

# *Power of We Consulting*

*Effective solutions for your workplace problems*

## **Improve Your Workplace With Teamwork and The Power of *WE***

From Steven H. Carney, the Workplace Guy:

Are problems like high stress, low morale, and back-stabbing common in your workplace? Surveys show that only about 80 percent of employees (more than 85 million) think teamwork needs to be increased and only 10 percent of employees are completely satisfied. Often assumed and rarely taught, teamwork and the *we* team identity are the foundation for any high-functioning workplace.

This *we* approach is helpful when dealing with employees, customers, and suppliers. It is an effective way to bring people together and build consensus. *We* are on the same side, on the same team. *We* says workers and managers are involved in issues and solutions together. It encourages unity for employees with different roles on the same team. Think of *us and them* becoming *we*.

*We* is effective for work-related problems, team-related problems, and relationship problems in the workplace. It can even extend to relationships outside the workplace. Which of the following styles of work direction is best?

”I want this 3-hour job revised in 2 hours!” vs.

”If *we* work together, can we get this 3-hour job done in 2 hours?”

Obviously, the second version is more team-oriented, collaborative, and motivating. Consider the gains in morale, job satisfaction, and productivity, and the more inclusive *we* approach is more effective. It provides greater gains for a small investment of time.

The *we* identity acknowledges teamwork and cooperation. *We* helps a group or team function as a unit, even if it’s only two people. The *we* approach is an acknowledgment of teamwork and it’s use will improve any workplace that incorporates *we* into their daily culture.

### **The *We* in Apology**

An extension of the *we* technique is the simple apology, something else I learned while managing my company. For example, I learned to say:

”I’m sorry for the misunderstanding.”

”My apologies, I didn’t realize there was a mix-up.”

Or even the more casual, “Sorry about that.”

These statements acknowledge awareness and responsibility for a problem or misunderstanding. (If you don’t acknowledge a problem, you will create distrust and resentment in a relationship—something you may never be able to fix.) Apologies are also helpful in defusing another person’s frustration or anger. A simple apology was one of the best things I discovered.

# *Power of We Consulting*

*Effective solutions for your workplace problems*

## **Improve Your Workplace With Teamwork and The Power of *WE* (Cont.)**

Be sincere with an apology and demonstrate integrity by supporting it with appropriate resolution and closure. For example:

”I’m sorry for running so late. Your project is our top priority and we plan to finish by tomorrow.”

Using an apology doesn’t make you weaker, it makes you stronger. Its use isn’t focused on manipulation or seeking power. It gives power to others. A sincere apology is another *we* tool because it demonstrates awareness and shared responsibility. It forms a bridge; it makes a connection. It encourages people to work through a problem and move on. Remember to use an apology in a timely manner. Keep it simple and sincere. Avoid using an apology as a vehicle to defend yourself or rationalize your actions—it will backfire.

In a teamwork culture, the *we* approach reinforces a group’s unity and action. Team members and managers can use these *we* techniques equally. If a team member uses *we* in conjunction with collaboration, you get the following communication:

”*We* need to find a solution to the situation. *Let’s* consider some alternatives and see what *we* can come up with.”

You can see that this approach helps to build teamwork. *We* is inclusive, leads to consensus, and helps bring solutions. When used regularly or with an apology, *we* integrates teamwork principles (communication, collaboration, recognition, and cohesion). *We* is a positive statement and a reinforcement of the group’s identity, purpose, and goals.

See [www.powerofwe.com](http://www.powerofwe.com) and The Teamwork Chronicles for more information and tips about teamwork and related subjects.