

# DO PEOPLE LIKE YOU?

BY JANICE HURLEY-TRAILOR

Part of your overall image is your likability factor. Studies show there are four different elements that contribute to likability. They contribute to your social style and therefore affect how well people think of you. The four universal social gifts are: Appreciation, Connection, Elevation, and Enlightenment. Your likability score goes way up when your conversations have just the right balance from each of these categories and not too much of any one.

## APPRECIATION

We know EVERYONE likes to feel appreciated and affirmed. You show people you appreciate them when you tell them you understand and respect them for their positive qualities. Mention qualities like thoughtfulness, intelligence, humor, and caring. To have your appreciation register, you must be specific and sincere. Comments about external elements such as a person's hair or car are not acknowledgement of character or value as a human being and can sometimes come off as contrived or insincere.

## CONNECTION

Connection is about finding out what you have in common with the other person. It can be a mutual friend, a common hobby, having attended the same school, or having children of the same age. It can be as simple as pointing out shared similar attitudes. It can be as easy as saying "I feel the same way" or "I noticed the same thing." This would be considered a safe connection because it is your response to their information, not your forcing the subject.

Don't be confused. This is very different than your talking about your personal life at work to the captive audience in your chair. This is about your genuine response to a subject your patient or co-worker brought up first. By the same token, a negative reaction that is contrary to their belief or experience will create a disconnect between the two of you.

## ELEVATION

Be in a good mood. We're all drawn towards people who are in good spirits, who look on the bright side of things, and who can appreciate or tell a good joke. It doesn't mean you have to be a comedian; it just means people like to be around those who have a smile on their face and one in their heart.

As a dental consultant, I deal with team morale on a regular basis. One of the most common problems is the lack of respect staff members have for a doctor who comes to work in a bad mood. It is not unusual at all for the doctor to have NO idea they are seen as moody.

## ENLIGHTENMENT

We all like to learn new things—current events, interesting facts, ideas, even trivia. "Did you know 44% of Americans no longer have a home phone; they just use their cellular phone?" That's trivia.



You want your conversations with others to include a good balance of information. When you get a healthy balance of all four social gifts, it's charismatic. Charisma or likability in the workplace is a wonderful tool for success.



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