



Avoid Criticizing Others

If there is someone in your life that causes you stress or, perhaps, an employee at work that is not performing at the level they should be, you can influence this person's behavior better if you do not criticize them too harshly. Begin by praising them for what they do well. Show an honest appreciation for the work they do that is satisfactory. They will be more likely to listen to the correction if you begin by making them feel valuable. Also, try talking about your own mistakes before you discuss issues you have with them. They will be able to relate to you better and will be more likely to listen to what you have to say.

Here is an example taken from Dale Carnegie's book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People* that demonstrates this principle. Here's a fable about the sun and the wind. They quarreled about which was the stronger, and the wind said, "I'll prove I am. See that old man down there with a coat? I bet I can make him take his coat off faster than you can." So the sun went behind a cloud and the wind blew until it was almost a tornado, but the harder it blew the tighter the old man wrapped his coat about him. Finally, the wind calmed down and gave up. The sun came out from behind the cloud and smiled kindly on the old man. He mopped his brow and pulled off his coat. The sun then told the wind, "gentleness and friendliness were always stronger than fury and force." Friendliness and appreciation can make people change their minds more readily than coming at them with strong criticism and judgement.

Source:

Anthony, R. (n.d.). How to Win Friends and Influence People. Retrieved April 16, 2015, from <http://ecclesia.org/truth/friends.html>

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