TOP 10 LIST OF DIFFERENCES IN RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Communication Styles.

All people do not communicate in the same fashion. There are many inventories available to identify differing styles. Once you understand a person's style, this knowledge can lead to respect not conflict.

2. Non-Verbal Communication.

All forms of communication must be considered. This form of communication is more covert, but not any less important. Non-verbal communication includes; body language, and tone. Non-verbal communication may differ from the verbal. With this additional understanding of what is really being communicated more effective collaboration is possible.

3. Learning Styles.

People learn in different ways. When this concept is in the forefront of understanding then communications can be geared to various styles and will meet with greater success.

4. Differing Values.

This concept can be a little tricky. While values need to be identified and respected, there are times when conflicting values can be so different that they cannot coexist on the same team. When mutually exclusive values are encountered, collaboration is not recommended.

5. Boundaries.

We all have different space needs and boundary needs (boundaries are the limits you place on the behavior of others around you). The first step is to be aware of peoples' boundaries and then to use this understanding to approach them respectfully. This new behavior often avoids conflict and strengthens relationships.

6. The Self.

Self-respect is a vital and primary building block that supports the formation of relationships. By being aware of your own needs and styles you create a healthy foundation and the ensuing relationships are more solid.

The remaining categories are variations on the theme of Cultural Differences. The need to understand, respect, and integrate diversity is a must in today's market.

7. Company Culture.

Seasoned employees have come from different companies and each company has a culture. This must be identified and respected in order to insure successful integration into the current company. This concept is especially pertinent to mergers and acquisitions.

8. Culture of the Country.

Employees often come from different countries, each with a different culture. In order to successfully integrate multicultural differences, these differences must be understood, articulated, and respected. [link to diagram on culture]

9. Family Cultures.

The influence of our backgrounds is great. Often we ignore these differences because they "do not belong in the workplace". However the reality is that people cannot keep who they are out of the work environment. The key here is to recognize when the source of the conflict is based on someone's family/personal issues. This allows you to choose not to engage in a battle that is based on their family history.

10. Individual vs Team.

Balancing the individuals' needs with team needs is always an interesting dilemma. However, if this healthy balance is not reached, problems are certain to follow. Taking the time to identify and then address both individual and team dynamics are at the core of this balancing act. Business success is directly related to getting this right.