

Never Miss an Opportunity to Connect

“Rob is one of the most difficult people to get to know and very hard to work with. Over the past 20 years, few company representatives successfully developed a relationship with him and influenced him. He can be very disagreeable and non-inclusive.”

My peers told me this as I took my new role working with our partner company's new Senior Vice President, Rob. I had the demanding task of building trust with him and becoming a valued team member.

Early in my new role, I was invited to a meeting at Universal Studios in Orlando. I looked at the invite list and saw that Rob was attending the conference. What a perfect opportunity to get to know him.

As I arrived in Orlando, I received an email that the team was gathering in the hotel lobby at 3 pm and were going to the amusement park together. I arrived in the lobby along with 30 other meeting attendees. Everyone was there except Rob. I asked where he was, and they said he was running late.

We decided to wait a few minutes, but most of the group became restless, and folks slowly left a few at a time. I asked some of the team members before they went if they wanted to wait on Rob, and they said, “no, we want to have fun at the park. We'll catch up with him later”. I considered going with them but decided to stick it out and wait for him.

About 15 minutes later, Rob came running into the lobby. The small group that remained greeted him after he checked in. He told us that he wanted to go to the park and asked where everyone else was. We told him that the group went ahead to the park and that we could catch up to them. He nodded his

head in disappointment.

Then, he pulled out a map of the amusement park. Rob enthusiastically showed us how he'd mapped out all of the rides he wanted to take, including Harry Potter, Spider-Man, and the Dueling Dragons roller coaster. He confessed his love for amusement parks and said he'd been looking forward to the team building afternoon in the park for quite a while. I exclaimed, "what are we waiting for? Let's go!"

Because the group was small, I had the chance to hang out with Rob in the park all afternoon. Waiting in lines and enjoying the rides together, I got to know him. We talked about families, hobbies, travel, current events, and even a little business on the side. Rob warmed to me and appreciated the small group going to the park with him.

Over time, I earned Rob's trust. He began including me in meetings, and anytime I emailed Rob with a question or sought his help, he'd email me right back. He always picked up the phone whenever I called. Why? I attribute it to intentionally connecting with him at the park. I made an effort and took advantage of the opportunity. Who knew Rob was such an amusement park enthusiast?

My challenge to you is never to miss an opportunity to connect with others. It may seem uphill, but it'll be worth it. If you show genuine interest in them, you'll gain their trust and build lasting relationships.

Do you want to discover more about the value of connecting with others and becoming a leader others will gladly follow? Visit my website, prestonpoore.com, today!

Cheers,

Preston