

Criticizing or Negating Ideas Can Destroy Relationships

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People need to feel they're being heard and their opinions are being honored. When ideas are discredited, it crushes feelings of capability and creates bad connections. No one likes having their ideas invalidated. Criticizing or negating ideas can be deadly because it violates a person's need for respect. Think in terms of honoring both egos and ideas. For instance, "That's a really dumb idea!" gets personal; a face-saving alternative that avoids personal attacks would be, "That idea would cost an extra \$50,000 which isn't in our budget." This focuses the issue on dollars, not egos.

Resistance sets up polarities-the more you resist, the more others push back and hold firm in their positions. Likewise, the greater the acceptance you express, the more flexibility they will feel, since you've honored their need to be heard and respected. You don't have to like their ideas, you just need to hear and respect their thoughts.

Some responses instantly evoke antagonism, contempt, or animosity, all putting respect in jeopardy:

- * *Do you really know what you're saying?*
- * *Oh no, that would never work*
- * *Do you know what a stupid idea that would be?*
- * *You can't really want that!*
- * *You can't be serious!*
- * *You're crazy! You want what?*
- * *Don't be crazy ... ridiculous ... stupid...!*
- * *You don't know what you're talking about!*

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