue for discussion.

I have seen and heard this quote hundreds of times and it never gets old. The great Harvey Mackay and John Maxwell use it all the time: "People don't CARE how much you know, until they know how much you CARE."

Is this going to be easy? No, it's not, but to ease the implementation process, I suggest everyone read the classic book "How to Win Friends and Influence People" by Dale Carnegie.

If put into practice, this can and will have a positive impact on your life and your work. Because a happy workplace is a more productive workplace, and a more productive workplace usually translates to more profits and a better working environment.

CARE is not a definition or a destination; it is an opportunity and an obligation. We all need to make a living, but we can CHOOSE to make a difference. Let's start today, by showing people that we CARE. We need to, now, more than ever. Let's do it!

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