



## **R-E-S-P-E-C-T**

by **Steven D Huff**

Over thirty years ago, Aretha Franklin topped the music charts as she sang about "R-E-S-P-E-C-T." Rodney Dangerfield built his comedy career telling us how he "gets no respect." Everyone you deal with professionally expects to be treated with respect. And you are no different.

If you want others to respect you, you must show respect for them. For the next 20 days, approach everyone you meet, regardless of his station in life, as if he or she was the most important person in the world. Everyone wants to feel that he counts for something and is important to someone. Invariably, people will give their love, respect, and attention to the person who fills that need.

Showing respect essentially means treating people as if they were valuable. You cannot really show respect to people unless you value them. Here are a few suggestions for showing respect:

- **Welcome Their Ideas and Input** - Airline executive Herb Kelleher reminds us, "Amazing things happen when you make people feel they are valued as individuals, when you dignify their suggestions and their ideas, when you show respect for them by allowing them to exercise their own wisdom, judgment and discretion."
- **Be Genuine With People** - Monte Clark, former coach of the Detroit Lions, once joked, "The key to this whole business is sincerity. Once you can fake that, you've got it made." In truth, everyone you deal with is using his or her built in "hypocrisy detector." We all have an instinct for whether people are being genuine or not. One of the surest ways to disrespect someone is to be less than honest. Insincerity is a cancer to relationships. Always shoot straight!
- **Leave Room For Mistakes** - Allowing for mistakes not only shows people that they are valued but creates a corporate culture where people will really step out to make things happen. Bill Gates, Microsoft CEO, puts it this way: "How a company deals with mistakes suggests how well it will bring out the best ideas and talents of its people. When workers know that mistakes won't lead to retribution, it creates an atmosphere in which people are willing to come up with ideas and suggest changes."
- **Let People Know Where They Stand** - Some people like to sugar-coat problems. Using tact is important but make sure you tell people the truth about their situation even if the news is bad. Telling the painful truth in a straightforward way will be less destructive and shows greater respect than leaving people in the dark. People have the greatest opportunity to learn and grow when they see their situation clearly.

Excellence in business means recognizing that your most important asset is the people you work with and deal with. Do you want to bring out the best in your customers, co-workers and vendors? Treat them as people of value. Show respect!