



Building Bridges

A publication by Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Career Services Office
Especially for Employers!

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You need to be aware of what others are doing, applaud their efforts, acknowledge their successes, and encourage them in their pursuits. When we all help one another, everybody wins.

-Jim Stovall

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What's Behind the Pepperdine Brand? Why Pepperdine Graduates Make a Difference

By: Yas Djadali, Assistant Director of Career Services

In today's competitive job market, what makes some candidates stand out over others? Specifically, what is so unique about the Pepperdine brand?

Having worked at a number of universities, public and private, large and small, I have had the opportunity to both witness and experience the important role that an educational institution plays in cultivating talent and preparing our future leaders. At Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education and Psychology (GSEP), our brand represents quality and substance. Committing to such high standards is an intentional and ongoing process, which our administration, faculty, and staff create through the following:

An Integrated Scholar-Practitioner Model

At GSEP, we adhere to a scholar-practitioner model, where theory is put into practice, whether through student teaching, clinical work, administrative/organizational leadership, or social change initiatives. Furthermore, students develop "action research projects" where they initiate and launch new programs at their place of employment, as well as community resources in settings where they see a clear need and opportunity to contribute.

A Mission-Driven Program

Pepperdine's mission to "strengthen lives of purpose, service, and leadership" is evident in both the classroom, as well as the co-curricular programming. From the "Social Change Symposium" to the "Urban Initiative" and the "Women Leading Change" student group, we are cultivating change agents in our community, who not only commit to making a difference in the lives of individuals, but to making a sustainable impact on society. In other words, our students place meaning behind the mission that our University sets forth.

Strong Faculty Mentoring

I am consistently amazed at the amount of time and attention our faculty members provide our students and alumni - far beyond what's "required" of the job. Having established successful careers themselves, they are truly committed to helping our students do the same. From understanding course content, to reflecting on their student teaching, clinical training, or administrative/organizational leadership experience, our faculty ensure that both learning and application are taking place and that each student has the guidance and support needed to create success. Studies consistently show the far-reaching impact of quality mentoring on an individual's career development, and Pepperdine's faculty members are those mentors to our students.

Hiring Quality and Substance

Through our work in Career Services, we have the opportunity to witness the Pepperdine brand through our students, and to hear the success that this brand promises from our employers. So, what's behind the Pepperdine brand? Everything.

Visibility through Volunteering

By: Brian Tyler

What are the benefits of creating a volunteer culture at your organization?

Employees' volunteer experience is held in high regard by organizations; likewise, encouraging continuing volunteer work amongst employees can be a strengthening component to all organizations. Often times, recent graduates have limited relevant experiences even within their proclaimed areas of study. It's sometimes risky hiring such candidates, although pay-offs such as training fresh and motivated people and developing a diverse but cohesive team can be beneficial in the long-term. Organizations often base their employee selection on the perceived character of the individual, based on both their work-ethic (as reflected by their grades) and other values, as reflected through such experiences as volunteer organizations or projects to which they have contributed.

First, volunteering, as is often stated, is good for the soul. Individuals often report how "good it feels" to be involved in volunteer work, regardless of type. This can improve an employee's sense of self and purpose, and such a mood can greatly improve productivity in other areas – including their work!

Additionally, volunteering as a group, such as when an organization arranges for employees to participate together, can be a very effective means of building team cohesiveness. Go-karts and the occasional dinner outing can be fun, but banding together to build a house with Habitat for Humanity or spending time at a soup kitchen can be an even more fulfilling experience. Employees often report an increased sense of camaraderie, in addition to personal growth, when they participate in such activities.

Organizations and leaders can further reflect their values to both employees and the community when they donate their time and people-power to improving their local neighborhood. It also offers an opportunity to showcase their goodwill and market themselves to potential employees, clients, and partners. Spending a day or encouraging employees to donate their time in volunteer work is a lot cheaper than sending out a bunch of pamphlets and marketing brochures, and it improves the lives of others.

While it may cost some time and productivity, in the long-term it is worth it – for employees' well-being, team development, and even marketing – to make volunteering an active and expected part of organizations.



**There are few, if any, jobs in which ability alone is sufficient.
Needed, also, are loyalty, sincerity, enthusiasm and team play.
-William B. Given, Jr.**

Being a Good Mentor: The Unspoken Rules

By: Sadaf Mayet, Manager of Career Services

Young and impressionable future professionals join the workforce every day. These eager, bright minds are hungry for encouragement, guidance and wisdom. They seek an experienced and seasoned professional in the field to take them under their wings and show them the ropes—in other words, mentor them.

