

Being Approachable – Train the Trainer



WHAT DOES APPROACHABLE MEAN?

Approachability is measured by how you convey yourself to others in terms of body language, response and appearance.

At the workplace, if colleagues deem you unfriendly, stuck up, and difficult to talk to, you are seen as unapproachable.

TIPS TO BE MORE APPROACHABLE – ATTITUDE, BEHAVIOR, BODY LANGUAGE AND WORDS

1. Smile. A friendly facial expression can be inviting to people. Maintain a warm but natural smile when you are walking around the office or at a work event. When you make eye contact with someone, acknowledge them by smiling bigger.
2. Make eye contact. You can also encourage people to approach you through eye contact. Maintain eye contact when you greet someone and during conversations. If you are at a conference or an event, make eye contact and smile at strangers if they look in your direction.
3. Angle toward people. When talking to someone, angle your body toward them to show your interest in the conversation. Focus on turning your feet and legs toward the person, and your body will follow. Do this whether you are sitting or standing.
4. Look up. Keep your head and eyes up when walking around the office or events. When you look up and ahead, it is easier to make eye contact with and greet people. Many people read your face to determine your approachability.
5. Avoid fidgeting. Nervous habits can make you look anxious. Avoid fidgeting with things like your pen, keys or hair or doing something you might not be aware of. When interacting with people, focus on keeping your hands at your sides or in your lap or using them to gesture rather than fidget during conversations.
6. Mirror people. Mirroring or mimicking another person's body language can make both you and that individual feel more comfortable. You might nod, smile or shift your position slightly when the person you are talking to does the same.
7. Be positive. Positivity attracts people, whether you show it in your words or your body language and energy. When passing someone at work, make a positive remark or give a compliment to let them know you are friendly and open to interaction.
8. Ignore your phone. If you are looking at your phone, people might think you are busy. They might not interact with you because they do not want to interrupt. Your phone can also distract you from making eye contact, connections and conversations with the people around you.
9. Have an open posture. Practice an open posture by:

- Sitting up straight with your shoulders back
- Leaning toward the speaker slightly during conversations
- Placing your hands at your sides rather than in your pockets or across your chest

Practice having an open posture during meetings, in social situations and when someone enters your office. This body language is inviting and shows you are interested in the other person.

10. Show interest. Take an interest in what other people say or the things they enjoy doing. Ask about their hobbies or what they did over the weekend to encourage them to open up to you. Show your interest by listening carefully to what others say and asking follow-up questions.
11. Start conversations. Rather than waiting for someone to start a conversation with you at work or a conference, make the first move. Make eye contact to engage with people and put your hand out for a handshake.
12. Keep your face and body visible. People feel comfortable when they can see your eyes and facial expression. Avoid wearing things that block your face in professional settings, such as sunglasses, hats or large scarves.
13. Dress professionally. Your appearance can have a positive first impression on others. Practice good hygiene and dress appropriately (professionally but not overdressed for the situation) so people want to be near you.
14. Make room for people. If you are talking with a group, provide room for others to join. Keep the circle open and inviting by putting space between you and your peers or coworkers.

TAKEAWAY

Being approachable can work in your favor, as your colleagues or employees will be able to communicate more openly with you, which will help you create a good working environment and increase your overall business productivity.