

TIME TIPS



How To *Get Cooperation from Other Departments*

- Other departments may appear to slow you down. In dealing with them, begin with an assumption that they are as competent as you are. Everyone is doing his or her best, and everyone is busy. Remember that ultimately, you're all on the same team. Your positive attitude will get better results than antagonism. Treat them as you would like to be treated.
- Handle your special requests of other departments as you would handle a task that you would delegate:
 1. Clarify the task to be done and the standards to be met.
 2. Establish a timetable.
 3. Ask if there is anything else that the person needs to complete the task.
 4. Confirm the commitment that they made (don't make it for them).
- If others let you down; be careful not to react with one of two opposite emotions; aggression and passivity. Aggression is fighting back, yelling, name calling, threatening to go to a higher authority, becoming impatient and being forceful. Passivity is giving in, ignoring an issue, procrastinating, apologizing or running away.
- Be assertive instead. Use the person's name. Say please and thank you. Ask, don't tell.
- Be straightforward with your request. "Our department needs this delivered to us by tomorrow." Adding an explanation helps to validate the request. Then ask if there's anything else they need, or anything you can do to help the process. Clarify the agreement made.
- If the person objects, repeat the request, stating it slightly differently each time. "Jillian, I'd like to get a copy of that report by tomorrow." She answers that she's too busy. "I can understand how you've got a big workload. (Avoid the dreaded "but") I do need the report finished by tomorrow so can we find a way to complete it somehow?"
- Ask "Would it be helpful if I..." Sometimes they can do a better job if you help first. Your offer also displays genuine empathy.

- Use the phrase, "What would have to happen..." For instance, "I understand most of the staff have left for the day, but what would have to happen for this to be finished by tomorrow morning?" Sometimes the person might suggest a solution that you can help achieve: "Well I'd have to send it over in a taxi and we're not allowed to do that." Maybe they can't authorize a taxi, but you can.
- Don't appeal to a higher authority. If you say "I need this done, and I can get my boss to speed things up if I have to," you may not be successful. Instead, build a relationship. Take an interest in things that are important to them.
- If problems persist, keep a log of transactions. Include the date you sent something to another department and the date you got it back. Use this to support process improvement, not to blame someone.
- Create routines for standard requests from other departments that are repeated. For instance, automate your expense report. This isn't bureaucracy, it's efficiency.
- On the other hand, remove routines that were created for occasional exceptions that no longer occur. Old routines may be slowing other departments down.
- Ask what the holdups are. Convene a meeting to outline your concerns. The other department might identify blocks that can be removed.