What many supervisors do not realize is that whether they willingly sign up for the job or not, they have a tremendous influence on budding professionals. Being in a position of power and authority automatically places a supervisor in the category of role model. The supervisor is constantly analyzed and scrutinized, and how he conducts himself is an essential element for teaching values and ethics. Along with knowledge of the job function, the following skills and attributes are of utmost importance in a supervisory relationship and can also make a supervisor a strong mentor:

- **Communication:** A supervisor should be able to connect with each one of his employees. He should be able to clearly communicate his expectations, set appropriate boundaries and handle conflict in a fair manner. That being said, a supervisor should also be able to listen to his employees non-defensively. This open method of communication enhances the mentor's approachability and contributes to the positive experience of the mentee.
- **Responsibility and Reliability:** The actions and attitude of a mentor should always provide a good example for mentees. Getting to work on time, following-up on tasks, meeting deadlines and being available for questions and concerns are just a few of the things mentors should always be mindful of.
- **Presentation:** A professional and polished appearance often reflects how you feel about your job. Dress and demeanor convey that you take your position seriously and that you are ready to work. Most importantly, it models to new professionals confidence and respect for the field.
- **Morale:** If you are happy and satisfied with your career, the feeling is infectious. It will keep your mentees motivated and inspired. Practice self-care, acknowledge hard work and be positive!

Resolving Workplace Conflict

By: Mia Pierson

Conflicts in the workplace are one of those things that are inevitable. No matter how hard we try, conflict is something hard to avoid. But what most don't realize is that often times conflict in the workplace stems from things that are unsaid rather than things that are said. Here are a few tips to remember when conflict arises:

- Handle conflict sooner than later.
Many will not address the issue in hopes that it will blow over. Often times it may not, and the tension will continue to build; which is not healthy for either parties nor the company.
- Ask.
In early stages of conflict, one of the most effective ways to resolve it is to simply ask the other party why he or she did XYZ. For example, in a nice tone one can say, "Hey, I noticed you do X; I was wondering why that is?"

If the conflict has been going on for an extensive period of time, here are a few suggestions:

- Set up a meeting.
Ask the other party if he or she could meet with you in a conference room or in a private office setting. It is better to meet in these types of settings than a hurried phone call or email.

(continued on page 4)

A Team that Plays Together Stays Together: Importance of Staff Cohesion & Ideas for Team-Development

By: Darren Binkley

Great team dynamics do not arise out of the blue, but are developed and strengthened just like any healthy relationship. But why is having good team dynamics important in the workplace? Is it not enough to simply have employees who show up and go about their work efficiently? The answer is, it may be enough for some workplaces, but a highly effective and fun workplace will almost always have amazing teamwork. And this type of environment does not happen by accident.

Team development can integrate and utilize employees' very different personalities and talents to make a highly dynamic and enjoyable workplace. One of the first steps in team building is establishing a compilation of team values and norms that each team member will adhere to. This may be things such as: friendliness, honesty, communication, dependability, immediate feedback, and humor. Once norms like these are established, the door opens for other activities that promote team development.

One idea is to have each individual team member learn about his/her personal view of the world and in turn explore the view of others. Assessments like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) can help each team member understand themselves better, along with gaining an understanding of each other.

Another great activity to promote team cohesion and develop better teamwork is the Gallup Organization's Strengths Finder. Through this activity, employees and managers can learn their natural talents and strengths. Not only will this help them nurture and further develop their own strengths, but it will give the team a good idea of where others excel. Knowing this can help distribute workloads and make the work environment much more fluid.

As you can see, having a close-knit team is important if you want to take your company or department to the next level. The work environment will not only become more productive and dynamic, but most importantly it will increase the opportunities for an enjoyable and fun milieu!

Resolving Workplace Conflict (continued from page 3)

By: Mia Pierson

- Inform the other party of your observations.
In a polite manner explain some of the things you have noticed. For example, "Hey John, I have noticed that when we are in meetings, we become very critical of one another's ideas. Do you notice that?" This allows the other person to express what he/she notices.
- Apologize for your part.
It is a true show of character when people can apologize for the wrong they have done in a situation. It is not always about blaming the other person, but also taking responsibility for your own part in the conflict.
- Show appreciation to the other person and explain why it is important to solve this conflict.
This shows them you are not out to pick a fight and you do value their contribution to the company.
- What next?
Come up with actions that both parties agree on to minimize future conflict.

Conflict is not something to dread and it does not have to ruin lives. When the right steps are taken, it can easily be diffused and the work environment can be a much healthier place for all employees.

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PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
— CAREER SERVICES —

Comments, questions, or concerns?
We'd love to hear from you!

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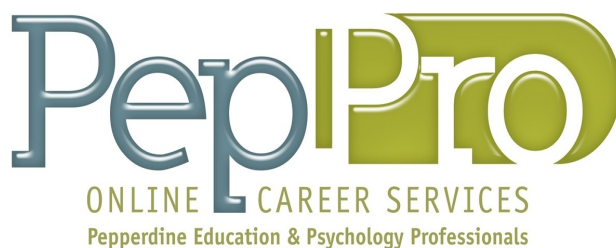
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