

# Unlock Stress by Getting to Know Co-Workers

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*By Donna Rawady*

Each of us brings our unique self to work. Our interests, reactions to conflict, skills and capabilities, along with how we raise our families, what we find entertaining or inspiring, or upsetting — are different for each and every one of us.

Some of us are innately assertive, and some are shy. Some of us seek exposure while others seek solitude.

We all know and realize the truth of our uniqueness when we think about human nature. Yet, in the throws of work and high-stress demands, we still may find ourselves surprised, disappointed, and frustrated when we just can't understand why a colleague, employee, or manager is not approaching a situation or conflict exactly the way we would.

We may fail to understand that something that motivates us, may not motivate someone else. We might make assumptions about why someone is behaving a certain way based on how we might process a similar problem or emotion. We judge.

If we were to remind ourselves more often of the unique nature of each of us, we may be more interested in asking questions and listening more closely to learn about how another team member views a problem or ponders a solution.

We could learn more about how we might shift our approach to better partner or communicate with others, based on their individual preferences or needs. We may learn what incentives will help individuals be more invested in their professional development and successful outcomes.

Our genuine effort to better understand the tendencies and needs of others, and our ability to acknowledge and respect our differences, will go a long way toward more effective and productive partnerships.