

Q: How would you describe the term, *people skills*?

A: We have to go all the way back to the book of Genesis. At the end of every creative act (vegetation, division of sea and land, stars and space, etc.), God said, "It is good." However, after God created man, He said it is *not* good for man to be alone. We are made by our very nature to connect with other people. Life is about relationships.

Q: How do you connect with people?

A. My philosophy is that there are only three relationships in life: *outward expression* (with other people), *inward expression* (with ourselves), and *upward expression* (with God). The bottom line is that we are never properly related with each other until we are properly related with ourselves (self-respect, self-love, etc.). And we are never properly related to ourselves until we discover how indescribably valuable we are to God and have a proper relationship with Him through Jesus Christ. In fact, Jesus put all of these relationships in the Great Commandment: love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself.

Q. Networking has been a buzzword for several years. What do you do to build your life network?

A. Fred Smith wrote a valuable book entitled, *You and Your Network*. I would encourage everyone to read this book. Here are a few things to consider when networking:

1. Be approachable—people need to feel they can talk to you.
2. Be affirming—the greatest motivation factor is a pat on the back and an affirming word. Write notes of affirmation.
3. Be appreciative—write thank you notes.
4. Be affectionate—love people genuinely.
5. Be attentive—know peoples' names, know their kids' names, know something about them.
6. Be aggressive—be prompt and punctual. Never go home without returning every phone call you receive that day. Answer your e-mails and every piece of mail you possibly can.

A SERIES OF ROUNDTABLE
DISCUSSIONS LED BY
DAVID H. MCKINLEY



Sharpening Your Life Skills

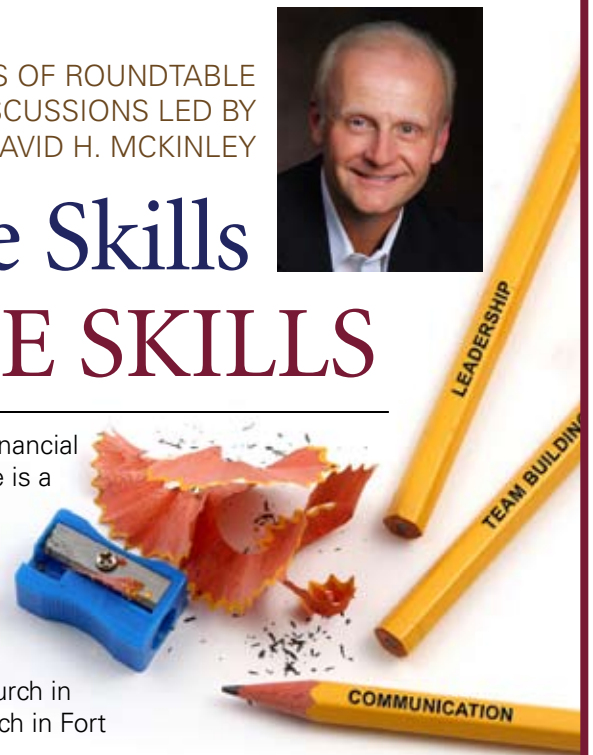
PEOPLE SKILLS



Dr. O.S. Hawkins is President of GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. He is a frequent speaker at conferences and conventions across the nation and has authored several books including *The Art of Connecting: Advice from Philemon on the Power of Productive Relationships* and *Tearing Down Walls and Building Bridges*.

From 1993-1997, Dr. Hawkins served as Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. Previous to this, he was Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for 15 years (1978-1993).

www.guidestone.org



7. Be accurate—be honest. You don't have to be afraid of the truth because truth will always win in the end.

8. Be authentic—have integrity.

9. Be accountable—have someone around you to whom to are accountable.

Q: How do attitudes affect relationships?

A: While painting *The Last Supper*, Leonardo da Vinci had a bitter dispute with a fellow painter. Da Vinci was so enraged that he painted the face of his adversary into the face of Judas. Everyone immediately recognized Judas as Leonardo's former friend. Da Vinci continued to paint each disciple into the portrait. It then was time to paint the face of Christ. After many attempts, da Vinci could not paint the Lord's face because of the hatred within his heart. So, he reconciled with his friend, and repainted Judas's face with another. Then with great ease, da Vinci painted the face of Christ, completing the masterpiece admired throughout the centuries.

Forgiveness is a vital key to having good relationships. Two things have to happen if we are going to have genuine restoration in relationships: 1) there has to be a truly repentant heart on the part of the "offending" person and 2) there has to be a receptive heart on the part of the "offended" person.

Q: What about conflict in relationships?

A: There are four timing issues you can apply when conflict occurs:

1. There is a time to back off.
2. There is a time to stand up.
3. There is a time to give in—pick your battles.
4. There is a time to reach out.

If you *always* back off or *always* stand up or *always* give in, resolution in conflict will never occur. Timing is everything.

Q: What is the most important connection?

A: The most important connection is a connection with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. We were all in conflict with Christ. Let's look at the four timing issues again.

1. Jesus backed off. He went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. He won the victory of Calvary there.

2. Jesus stood up. He acknowledged He was the Son of God when asked by Caiaphas.

3. Jesus gave in. Nobody shoved Jesus down the Via Dolorosa. He went willingly to the cross.

4. Jesus reached out. He did this on Calvary with outstretched arms on the cross. Jesus reached out to each one of us to bring us into a relationship with Him.

Remember the bottom line? We are never going to be properly related to each other until we are properly related with ourselves. And we are never going to be properly related to ourselves until we are properly related to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.