People Skills

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Macmillan Modern Office

Series Editor: Christine Simons

PEOPLE SKILLS
Building Business
Relationships

Vera Hughes

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MACMILLAN

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Introduction

Is this book for you?

Do you have to deal with people at work? Are you starting out in working life? Are you part of a team or a team leader? Would you prefer to work in a positive rather than a negative atmosphere?

If you want to build and improve your business relationships, this book is for you.

What will you learn from this book?

This book will help you to deal with all sorts of people in the work environment and to make sure you tackle each situation in the right way.

You will learn how to listen to people, how to respond and how to get the best out of the most difficult situations, on the telephone and face-to-face. Many of the exercises or practice sessions will cover Elements, or in some cases entire Units, in your NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) competences.

There are no set rules about how to deal with people, because people are people, and each person is different, but there are guidelines and suggestions you can use. Occasional self-assessment exercises encourage you to analyse how you think and behave, and how this affects the people you work with.

How does it work?

It works in two ways. You can work through it from beginning to end to help you build your business relationships in the different situations you are likely to find yourself in.

You can use it to help you deal with specific situations – 'How to say

no' for example, or when you have to delegate a task to someone else.

Like the other two books in this series *English Language Skills* and *Self Presentation Skills*, use it in the way most suitable for you.

At the beginning of each chapter you will find a list of the main points covered – these are a repeat of the points in the Contents table, which you can use to look for general headings. If you want to study a very specific situation which you cannot find in the Contents table (Open Learning, for example) look in the Index.

Each chapter has exercises to do as you work through it, or a practice session at the end, or sometimes both. Each chapter also has a checklist of points to remember.

Situations covered in the book

Chapter 1 is a very general chapter about people and what makes them tick. It introduces the idea of external customers (people you deal with outside your company or organisation) and internal customers (the people you work with). Read this chapter as a basis for the rest of the book. The external/internal theme is used all the way through.

The next two chapters concentrate on the development of your own skills in listening, responding, questioning, greeting, parting and using positive body language – all skills you will need as you cope with various people situations. These are followed by four chapters on the different tricky situations you might come across.

Chapters 8 and 9 concentrate on your skills in working with people as part of a team or through other people if you are a team leader – even if your team is only two people, you and one other. This self-improvement theme is carried through into a chapter on how to get the best out of development opportunities such as appraisals, assessments, self-study, training courses and work experience.

The last two chapters are about opportunities for giving quality service in your job, whatever it is. They encourage you to think creatively, to avoid getting stuck in a rut and to put your ideas into practice without upsetting other people.

You spend a large part of your life at work. This book will help you develop your people skills; it will help you build the business relationships which often make all the difference between work which you passively accept and work which you actively enjoy.