

PEOPLE SKILLS

If you were going to create a list of skills that people need to develop in order to connect and get along well with people, what would be on your list?

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Now take a minute to look over the list your group created. How many of these skills do you have? Does everyone in your group have to have all these people skills in order for us to get along well with each other? I hope not! **We each pull out of our relationship toolbox the tools and gifts that God has blessed us with.** Some people are good at initiating conversations. Some people are good at facilitating and including others in conversations. Some people are good talkers. Some people are good listeners. Some people are good at making others laugh. Some people are good at telling stories. Some people love to hear good stories. Some people know how to keep things light. Some people know how to talk about things that really matter. Some people are good at making time for you and being there for you when you're going through tough times. Some people just know when you need some space and some time alone. Some people are good at dealing with conflict. Some people know how and when to share their faith with others. Some people are good at encouraging and supporting others. Some people are full of grace and mercy. Some people look out for those who are neglected and mistreated. Some people know how to say the right thing at the right time. Some people know how to be supportive and loyal to others without saying a word. Some people are good at helping and serving others. Some people are good at leading people, while others are good at following leaders.

But let's not assume that just because we all have people skills, that we all have **good** people skills. We could also create a long list of bad people skills without even giving it much thought. But we won't go there today. Instead, **let's talk about the process of developing good people skills.**

- **Do people naturally have good people skills?**
- **Do you have to be taught good people skills?**
- **Do you pick up the good and bad people skills of those around you?**
- **What are the contexts and places where people grow good people skills?**
- **Do you have to be in new situations around different people groups in order to get good at relating to a variety of people?**
- **Who do you know that has good people skills? What do you hope to learn from them?**
- **Are you open to giving and receiving feedback with one another so we can improve our ability as a group to get along with one another?**

Our overall satisfaction with a job, friendship, church, marriage, or family may be directly related to the quality of relationships we have with one another. Most people will put up with a lot of daily challenges if they know they are with people who know, love, and care for them. But that takes time and a willingness to work at developing our people skills and relationships. It's much easier to alienate people and build walls than it is to build meaningful relationships. We can only get better at loving one another as we allow ourselves to be known and loved. We have the opportunity to live in community, to speak the truth in love, and give each other our best. We can also be a community that is gracious when we are having a bad day. **Let's see how good we can get at relating with one another.**

"Health Talks" are designed to help us learn to talk and deal with one another in ways that build understanding and a healthy, growing, supportive, Christian community.